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"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

To the Paramhansa
Ramkrishna Deva

Diverse creeds of worship
from varied springs of fulfilment
have mingled in your meditation.
The manifold revelation of the joy of the Infinite
has given form to a shrine of unity
in your life
where from far and near arise salutation
to which I join mine own.

Rabindranath Tagore

HYMN ON THE NATIVITY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Girish Chandra Ghose*

Who art Thou, lying here
Upon Thy Brâhmin mother's lap,
Filling the worlds with light?
Who art Thou, born in this poor hut,
O naked babe—Thou jewel without a peer,
Who art Thou, O my dear?
Hast Thou compassionately come down,
Seeing this wretched world's unhappy plight?
Hast Thou come down alone
To shower Thy mercy on the afflicted soul,
To others all unknown?
Thy face is full of kindliness;
For whom dost Thou so weep and cry?
Thy beauty dazzles me
So that I cannot turn my face from Thee!
O sweet destroyer of the heart's unrest,
Thee would I hold forever to my breast!

Translated
By John Moffitt, Jr.

*The famous actor and dramatist of Bengal and a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

TO THE DEVOTEES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Swami Vivekananda

It is only just that I should try to give you a little of my views. I fully believe that there are periodic ferments of religion in human society, and that such a period is now sweeping over the educated world. While each ferment, moreover, appears broken into various little bubbles, these are all eventually similar, showing the cause or causes behind them to be the same. That religious ferment which at present is everyday gaining a greater hold over thinking men, has this characteristic, that all the little thought-whirlpools into which it has broken itself, declare one single aim—a vision and a search after the Unity of Being. On planes physical, ethical, and spiritual, an ever-broadening generalization, leading up to a concept of Unity Eternal—is in the air; and this being so, all the movements of the time may be taken to represent, knowingly or unknowingly, the noblest philosophy of the unity man ever had—the Advaita Vedânta.

Again, it has always been observed that as a result of the struggles of the various fragments of thought in a given epoch, one bubble survives. The rest only arise to melt into it, and form a single great wave, which sweeps over society with irresistible force.

In India, America, and England (the countries I happen to know about) hundreds of these are struggling at the present moment. In India, dualistic formulæ are already on the wane, the Advaitists alone hold the field in force. In America, many movements are struggling for the mastery. All these represent Advaita thought more or less, and that series which is spreading most rapidly, approaches nearer to it than any of the others. Now if anything was ever clear to me, it is that one of these must survive, swallowing up all the rest, to be the power of the future. Which is it to be?

Referring to history, we see that only that fragment which is fit will survive, and what makes fit to survive but *character*? Advaita will be the future religion of thinking humanity. No doubt of that. And of all the sects, they alone shall gain the day, who are able to show most character in their lives—no matter how far they may be.

Let me tell you a little personal experience. When my Master left the body, we were a dozen penniless and unknown young men. Against us were a hundred powerful organizations, struggling hard to nip us in the bud. But Ramakrishna had given us one great gift, the desire and the life-long struggle not to talk alone, but *to live the life*. And today all India knows and reverences the Master, and the truths he taught are spreading like wild fire. Ten years ago, I could not get a hundred persons together to celebrate his birthday anniversary. Last year there were fifty thousand.

Neither numbers, nor powers, nor wealth, nor learning, nor eloquence, nor anything else will prevail, but *purity, living the life*, in one word, Anubhuti, realization. Let there be but a dozen such lion-souls in each country, lions who have broken their own bonds, who have touched the Infinite, whose whole soul is gone to Brahman, who care neither for wealth nor power or fame, and these will be *enough* to shake the world.

Here lies the secret. Says Patanjali, the father of Yoga: "When a man rejects all the superhuman powers, then he attains to the cloud of virtue." He sees God. He becomes God, and helps others to become the same. This is all I have to preach. Doctrines have been expounded enough. There are books by the million. Oh, for an ounce of practice!

As to societies and organizations, these will come of themselves. Can there be jealousy where there is nothing to be jealous of? The names of those who will wish to injure us will be legion. But is not that the surest sign of our having the truth? The more I have been opposed, the more my energy has always found expression. I have been driven away without a morsel of bread: I have been feasted and worshipped by princes. I have been slandered by priests and laymen alike. But what of it? Bless them all! They are my very self. And have they not helped me by acting as a spring-board, from which my energy could take higher and higher flights?

I have discovered one great secret—I have nothing to fear from *talkers* of religion. And the great ones, who realise—they become enemies to none. Let talkers talk. They know no better! Let them have their fill of name and fame and money and woman. Hold we on to realization, to being Brahman, to

becoming Brahman. Let us hold on to truth unto death, and from life to life. Let us not pay the least attention to what others say, and if, after a lifetime's effort, one, only one, soul can break the fetters of the world and be free, WE HAVE DONE OUR WORK. Hari Om!

One word more. Doubtless I do love India. But everyday my sight grows clearer. What is India, or England, or America to us? We are the servants of that God who by the ignorant is called MAN. He who pours water at the root does he not water the whole tree?

There is but one basis of well-being, social, political, or spiritual—to know that I and my brother are *one*. This is true for all countries and all people. And Westerners, let me say, will realize it more quickly than Orientals, who have almost exhausted themselves in formulating the idea and producing a few cases of individual realization.

Let us work without desire for name or fame or to rule over others. Let us be free from the tripple bonds of lust, greed of gain and anger. And the truth is with us.*

* Written to an American disciple.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S LIFE AND TEACHINGS

BY THE EDITOR

Introductory

It is everybody's experience that thought always precedes action. Before these thought-forces take definite shape they work in the subconscious mind of the individual. The thought-power of an individual works through a particular brain. The sum total of these individual centres of thought may be said to be the thought-power of a nation or people. Just as in the individual there is a reaction from his subconscious self when he is in danger, so also when a national crisis arises, an intense desire for a new state of things arises in the collective mind to tide over the crisis. This intense desire calls forth into existence a great reformer who gives a definite shape to the needs and aspirations of the people. Such great reformers have come amidst us at different critical periods in the history of our planet in the form of Christs, Buddhas, and Mahomets and have allayed the miseries of humanity and given new life and vigour to it. But then the world-machine, like all other machines, is not perfect and requires repeated overhauling.

In this age again we are witnessing a great discontent all the world over. It is caused by the ever increasing dissatisfaction with the modern civilization which has not brought man any real happiness. While it has given man the best conditions for life it is about to crush life itself. All the so-called progress has been at the cost of man himself. Selfishness reigns supreme, as is evident from all the social iniquities and economic, national and racial conflicts all over the world.

Amidst this confusion there is a great hankering for a better order of things. Attempts have been made in this direc-

tion with various ideas and strange dreams of a perfection to be gained by material means. But nowhere has the purpose been gained. No scheme of society or politics has helped the world so far, and rightly so, for all material means to attain perfection cannot but fail. For a solution of the modern world-malady we have to turn to the spiritual nature of man. Man has to be given a lift from inside and this can be done only by religion. But then to return to the old forms of religion is an impossibility for the modern man who has outgrown those stages, thanks to his scientific knowledge. So the modern man, although he has been forced to snap his ties with the old forms of religion, is not able to find any new substitute in keeping with his intellectual progress that can satisfy his inner cravings. While there is the passion for worship and prayer, he finds it difficult to owe allegiance to the dogmas of the old religions or to the ancient God, and this has launched him in doubt and negation, with all their consequences. That is why we find he is up against religion. But all the same, in the depth of his heart there is a great hankering for a spiritual life. Religion can once more be a force in human progress if only it can put the eternal truths in new forms, like old wine in a new bottle, and thus make them acceptable to the modern man.

To meet this demand of the modern man, to give a direction to the subconscious aspirations of humanity, was that perfect instrument, the God-man of Dakshineshwar called into existence by the collective thought-power of the world. To show to the world at large the immeasurable joy and potentiality of the life of the spirit, and to discover for the world the God that was hidden behind the maze of scriptural texts, was the sole object of his advent.

Existence of God

Does God exist?—seems to be the fundamental question on which religion depends. The arguments that great thinkers of the past have given to demonstrate His existence, though they were convincing to the ancients, are not at all satisfactory to the modern man. He fails to find any convincing proof in them and therefore entertains great doubts about His very existence. The rational arguments, viz. the ontological, cosmological and teleological ones, were formerly supposed to give a direct demonstration of the existence of God. But the modern man with his scientific knowledge thinks in a different way. The ontological argument establishes a God, because there is an inherent belief or idea of God in the human mind. His belief that God exists is an indication that He does exist, for it would seem rather strange that a universal and powerful desire should be doomed to non-fulfilment. The cosmological arguments establish a God who must be the First Cause of this great cosmos. The last one, the teleological argument, establishes Him from the purposiveness that is observed in this creation. Behind such purposiveness there must necessarily be an intelligent principle guiding it.

All these arguments are by no means convincing. They at best point to the possibility of the existence of God—a plausible hypothesis for the explanation of this world, probably the best that can be put forward. Ultimately, however, there is an element of faith in the affirmation of God's existence, for it can never be established through reasoning, like a mathematical problem. This leads us, then, to agnosticism—that all knowledge of the ultimate Reality is impossible, and that it will therefore be wise on our part not to try to solve

the mystery of life. But such a thing is not practicable; for however much we may cling to our senses and say to ourselves, "Don't bother about God and religion; live here, this is a bad world indeed, but make the best of it"—the human mind is not satisfied and asks the question, "What is real?" The question has to be solved, it does not allow us to put it aside.

The existence of God, therefore, cannot be proved by arguments, for they are as much on one side as on the other. Arguments will not help us. The only justification for belief in His existence is direct experience. It is a question of fact and not of argument. All reasoning has to be based on facts experienced, for it is comparison between certain facts that have been perceived; and if the facts are not there, no reasoning is possible. All our knowledge, even scientific knowledge, depends on facts perceived. Similarly the science of religion must also be based on such data and not on vain argumentation. The only proof, therefore, of God is experience, realization. And it is a curious fact that those who attack God and religion have never struggled to get at facts, and consequently their arguments carry no weight with those who have actually experienced God. That is why Sri Ramakrishna says, "You see many stars in the sky at night, but do not find them when the sun rises; can you say that there are no stars in the heaven of the day? So, O man, because you do not behold God in the days of your ignorance, say not that there is no God."[1] When Swami Vivekananda, who was a great sceptic in his younger days, asked him if he believed in God, "Yes," came the bold reply. "Can you prove it, sir?" "Yes." "How?" "Because I see Him just as I see you here, only in a much intenser sense. Not only that, I can make you realize Him." Then with a touch he transferred to him the God-consciousness. All scepticism was brushed aside, and the disciple realized that doctrines or dogmas or rituals or books or temples were but secondary details, and that religion consisted in realization, which was the only proof of God's existence. Nothing short of it can convince us, however much we may argue or reason. Sri Ramakrishna's life is a proof that such an experience is possible for every one of us if we will only try.

God Personal and Impersonal

There is today a considerable amount of dissatisfaction with the great organized forms of religion and with the idea of God they preach. For more than one reason the conception of a Personal God has been a great stumbling-block. Attempts have therefore been made to have a religion of Humanity, which puts Humanity in the place of God, and its by-product the religion of Evolution. But these attempts have failed to satisfy man and his inner hankering for worship and prayer. So God is a necessity for man, but the conception of God must be in keeping with the positive knowledge of science, before He is acceptable to the modern man. Scientific reasoning wants that the particular should be explained by the general and the general by the more general. When one apple falls we are dissatisfied, for we cannot explain it; but when we find all apples fall and we are told it is the law of gravitation, we are satisfied. This again involves a second principle of knowledge, viz., that the explanation of a thing must come from inside and not from outside. To explain the falling of the apple as due to a ghost will not be scientific, but

[1] *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 5.

to say that it is its nature to fall owing to gravitation is all right. Science accepts this explanation. Another idea of modern science is the law of evolution—the law of cause and effect. The effect is nothing but the cause evolved; the whole universe is but an evolution and not a creation. The Personal God, put to these tests, is found wanting, for we are launched into difficulties and contradictions to maintain this conception and so the modern man is not able to accept Him. He wants a God that will satisfy both these principles—the principle of generalization and of evolution. The Impersonal God of the Vedânta—the Brahman of the Upanishads—satisfies these principles. Vedânta defines God as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss—the ultimate generalization and cause of this universe. Existence is the highest generalization which includes all the variety of this universe; for everything exists—man, animals and material things. Beyond this the human mind cannot go. Knowledge again does not mean the knowledge we get through the senses, but the very essence of that, that which is expressing itself as our relative knowledge. Similarly with Bliss. This Impersonal God, then, is the essence of everything. All this is indeed He. He is in the universe and is the universe itself. In Him we live, move and have our being. It is this God that has evolved into this universe of diversity. No extraneous explanation is sought here, no extra-cosmic God resorted to as the creator. The sum total of the universe is God. But then, God is not matter. Perceived through the senses, He appears as matter; perceived through the intellect, He appears as mind; and when the spirit sees Him, He is the pure, infinite spirit. He is the canvas on which the intellect and the senses paint different worlds. He is neither good nor evil. He is beyond both, for good and evil exist only in the relative and not in the Absolute.

What then about our desire to worship, to pray? The mystical experiences and all kinds of prayer involve a personal relation to God; prayers addressed to an Impersonal God will not give us any satisfaction and therefore cannot be maintained long. It is true, but the acceptance of the Impersonal God does not do away with the Personal God, but puts Him on a better footing; so all our prayers and worship would remain. God as an extra-cosmic Being cannot be maintained in these days; but if we accept an Impersonal God, the Personal God stands explained as the highest reading of the Impersonal by the human intellect. Just as the material world is the Impersonal God seen through the five senses, and as our experience of the universe would change if we had more senses, so also the Personal God is but the highest presentation to us of the Impersonal. The Personal God is true, as true as the universe outside us, as true as this limited individuality of ours. That much and not more. But from the absolute standpoint, there is neither the Personal God, nor this universe nor our limited individualities. The Absolute alone exists, which is beyond all description.

"We cannot fully know God," Sri Ramakrishna would often say. "He is without form and again with form. To the devotees He is with form. To the Jnânins who have realized the world as unreal, He is without form. The devotees know that they are something different from the world; that is why God appears to them as a Person. The Jnânin always discriminates saying 'Not this,' 'not this,' and he realizes that this 'I' and the world are unreal—like a dream. He realizes the Brahman

(Impersonal), but he is not able to describe It.

"It is something like this. Think of the Impersonal as a vast shoreless ocean, an infinite expanse of water, with no land visible anywhere—only here and there appear blocks of ice formed by the intense cold of devotion. That is to say, to the devotee, now and then, He appears as a Person, with form. When the sun of knowledge rises, the ice melts away and then God cannot be said to be a Person; one no more sees His form. But what He is, cannot be expressed in speech. Who should say? He who was to say (the individualized ego) has ceased to exist. He cannot be traced.

"If one discriminates, then the 'I' ceases to exist, as by continual peeling of the onion we find that nothing is left in the end. Where one's 'ego' is not traceable—who is to trace it out—who should describe the nature of the realization of Brahman? For the devotees He is God with attributes; that is to say, He appears as a Person with form. He hears their prayers. The prayers you offer are to this Personal God. You are neither Vedāntins nor Jnānins, you are devotees. Whether you accept form or not, that does not matter. It is enough if you have the faith that He is a Person—a Person who hears the prayers, who creates, preserves and destroys, and who is Infinite Power. You can attain Him easily through devotion."[1]

The Way to Realization

"Where is God? How can we reach Him?" "There are pearls in the sea, but you must dive again and again until you find them. So God is in the world, but you will have to persevere to see Him."[2] "Effort is necessary for God-vision. If you merely sit on the bank of a lake and say: 'There are fish in the lake,' will you catch any? Go and get the things necessary for fishing, get a rod and twine and bait and throw some lure into the water. Then from the deep water the fish will rise and come near and you will be able to see and catch them. You wish me to show you God while you sit quietly by, without making the least effort: You ask me to catch the fish and place it in your hands! How unreasonable! What is the use of crying, O God, O God! Regularly practise devotion and you shall see Him."[3] God will be realized not by all, but only by those who struggle sincerely, who are prepared to give up everything else and exert to attain Him. The results attained will be in proportion to the sincerity and degree of the effort. "You get what you seek. He who seeks God attains Him; he who seeks wealth and power gets that. Verily I say unto you that he who *wants* Him realizes Him. Go and verify it in your own life. Try for three days and you are sure to succeed:"[4] These words are literally true and not mere poetry, for these come from a man who felt and realized God, lived and communed with Him more intensely than we do with this sense world and its objects. But the question is, who wants God? Do our daily actions show that we want God and yet we are not able to attain Him? "Do you mean to say that if all these people really believed that the mine of happiness, blessedness, and glory was present here, they would act as they do in the world, without trying to realize God? Oh, what days of suffering I passed through! You can't imagine my agony at separation from

[1] *Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita* by M. Part I, pp. 68-70.
[2] *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 188.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 189-190.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 200.

the Divine Mother. That was only natural. Suppose there is a bag of gold in a room and a thief in the next, with only a thin partition in between. Can he sleep peacefully? Will he not run madly about and try to force the wall to get at the gold? Such was my state. I knew that the Mother, full of infinite bliss, compared with which all earthly possessions were as nothing, was there, quite close to me. How could I be satisfied with anything else. I had to seek Her. I became mad for Her and in my agony I would rub my face against the ground."[2] His plaintive moans would attract crowds of people, who whispered to one another, "Poor young man! Has he really lost his Mother? His pathetic cries move one to tears."[3] Such is the intensity of hankering that results in God-realization.

The first step, therefore, towards God-realization consists in an intense desire and the hearty renunciation of everything which we find does not lead us to God. Today in India owing to the conflict of two incongruous civilizations a kind of playing with truth has begun. A most treacherous kind of secularism is being preached under the garb of religion and it is the fashion of the day to talk against renunciation. Why should a man flee from his wife and children? Why should he abstain from all love and beauty that comes to him through the senses?—says the modern pseudo-religionist. Is not all this the play of the Divine, the manifestation of His unspeakable love! Very alluring indeed to man, who is so loath to leave his sense-enjoyments. Herein he finds the sacred authority in justification of his desire for enjoyment. But then, how is man to realize this Divine love and play? Even in earthly love we find that when a person experiences its urge, he finds it difficult to look to his daily duties and physical needs. His whole mind is engrossed in the object of his love. So, to be in love with God also requires that one should devote one's whole mind to Him regardless of all other things. It is imperative that one should die to the world to live in God. If anyone says that he can keep both sides, he is either a great hero or a hypocrite. "The disease of a worldly man is of a serious type. Attachment to lust and gold has brought all this trouble on him. Would you keep a large water jar and savoury pickles in the same room in which a patient is laid up with typhoid fever? If you wish to cure such a patient, you must have him removed from that room, in case it is impracticable to put away the water jar and the pickles. A householder is such a patient. Desire to enjoy worldly things is his thirst, and the mouth waters at the mere thought of pickles. The pickles and the water jar stand for lust and greed. Hence solitude is the best remedy. People quote the example of King Janaka as a man who lived in the world and yet attained perfection. His case was not the rule but the exception. The world has not produced a second Janaka. The rule is that no one can attain spiritual perfection unless he renounces sex and possessions."[4]

The confusion of thought about harmonizing God and Mammon has arisen through a false conception of what is meant by realization. By realization of God is not meant grasping Him through the senses or the intellect. It is something more than that. Our normal plane of conscious-

[2] *Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, published by Advaita Ashrama, p. 79.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 78.
[4] *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, pp. 114 and 102.

ness will never reveal God to us, because it functions within the limits of the senses and the intellect, and consequently cannot reach the Infinite God who is beyond all limitations. The higher phase of experience—the super-conscious state, as it is called—transcends the senses and the objective world which the intellect creates out of the materials supplied by the senses. All talk of realization within the sphere of the senses and the intellect is childish prattle. If it consisted in intellectual faith and sentiment, then many of us would have been prophets, for it is easy to put such faith and sentiment in beautiful and attractive language. Claims about bringing God to every man in the midst of his sense-enjoyments are based on a conscious or unconscious inability to distinguish between realization and intellectual or emotional outburst.

Once a Brāhmo devotee asked Sri Ramakrishna: "Sir, is it a fact that one cannot realize God unless one gives up the world?" "Assuredly not," replied Sri Ramakrishna smiling. "It is not for you to give up everything. You are very well off as you are. There is pure gold as well as alloyed gold; are they not both useful? The fine crystallized sugar and the crude molasses; are they not both sweet?

"Oh, I should think that you are very well off. Do you know the game of *nox*[*]? Having scored too high I am out of the game! You are clever players. You are content, some with ten points, some with six, others even with five! You are clever enough not to score too high; so you are not out—the play still goes on. It is all right, don't you think so?

"Take my word for it, it matters not if you live the life of a householder. Only you must fix your mind on God. Do your work with one hand and touch the feet of the Lord with the other. And when you have no work to do, hold His feet fast to your heart with both hands."[**]

He used to say that so long as there was the least attachment to sex and gold, God-realization was not possible. If one would keep the game of the world going, he cannot boldly bid for the highest score, i.e. God-realization. Such a person can at best score ten points and no more. But then the Master could understand that for the vast majority of people married life was a necessity, and so he told them to have the enjoyments of the world, but tempered with discrimination. Such discrimination, he knew, would prevent a man from becoming a slave to his senses and would gradually develop a spirit of renunciation in him, when the truth that all pleasures of the world are evanescent and that God alone is real, will dawn on him, and he will make one mad bid for God-realization. Though Sri Ramakrishna exalted renunciation, he did not decry marriage; he only wanted that it should be purified and tuned to high ideals. It is only in a society where the marriage-vow is faithfully kept and people live a highly moral and righteous life, that sincere Sannyāsins can be produced and not amongst profligates.

To set a noble ideal to the householders, the Master took upon his shoulders the responsibilities of married life and lived with his wife a life of purest love, undefiled by any physical relationship. He would say to his disciples, "Whatever is done here (i.e. by him) is for your sake. If I do good, you may be inclined to imitate at least one-sixteenth part of it; and if I do

[*] A game at cards.

[**] *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, Vol. I, pp. 177-178.

anything wrong, you are likely to do the same thing a hundredfold." He has, therefore, shown by his example that marriage has got an ideal much higher than mere satisfaction of the senses. "This ideal," says his disciple and biographer, Swami Saradananda, "not required to be shown in older days in the lives of Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Sankara, Chaitanya and others, has thus been set forth in the life of Sri Ramakrishna to fulfil a vital need of the age. It is for the first time in the history of the world that such a novel and perfectly pure model of the married life has been formed, as the outcome of lifelong spiritual practices and austere penances. Now, as the Master would say, let people cast their own lives into this ideal mould and shape them accordingly, to the best of their abilities. They can thereby make themselves worthy citizens, and be parents of worthy children possessing noble qualities for the regeneration of Indian society from its present state of degradation."[11]

Unity in Variety

One great legacy of Sri Ramakrishna to the modern world is his catholicity in religion. He was an embodiment of the ancient lore, a life into which was infused the universal spirit of Hinduism. To quote Sister Nivedita, "The doctrine that different creeds are but different paths to reach God is not new in India. But taught as this man taught it, with his strong contention that it was the actual duty of men to follow their own faith—for the world gained by many-sidedness; . . . and above all, with that love that said of every faith, 'Bow down where others kneel, for where so many have worshipped the Lord will manifest Himself.'—it was unique in the world's history." He was without a parallel as regards the synthetic harmonizing of the various ideals in spiritual culture. His synthesis was not of the kind that collects all the truths in different religions and puts them together—an indiscriminate combination en masse rejecting the so-called useless and superstitious portions in each of them. Such eclecticism can neither give us a religion nor a synthesis. It is a sort of intellectualism which has no place in religion, where realization is of prime importance. In every religion there is a particular ideal, a particular aspect of the one Truth, and this ideal has its own external form in which it is clothed. The form, the husk, as people think it to be, is as essential as the grain—the ideal in it—for the growth of religious experience according to that ideal. "Rice is the essential thing, but husked rice will never sprout into a plant." Therefore such a collection of truths will not give us a religious synthesis at all. On the other hand Sri Ramakrishna's synthesis was based on experience, and therefore the right one. To him realization of God was the essential thing, and so the differences amongst the various paths were of no consequence so long as those paths helped man to reach Him. He therefore left every religion intact and accepted it in toto, because he had actually realized that in truth all religions are but part and parcel of one Eternal Religion. To quote Sister Nivedita again, "There was not a symbol in India that he had not worshipped, not a worshipper by whatever route, whose special need he had not felt in his own nature, and till it was satisfied, not a prayer or ecstasy or vision that he did not reverence or understand." He had subjected himself to various kinds of discipline to realize the Mohammedan ideal and also the Christian ideal of the Fatherhood of

[11] *Sri Ramakrishna Lilaprasanga, Guru Bhāv*, Part I, pp. 153-154.

God. He used to say, "God's book is not finished, it is a continuous revelation. It is just as absurd to say God the Absolute has been known and comprehended by anybody as it is to say that a mountain of sugar has been carried home by some ants to be eaten up." "As water takes the shape of the vessel in which it is put, so God is like that water filling these different vessels—religions. Yet He is One and in each case it is a vision of God." He realized that there cannot be any religious formula to suit all human temperaments, which are so diverse and varied according to their education, tastes and inherent tendencies, that every one must be the arbiter of his own religion. The greater the number of sects, therefore, in the world, the greater the chance of each one getting a religion to his liking. All talk of atheism is because some people do not get the truth needed by them—the special path that would suit them to realize God. With this breadth of mind and depth of realization Sri Ramakrishna could speak to each soul in his own language and direct him towards God.

Yet this great man was not blind to the fact that religious liberalism was apt to degenerate for want of intensity. It is the harmonious blending of this breadth and intensity of religious feeling that is required, and the way to it he found in the doctrine of the Ishta —the chosen Ideal. He was not for that kind of liberalism which made people feed their curiosity with ever new ideals. This he used to illustrate by the parable of the mother-of-pearl, which floats on the surface of the sea to catch a drop of rain, and which, as soon as it gets that, dives deep and fashions a pearl out of it. So once a person hears of the truth and has chosen his path, he must devote his energies to that particular faith till the pearl is formed, that is, till the goal is reached. Frequent change of site for digging a well ends in a total failure; and a growing plant has to be hedged round for protection—are two of his oft-quoted sayings to bring home the necessity of one-pointed devotion in spiritual life. One other saying would make it clear to us how we are to harmonize this breadth of religious feeling with intensity: The daughter-in-law of a family loves every member of the household generally, but for her husband she has a special and intense kind of love.

Conclusion

The message of Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings is fundamentally a spiritual message to a world steeped in materialism of the worst kind ever known to history. The message, in keeping with this degradation, is quite unique. The spiritual achievements of this God-man contain in them the power for spiritually revitalizing the world. The mass of spiritual energy and love that he has radiated is sufficient to fuse the various races and nations into one universal brotherhood of man. The world will learn in the light of his life to temper its materialism and bring its feverish activity under control. His ideal of renunciation will once more cover the world with forest retreats and monasteries where men and women will live a life devoted to truth and truth alone, thus accumulating culture and handing it down from generation to generation. Thus we can expect at no distant date the birth of a new epoch in civilization, for he has supplied the motive power and thought required to usher it.

To us Indians his life has a special significance for it has given us a concrete symbol of unity to gather round. It settles once for all the question of

communalism, for was he not as much a Hindu as a Mohammedan or a Christian in his spiritual realizations? Not only has his life solved for us the problem of national unity, but it has also pointed out to us our national mission, which is to accumulate spirituality and distribute it to the world. This is what India had been doing all along for centuries in the past and this is what she is destined to do in the future in the world's economy of forces. So let us on this his centenary birthday remember what Swami Vivekananda, his foremost disciple and the greatest of patriots, has told us: "Each nation has its own peculiar method of work. Some work through politics, some through social reforms, some through other lines. With us, religion is the only ground along which we can move. . . . And that was in danger. It seemed that we were going to change this theme in our national life, that we were going to exchange the backbone of our existence, as it were, that we were trying to replace a spiritual by a political backbone. And if we could have succeeded, the result would have been annihilation. But it was not to be. So this power became manifest. I do not care in what light you understand this great sage, it matters not how much respect you pay to him, but I challenge you face to face with the fact, that here is a manifestation of the most marvellous power that has been for several centuries in India, and it is your duty to study this power, to find out what has been done for the regeneration, for the good of India, and for the good of the whole human race through it. . . .

"The highest ideal in our scriptures is the Impersonal, and would to God everyone of us here were high enough to realize that Impersonal ideal; but, as that cannot be, it is absolutely necessary for the vast majority of human beings to have a Personal ideal; and no nation can rise, can become great, can work at all, without enthusiastically coming under the banner of one of these great ideals in life. Political ideals, personages representing political ideals, even social ideals, commercial ideals, would have no power in India. We want spiritual ideals before us, we want enthusiastically to gather round grand spiritual names. Our heroes must be spiritual. Such a hero has been given to us in the person of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. If this nation wants to rise, take my word for it, it will have to rally enthusiastically round this name. . . . And may he, the same Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, for the good of our nation, for the welfare of our country, and for the good of humanity, open your hearts, make you true and steady to work for the immense change which must come, whether we exert ourselves or not."[1]

[1] *Complete Works*, Vol. III, pp. 314–316.

In big shops there are huge jars of rice. Some of these contain pulses also. But lest they be eaten up by rats, the shopkeeper puts a quantity of parched rice, some of it sugared, as a winnowing-fan. They taste sweet and have a strong flavour. And the rats rush to that winnowing-fan, and get no clue to the huge jars of rice. Men are infatuated with lust and gold! They remain in the dark about God.

Whoever performs devotional exercises, with the belief that there is but one God, is sure to attain Him, no matter in what aspect, name or manner He is worshipped.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA IN ECSTASY

WORLD'S HOMAGE TO THE SAINT OF DAKSHINESWAR

In the following pages we have given a collection of writings on Sri Ramakrishna by various persons—by men who had seen him (Section I) as also by others (Section II). We have also included (Section III) various press comments, contemporary and later, that appeared in the different papers of India. In section I which deals with the reminiscences of persons who actually saw him, we have those by his own disciples as also those by men of note belonging to the orthodox and reforming sections of Hindu society. It is interesting to note that according to the different view-points and understanding of these people, their estimate also of this great soul differs widely, ranging from an insane person to an Incarnation of God. But what strikes one most is, that whatever might be their estimate of this saint, one and all of them were attracted by him, though many could not explain why. Everyone who visited him once was impelled to go to him again, as if under the influence of a dope. There was an intoxicating quality in the company and conversations of this person which none could resist. They must come to him again and again, however much they might disapprove of some of his actions. God is love. That is why everyone is attracted towards Him, consciously or unconsciously. The universal love of this strange madman of Dakshineswar was also irresistible.

Another point that strikes one is, that everyone of his visitors admits that he has been spiritually benefitted by coming to Sri Ramakrishna. It strikes one, therefore, that he must have been an ideal teacher who could come down to the level of his inquirers and talk to them in their own language; who could read their minds and help them Godwards from where they were, without in the least disturbing their faith. He never said anything or forced them to accept any truth for which they were not prepared. He had a particular relationship with each of them which he kept up to the last moment of his life. That explains why some of these writings are one-sided. Nevertheless all these versions, we are sure, will help the readers to have a glimpse of this great personality and judge for themselves as to what Sri Ramakrishna really was. It is with this idea in view that we present them with this bouquet of flowers of various kinds and of different sweet odours on this centenary birthday of this saint of Dakshineswar.—*Ed.*

Section I

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Swami Vivekananda

In a narrow society there is depth and intensity of spirituality. The narrow stream is very rapid. In a catholic society, along with the breadth of vision we find a proportionate loss in depth and intensity. But the life of Sri Ramakrishna upsets all records of history. It is a remarkable phenomenon that in Sri Ramakrishna there has been an assemblage of ideas deeper than the sea and vaster than the skies.

We must interpret the Vedas in the light of the experience of Sri Ramakrishna. Sankarâchârya and all other commentators made the tremendous mistake to think that the whole of the Vedas spoke the same truth. Therefore they were guilty of torturing those of the apparently conflicting Vedic texts which go against their own doctrines, into the meaning of their particular schools. As in the olden times, it was the Lord alone, the deliverer of the message of the *Gîtâ*, who slightly harmonized these apparently conflicting statements, so, with a view to completely settle this dispute, immensely magnified in the process of time, He Himself has come as Sri Ramakrishna. Therefore no one can truly understand the Vedas and Vedânta, unless one studies them in the light of the utterances of Sri Ramakrishna, and surveys them through the medium of his life. It was Sri Ramakrishna who first exemplified in his life and taught that these scriptural statements which appear to the cursory view as contradictory, are meant for different grades of aspirants and are arranged in the order of evolution. The whole world will undoubtedly forget its fights and disputes and be united in a fraternal tie in religious and other matters as a consequence of these teachings.

Above all, we must always remember that all his teachings were for the good of the world. If anyone has heard any injurious words from his lips, he should know that they were meant for that particular individual only; and though they might be harmful if followed by others, they were beneficial to that particular individual.

If there is anything which Sri Ramakrishna has urged us to give up as carefully as lust and wealth, it is the limiting of the infinitude of God by circumscribing it within narrow bounds. Whoever, therefore, will try to limit the infinite ideals of Sri Ramakrishna in that way, will go against him.

One of his own utterances is that those who have seen the chameleon only once, know only one colour of the animal, but those who have lived under the tree, know all the colours that it puts on. For this reason, no saying of Sri Ramakrishna can be accepted as authentic, unless it is verified by those who constantly lived with him and whom he brought up to fulfil his life's mission.

Such a unique personality, such a synthesis of the utmost of Jnâna, Yoga, Bhakti, and Karma, has never before appeared among mankind. The life of Sri Ramakrishna proves that the greatest breadth, the highest catholicity and the utmost intensity can exist side by side in the same individual, and that society also can be constructed like that, for society is nothing but an aggregate of individuals. The formation of such a perfect character is the ideal of this age.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Swami Ramakrishnananda

Sri Krishna after describing to Arjuna a little of his own glory, said to him, "Whatever being there is great, prosperous or powerful, that know thou to be a product of a part of My splendour." Everyone in India who is within the fold of Hinduism regards the son of Devaki (Sri Krishna) as the Lord Himself. But what is a matter for regret is that, nowadays people imbued with the scientific and materialistic ideas of the West, doubt the existence of God. But if we think a little, we shall be convinced that this kind of doubt about the existence of God and atheism can be entertained only by thoughtless people. O man, if you had the power to acquire everything you desired, I would not have hesitated to call you God. If no one had the power to obstruct you, if you could enjoy unbroken bliss, being free from the fear of death and thus live in great happiness, if you could at all times, at ease, and according to your sweet will have gratified your innumerable desires, then you yourself would have been God. But just think for a moment and see whether your condition is not quite the reversal of this. If so, it is mere foolishness to be an atheist, to dethrone God and set yourself in His place. That Supreme Power which you cannot obstruct and which easily obstructs you at every step, that Power of all-conquering Time known as Kâli, rules you and all this universe of moveable and immoveable things. This Power of Time is what is known as Ishwara, the Personal God. This Power is the cause of creation, preservation and destruction of this universe. Wherever we see an excess of this Power there we find the manifestation of God. Everyone knows to what a great extent this power was manifest in Sri Krishna. No power on earth was able to obstruct him. On the other hand he was able to trample under his feet all the monarchs of his time and let live only such of them as were pious and righteous, thus fulfilling his own words in the Gîtâ: "Whenever there is decline of righteousness and rise of unrighteousness then I embody Myself for the protection of the good and the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of righteousness." The Power of Time is ever favourable to righteousness and man cannot help admitting that he in whom this Power is manifest to a great extent is an Incarnation of God. For it is such great souls who are all-powerful and all-merciful that are real Masters of this world. These great souls control this great Power for they have been ruling this world from time immemorial. Just as Kâli, the Power of Time, is the ruler of this world, even so do these great souls rule this world. Their words are the scriptures of the world and are working for the good of mankind. They alone have shown mankind the way out of this relative existence (Samsâra) by treading the path themselves.

In this age, in which great soul is this power of the Lord to be found, taking shelter at whose feet man will be able to cross the ocean of life? Which great soul today is able to save blind mankind which has fallen into the jaws of atheism and doubt? The words of which great Master,—sweet and easy to understand like the loving words of a mother—are giving hopes of the

Kingdom of Heaven to man? Before which great personality, the embodiment of knowledge, Bhakti and supernatural realizations are the savants of the world standing aghast dumbfounded, like disciples? Who is that great soul who from behind the screens has today with his knowledge in the form of Vivekananda enlightened the world?

Really everything about Sri Ramakrishna is supernatural. In his own words, "the key to this antechamber has to be turned the reverse way," i.e. if one wants to attain knowledge, worldly means will be of no avail. Sri Krishna also taught in the same strain: "That which is night to all beings, in that the self-controlled man wakes. That in which all beings wake, is night to the Self-seeing Muni." The life of Sri Ramakrishna is an apt illustration of this teaching. It is beyond ordinary human understanding. For what the world thinks as good was bad in his eyes and what the world thinks as giving it happiness and peace he knew to be the cause of all misery and restlessness. His greatness is unequalled and irresistible. To bring home all these facts it is necessary to depict a few instances in his pure life. I have already told that wherever there is the play of great power there God is manifest. It may be questioned: what greatness can be found in a priest drawing a monthly salary of seven rupees which would make people regard him as a manifestation of God? It seems to be an impossibility at first sight. Though a few years back the greatness of Sri Ramakrishna was not known to the world at large, yet today there is no nation that has not heard of him and does not regard him with great reverence. What is the reason? His poverty and want of education are the two factors that exhibit his greatness. A desired object is gained by a certain means, through effort it is brought within one's control. It does not require proof, therefore, to understand that he who without any means or effort can attain a desired object, possesses great prowess. A battle can be won with the help of a big army well equipped; but if one can win a battle without proper equipment and single-handed, against a foe well equipped both as regards numbers and war materials, then we have to accept that the Lord is manifest in such a person. Nowadays to become learned people take the help of a library. The greater the number of books one has gone through, the more learned is one regarded. It will not be a mis-statement of fact if we say that Sri Ramakrishna had no book-learning whatsoever. He sometimes used to say that books (Granthas) are bondages (Granthis). For, many become egoistic by learning and get bound to this world. In his younger days he used to hear from one with whom he was acquainted and who was a great Pandit, about the unreality of the world and the reality of God, and from his talks thought that he was free from all worldly attachments. But one day when he saw this Pandit taking to the profession of a priest for the sake of a few handfuls of rice, it struck him that book-learning after all does not help one to attain true knowledge and that there must certainly be some other means to it than mere book-learning. Thus he became averse to book-learning. When he saw Pandits discussing on the unreality of things in a religious conference, he used to compare them with vultures. These rise high up in the air but all the time have their eyes on carnal pits in search of putrid carcasses; so also Pandits though they may be talking big, quoting scriptures, yet have their minds fixed on gold. Once when a disciple

of his was engaged in studying the scriptures of the Parsis, neglecting his service of the Master which would bring him infinite good, he said, "My boy, book-learning like this disturbs the mind. It is even an obstacle in the way of attaining devotion to the Lord." The disciple was brought to his senses by this chastisement of the Master.

By going through too many books, the mind gets filled with other men's thought and loses the capacity of thinking for itself. If book-learning stimulates one's thought it is good but if it destroys one's capacity for thinking, then it is to be discarded.

Sri Ramakrishna giving up book-learning began the search for that storehouse of knowledge inside his own pure mind and in no time came by such wealth of knowledge that he resolved to give freely from that inexhaustible storehouse to all men and women. The learned and the illiterate, the rich and the poor thought themselves blessed by getting knowledge from his inexhaustible storehouse.

We had learnt from the Upanishads that there are two kinds of knowledge, supreme and relative. There the knowledge of the scriptures is described as relative knowledge while the supreme knowledge is said to be the means to God-realization. But we came to know what supreme knowledge really was after we sat at the feet of the Master. It was with the help of this supreme knowledge that he was able to dispel the ignorance of both the Pandits and the ignorant. No one has seen such a phenomena anywhere else. This is a fact which goes to show that he was God incarnate.

In these days there is no chance for anyone to gain esteem without wealth. Wealth makes even a fool a Pandit. Wealth makes impossible, possible. So wealth is worshipped everywhere today. But Sri Ramakrishna came to show that wealth was the root cause of all evil. He had such a great dislike for metallic things that he could not even touch a metallic object, and his fingers would become benumbed if he touched any such object. It is because of his extreme renunciation of wealth that the wealthy regarded themselves as blessed by serving him and spending money for him. Wealth comes of its own accord to him who renounces—this fact is proved in the life of Sri Ramakrishna.

Storing for a rainy day, is a thing that is quite necessary for a man who is ever in wants, for who knows what want may arise unexpectedly. But Sri Ramakrishna could not save anything even for the next moment. On account of this non-attachment of his, other people used to store up for him. We read in the *Gitá*, "Persons who meditate on Me, without any other thought, to them thus ever jealously engaged, I carry what they lack and preserve what they already have." But we could not understand at that time the true significance of this statement. Later the divine life of Sri Ramakrishna made it quite clear to us.

In this world 'ties' alone are the causes of happiness. The worldly life gives happiness only because of the ties of love. Even a beggar ties up into a bundle his old torn and tattered rags, lest he should lose them. So ties of some kind or other help the worldly man. But Sri Ramakrishna was afraid of all kinds of ties. Such ties bind man to this worldly life and do not allow him to commune with God. They rob man of his wealth of freedom. They do not allow one's heart to expand. So he who wishes to drink deep of the honey of the lotus feet of the Lord, or he who wants to attain freedom and go about in this world without fear, enjoying great happiness, he should not

allow any ties to grow in his heart. In this way he used to look with so great a contempt on human ties that he could not even tie up any valuable thing for safety's sake. To put on a cloth he had to be tied round and so he could not dress himself, somebody else had to dress him. He was like a child of five years. Therefore the Divine Mother had appointed many servants and maids for him who felt themselves blessed by serving this great soul.

Sri Ramakrishna used to think of the Divine Mother as his real mother. Just as the child is unwilling to leave the lap of its mother, so also he was loath to leave his Mother. Day after day he used to stand before the Divine Mother and get lost in Divine bliss and he knew for certain that there was no place in this world except the feet of his Divine Mother where such great bliss could be had. That is why he liked so much to take the aspirants after bliss to the feet of the Divine Mother. In reality, so long as you cherish the idea of motherhood with respect to women do they also look after you like their child; but the moment you look upon them with lust you get a strong desire to be married. After marriage when you take a woman as your wife, the responsibility of maintenance is shifted from woman to your shoulders. Wife has to be taken care of. Till now you were living without any responsibilities and in great bliss being taken care of by others. But now having accepted the bondage of married life you are scorched by the fever of anxieties, and are carrying on your head the burden of misery and are leading a despicable life. Your forehead is wrinkled with anxieties and peace of mind has left you for ever. That is why Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "Look at the new-born calf, how it skips about in great glee as though it is born for enjoying. But the day the rope is put round its neck, from that day both its look and happiness will dwindle down gradually. Before marriage man is as happy as this calf, but when the rope of worldly ties is put round his neck, that happiness deserts him."

Freedom is the source of happiness. Freedom makes a man all-powerful. Sri Ramakrishna never lost this freedom. No ties could bind him. His heart was as wide as the infinite sky itself. That is why he could appreciate all the religions of the world. He used to say, "Never say that God is this and this. No one has yet been able to know Him as He really is nor will anyone be able to know Him fully. He is the ocean of intelligence, taking a drop from which, Siva, Suka, and Nārada became God-intoxicated. I have known Him as with form and without form and to transcend both. But what He is in reality I do not know. All the religions of the world are but different paths to Him. Follow sincerely the path laid down by the religion you are born in and you will in time reach the abode of eternal Bliss."

There was not the least trace of egoism in Sri Ramakrishna. He could not say 'I' or 'Mine'. Where people generally use the word 'mine' he used to say 'of this place' by pointing out himself with his finger, as for e.g. when he wanted to say it is not his opinion, he would say, "It is not the opinion of this place." It was because there was no ego-consciousness in him that the Cosmic Ego of the Divine Mother worked through him. The Divine Mother, the sportive Kāli, had incarnated in the form of Sri Ramakrishna to give to Her innumerable children knowledge and devotion.

I have tried to give you, readers an inkling into the personality of Sri Ramakrishna. It is not for me to

describe in full even a particle of his infinite glory. If you are eager to know the Truth, then dive deep in the ocean of the life of Sri Ramakrishna, the all-compassionate one and in time your heart will be enlightened by the Truth; you will get infinite strength; you will attain peace of mind and be blessed. *(Extract from the original in Bengali, which appeared in "Udbodhan".)*

IS SRI RAMAKRISHNA AN ORDINARY SAINT?

By Ramchandra Dutt

[Ramachandra Dutt was one of the householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. He was a medical practitioner and held a post in the Calcutta Medical College. He was an atheist but was completely transformed by the touch of the Master.]

Very many believe that the Master is no ordinary virtuous man or saint. It is the opinion of many in the field of religion that he belongs to the same class to which persons like Chaitanya, Mohammed, Jesus and others belonged. When men in different fields of religion declare him as belonging to a class different from that of ordinary saints, the matter cannot be lightly brushed aside.

Keshab Chandra Sen during his last days has said to some that the Master is an Incarnation of Chaitanya. Once Babu Rajendra Nath Mitra, the then Asst. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, asked Keshab Babu as to his view about the Master's love for God. Keshab Babu in reply said to him, "The various states of divine ecstasy are generally not seen in ordinary spiritual aspirants. Mahâbhâva or the highest state of divine ecstasy was seen in this country in Sri Chaitanya. Amongst aliens Jesus had it." Saying this he pointed out to a picture in his room and said, "Sri Ramakrishna gets this kind of ecstasy. Therefore some regard him as an Incarnation of Chaitanya."

We once went to Pandit Sivanath Sastri, a minister of the Sâdharan Brâhmo Samâj to enquire about the greatness of the Master. His words increased our devotion to the Master a thousandfold. Had we not heard him saying so, it is just possible that there would have been greater delay in our having faith in the Master. He said, "Paramahamsa Deva's instructions are to be found in some book or other. He may not be great for his teachings; then wherein lies his greatness? Who has that devotion with which he used to cry out in tears on the bank of the Ganges, 'Mother, O Mother!'? Chaitanya had this kind of devotion. He would rub his face and root out the hair of his head to have a vision of Krishna. Jesus had such devotion. He fasted for forty days. Mohammed too had such devotion. He was sitting inside a cave and when his wife approached him, he rushed out to kill her with a sword. The devotion that leads one to self-surrender, to renounce all the pleasures of the world for God, is rare indeed. Jesus said to his disciples, 'Ye are the salt of the earth.' Just as salt imparts flavour to food (or makes food savoury) so does a truly virtuous man impart strength to an ordinary person steeped in the affairs of the world by instilling into his mind the feeling of love for God. Paramahamsa Deva is one such. That country in which such great souls are born even once in four centuries, never lacks religion." One of the

devotees of the Master went to the famous Yogi, Pavhâri Baba of Ghazipur. When he heard the name of the Master he said, "He is an Avatâr (Incarnation)." Pavhâri Baba had a photograph of the Master with him. According to others the Master belonged to that class of persons who are superior to the ordinary saints and who from time to time come down with the special divine mission of bringing about a religious upheaval. So the opinion of all classes of people seem to coincide, though there is difference in words or expressions.

He was not one of those who are deemed Sâdhus or pious men. Though he practised the methods of heretofore established religions, he never restricted himself to any one. Ordinarily we find that saints are adepts in any one Sâdhanâ. For this reason, whoever became a Sâdhu or saint following the Sâdhanâ prescribed by any particular sect, made his disciples also follow the same path. The Master was not of this class. So he cannot be said to be merely a saint. He was what is meant by the term saint and he was, besides, what saints are not. He was an adept in all the various doctrines. If any one asked him the method of practising religion according to any faith, he had his desire fulfilled; nay, the Master even helped him to attain the goal through those practices if he failed in his attempt. No one has ever seen such a saint nor even heard of such a one. Has there been or is there at present such a saint in any nation or sect, as could instruct a Mohammedan in Mohammedanism, a Christian in Christianity and at the same time remain a perfect master of the different kinds of spiritual practices prescribed by the different sects in Hinduism with all their rituals. There is no doubt that the Master was an adept in all kinds of spiritual practices. Men belonging to diverse sects or religions among which there never was harmony nor any possibility of it in the future, such as Sâktas, Vaishnavas, Christians and Mohammedans, had their heart's desire fulfilled in him, and even attained their goal through his help; and that was not all, they found in him the unrivalled spiritual preceptor of their faith. History has no record of such a saint. So the question arises, what was he then? To which class did he belong? He was no ordinary saint. Is it possible for a man to attain realization through so many diverse faiths and spiritual practices—a thing which no one till now has been able to accomplish? Totâpuri attained Samâdhi after undergoing spiritual practices for forty years. The Master gained it in three days. This is no ordinary mystery. The Master himself said, "Whoever would come here with the desire of realizing God, of knowing the ultimate Reality, will have his desire fulfilled." All cannot say this except a Saviour. Ordinary perfected souls cannot take the burden of another's sins. It is only an Incarnation that can do it. (*Adapted from the writer's "Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsadever Jivanavrittanta", in Bengali.*)

SRI RAMAKRISHNA LOST IN RAPTURE IN COURSE OF A RELIGIOUS SONG AND DANCE IN THE HOUSE OF KESHAB CHANDRA SEN

SARADA DEVI, WIFE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Upadhyaya Brahmabandhava

[Bhavani Charan Banerjee, better known as Upadhyaya Brahmabandhava, was at first a staunch Brāhmo and a follower of Keshab Chandra Sen. As a speaker and leader and as Editor of the Bengali daily *Sandhyā*, he was well known. Later in life he passed from the church of the New Dispensation to the Anglican and eventually to the Roman Catholic Communion.]

Who is Ramakrishna? Well, that I do not know But this much I can say that in the firmament of Bengal no other moon of such sweetness has risen since Lord Gauranga. I have compared him with the moon; even the moon is not spotless, but this moon of Ramakrishna is absolutely free from all spots. Ah! his divine body was pure and bright like fire itself. Never was it contaminated by the slightest touch of sex. When he was married his wife was only six. Full ten years after marriage he met for the second time this lady, who was chastity personified. Sri Ramakrishna worshipped womanhood in this lady, just stepping into the prime of her youth—yes, he worshipped her, not figuratively, but literally with all the details of a Hindu image-worship—and made an offering of his holy rosary at her feet. Since this consecration, Ramakrishna shone in his fullest splendour like the full-moon with its bright halo. It is a beauty, unique in human history. Many saints and prophets there were who had renounced their wives for God; but this renunciation of Ramakrishna is no renunciation of an ordinary type, it is the height of acceptance. The light of the moon cannot live apart from the moon. Nor did this lady, the incarnation of chastity, live apart from Sri Ramakrishna. Ever since that unique worship of the lady of sixteen, she was always by the side of Ramakrishna, even like his halo. Go once and sit for a while at the blessed feet of this lady, so reverentially worshipped by her divine consort, and if you can have her grace and blessings on you, then your sanctified self will be able to understand and realise Sri Ramakrishna, you will be blessed indeed.[1]

Who is this Ramakrishna? He is one who attained the highest realization of Brahman—a stage where the realizer and the realized become one. And of this Brahman, Ramakrishna would speak: all the truths contained in the scriptures of the world have been uttered, have been expressed in words through mouth, but this Brahman or the knowledge of Brahman has not been expressed, it is inexpressible. It is like a dream of a dumb man, who feels the intensity of it, would do anything to give expression to it, but cannot.

Who is this Ramakrishna? He is the prince of Sādhakas, who through his spiritual practice, so rich with emotion and fervour, gathered round him all the peculiar spiritual attitudes of the different sects and faiths of the world, and thus demonstrated the all-comprehensiveness of his Brahman-realization. In his personality have been synthesized and unified the superconsciousness of the Yogis, the sweetness of the love of the Gopis of Brindavan, and the awe-inspiring attitude of the Sakti worshipper. He practised Islam and realiz-

[1] When this was written the Holy Mother was living.

ed its highest goal. He also realised the Christhood of Jesus. Fully established in his consciousness of the immutable Brahman and keeping intact the continuity of the Eternal Dharma of the Aryas, Sri Ramakrishna welcomed with open arms all the diversities of the spiritual life and enriched India by incorporating in it all the new spiritual forces and orientating them all to Advaita.

Sri Ramakrishna is the heroic conqueror of sex and greed, is one to whom Brahman-consciousness is as natural as breathing; he is the crest-jewel of devotees, the saviour of mankind, and the deep ocean of the grandest spiritual synthesis.

Salutations to this Ramakrishna.

(Translated from the original contributed to Sasraj, a Bengali monthly which has ceased publishing.)

PARAMAHAMSA RAMAKRISHNA

By Pratap Chandra Mazumdar

[Pratap Chandra Mazumdar was one of Keshab Chandra Sen's staunch followers. He was asked by Keshab Babu to study the Christian faith. He also represented the Brâhmo Samâj at the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893.]

My mind is still floating in the luminous atmosphere which that wonderful man diffuses around him whenever and wherever he goes. My mind is not yet disenchanted of the mysterious and indefinable pathos which he pours into it whenever he meets me. What is there in common between him and me? I, a Europeanized, civilised, self-centered, semi-sceptical so-called educated reasoner, and he, a poor, illiterate, unpolished, half-idolatrous, friendless Hindu devotee? Why should I sit long hours to attend to him, I who have listened to Disraeli and Fawcett, Stanley and Max Müller, and a whole host of European scholars and divines? I who am an ardent disciple and follower of Christ, a friend and admirer of liberal-minded Christian missionaries and preachers, a devoted adherent and worker of the rationalistic Brâhmo-Samâj—why should I be spell-bound to bear him? And it is not I only, but dozens like me who do the same. He has been interviewed and examined by many, crowds pour in to visit and talk with him. Some of our clever intellectual fools have found nothing in him, some of the contemptuous Christian missionaries would call him an impostor, or a self-deluded enthusiast. I have weighed their objections well, and what I write now, I write deliberately.

The Hindu saint is a man under forty. He is a Brâhmana by caste, he is well-formed in body naturally, but the dreadful austerities through which his character has developed appear to have disordered his system. Yet, in the midst of this emaciation, his face retains a fullness, a child-like tenderness, a profound visible humbleness, an unspeakable sweetness of expression and a smile that I have seen on no other face that I can remember. A Hindu saint is always particular about his externals. He wears the *geruа* cloth, eats according to strict forms, refuses to have intercourse with men, and is a rigid observer of caste. He is always proud and professes secret wisdom. He

is always Guruji, a universal counsellor and a dispenser of charms. This man is singularly devoid of such claims. His dress and diet do not differ from those of other men except in the general negligence he shows towards both, and as to caste, he openly breaks it every day. He most vehemently repudiates the title of Guru, or teacher, he shows impatient displeasure at any exceptional honour which people try to pay to him, and emphatically disclaims the knowledge of secrets and mysteries. He protests against being lionised, and openly shows his strong dislike to be visited and praised by the curious. The society of the worldly-minded and carnally-inclined he carefully shuns. He has nothing extraordinary about him. His religion is his only recommendation. And what is his religion? It is orthodox Hinduism, but, Hinduism of a strange type. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa (for that is the name of this saint) is the worshipper of no particular Hindu god. He is not a Saiva, he is not a Sâkta, he is not a Vaishnava, he is not a Vedântist. Yet he is *all these*. He worships Siva, he worships Kâli, he worships Râma, he worships Krishna, and is a confirmed advocate of Vedânta doctrines. He accepts all the doctrines, all the embodiments, usages, and devotional practices of every religious cult. Each in turn is infallible to him. He is an idolater, yet is a faithful and most devoted meditator of the perfections of the one formless, infinite Deity whom he terms Akhanda Sachchidânanda (Indivisible Existence-Knowledge-Bliss). His religion, unlike the religion of ordinary Hindu Sâdhus, does not mean too much dogma, or controversial proficiency, or the outward worship with flowers and sandal-wood, incense and offering. His religion means ecstasy, his worship means transcendental insight, his whole nature burns day and night with the permanent fire and fever of a strange faith and feeling. His conversation is a ceaseless breaking forth of this inward fire and lasts long hours. While his interlocutors are weary, he, though outwardly feeble, is as fresh as ever. He merges into rapturous ecstasy and outward unconsciousness often during the day, oftenest in conversation when he speaks of his favourite spiritual experiences, or hears any striking response to them. But how is it possible that he has such a fervent regard for all the Hindu deities together? What is the secret of his singular eclecticism? To him each of these deities is a force, an incarnated principle tending to reveal the supreme relation of the soul to that eternal and formless Being Who is unchangeable in His blessedness and the Light of Wisdom. . . .

He has successfully escaped the evil of carnality which he dreaded. His Mother to whom he prayed, that is the goddess Kâli, made him recognise every woman as Her incarnation, so that he now honours each member of the other sex as his mother. He bows his head to the ground before women, and before little girls; he has insisted upon worshipping not a few of them as a son might worship his mother. The purity of his thoughts and relations towards women is most unique and instructive. It is the opposite of the European idea. It is an attitude essentially, traditionally, gloriously national. Yes, a Hindu can honour woman. . . .

. . . So the other sin which he spent his life to be free from, is the love of money. The sight of money fills him with strange dread. His avoidance of women and wealth is the whole secret of his matchless moral character. For a long time he practised a singular discipline. He took in one hand a piece of gold and in the other a lump of

earth. He would then look at both, repeatedly calling the gold *earth*, and the earth *gold*, and then shuffling the contents of one hand into the other, he would keep up the process until he lost all sense of the difference between the gold and the earth. His ideal of service is absolute unworldliness and freedom from the desire of gain. . . .

Nor is his reverence confined within Hinduism. For long days he subjected himself to various disciplines to realise the Mahomedan idea of an all-powerful Allah. He let his beard grow, he fed himself on Moslem diet, he continually repeated sentences from the Koran. His reverence for Christ is deep and genuine. He bows his head at the name of Jesus, honours the doctrine of his sonship, and we believe he once or twice attended Christian places of worship. These ideas at all events show the catholic religious culture of this great Hindu saint.

Each form of worship that we have tried to indicate above is to the Paramahamsa a living and most enthusiastic principle of personal religion, and the accounts of discipline and exercise through which he has arrived at his present state of devotional eclecticism are most wonderful, although they cannot be published. He never writes anything, seldom argues, he never attempts to instruct, he is continually pouring out his soul in a rhapsody of spiritual utterances, he sings wonderfully, and makes observations of singular wisdom. He unconsciously throws a flood of marvellous light upon the obscurest passages of the Paurânic Shâstras, and brings out the fundamental principles of the popular Hindu faith with a philosophical clearness which strangely contrasts itself with his simple and illiterate life. These incarnations, he says, are but the forces (Sakti) and dispensations (Lilâ) of the eternally wise and blessed Akhanda Sachchidânanda who never can be changed or formulated, who is one endless and everlasting ocean of light, truth and joy. . .

If all his utterances could be recorded they would form a volume of strange and wonderful wisdom. If all his observations on men and things could be reproduced, people might think that the days of prophecy, of primeval, unlearned wisdom had returned. But it is most difficult to render his sayings in English.

A living evidence of the depth and sweetness of Hindu religion is this good and holy man. He has wholly controlled his flesh. It is full of soul, full of the reality of religion, full of joy, full of blessed purity. As a Siddha Hindu ascetic he is a witness of the falsehood and emptiness of the world. His testimony appears to the profoundest heart of every Hindu. He has no other thought, no other occupation, no other relation, no other friend in his humble life than his God. That God is more than sufficient for him. His spotless holiness, his deep unspeakable blessedness, his unstudied, endless wisdom, his child-like peacefulness and affection towards all men, his consuming, all-absorbing love for God are his only reward. And may he long continue to enjoy that reward! Our own ideal of religious life is different, but so long as he is spared to us, gladly shall we sit at his feet to learn from him the sublime precepts of purity, unworldliness, spirituality and inebriation in the love of God. *(Extract from the "Theistic Quarterly Review", October, 1879.)*

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

By Pandit Sivnath Sastri

[Pandit Sivnath Sastri was a minister of the Sâdharan Brâhmo Samaj.]

. . . When acting as a priest in the temple, he came in personal contact with many Hindu Sâdhus, saints and sages and mendicants, who, on their way to and from Puri or Jagannath, would visit that temple and would sometimes stay there for stated periods. The personal contact with these men brought on a revolution in Ramakrishna's life. His hunger and thirst for spiritual truth, which was naturally great, was further strengthened. As a result, he devoted himself to the religious exercises which many of them taught, and began to practise austerities that were very severe.

I recollect some of them as related by the saint. The idea that struck him most, and had an abiding influence on his mind, was to avoid as poison "Kâmini Kânchan" or woman and wealth, as the most effective way of ensuring spiritual detachment; and the means that he adopted for that purpose were also very peculiar. With a quantity of dust in one hand, for instance, and some pieces of coin in the other, he would sit by the side of the river, flowing near by, and then would compose himself into a state of meditation, trying to realize the equal nothingness of both of them, the quantity of dust, and the pieces of coin. Then he would go on repeating "dust is money, money is dust, dust is money, money is dust," and so on, till the realization of that truth was complete, when he would throw both 'money and dust' into the stream.

Similarly, his efforts to rise above the attractions of woman were also very peculiar. I need not recount all of them, which the saint related to me. Suffice it to say that ultimately his abhorrence of the touch of woman became so great that he would not permit, in after years, any woman to approach him within some feet of distance. To one approaching too near he would often bow and say "Mother! mother! stay there, please come not nearer." To my question, what were his apprehensions about the nearer approach of woman, he made the reply, that the shock would be too great for him, he would be simply overpowered and would faint away. I do not remember having ever seen any woman approaching him too near, with the result of his falling into fits, but I was personally present on occasions when pieces of coin were placed in his hand by an enquiring visitor, as an experiment, and the saint fell into his usual fits[1], and did not come back to consciousness, until the pieces of coin were removed from the hand.

Some more words about these woman-shunning exercises are needed. As a consequence of them, at the time I first saw him, Ramakrishna was living practically separated from his wife, who was living in her village home. One day finding me complaining to some friends

[1] The writer seems to class trance or Samâdhi under this category. It is made more clear from what he writes on page 82, where he says that Chaitanya and Mohamed too were subject to such fits.—*Ed., P. B.*

assembled there, about the virtual widowhood of his wife, he drew me to himself and whispered in my ears: "Why do you complain? It is no longer possible, it is all dead and gone." One day finding myself expostulating about this part of his teaching, and also declaring that our programme of work in the Brâhmo Samâj includes women, that ours is a social and domestic religion, and that we want to give education and social liberty to women, the saint got very much excited, as it was his fashion, when anything against his settled conviction was asserted in his presence, a trait we liked so much in him, and exclaimed, "Go thou fool, go and perish in the pit that your women will dig for you." Then he looked with glaring eyes at me and said—"Suppose the case of a gardener who is planting a young plant in his garden. What does he do? Does he not surround that young plant with a fence, to protect it from being eaten up by goats and cattle? And then when the young plant has grown up into a tree and it can no longer be injured by cattle, does he not remove the fence and let the tree grow freely?" I replied—"Yes, that is the custom with gardeners." Then he remarked—"Do that with regard to your spiritual life; shun women in the beginning of that life, be strong, be full-grown, then you may seek them." To which I replied—"I don't agree with you in thinking that women's work is like that of cattle, only to destroy our spiritual life; they are our associates and helpers in all our spiritual struggles and social progress," —a view with which he could not agree and he remarked his dissent by shaking his head. Then referring to the closing evening he jocularly remarked; —"It is time for you to depart; take care, don't be late, otherwise your woman would not admit you into her room." There was a hearty laughter of all present over these remarks. . . .

Added to all these there were hard regulations about diet and sleep. He fasted for days and denied himself rest during nights. One can easily imagine that these severe austerities told upon his constitution, which seems to have been naturally frail. The first result was that his health completely broke down and he became a permanent invalid. He got something like a cancer in his throat, of which, I think he finally died. The other was—he got a strange nervous disorder, under which, whenever there was any strong emotion or excitement, he would faint away, losing his consciousness, for the time being, and his whole countenance assumed a radiant glow, as a mark of the emotion working within. This kind of malady seems to be peculiar to religious persons. It is said of Chaitanya, the far-famed prophet of Bengal, that under strong emotion he would faint away, and his figure would assume such an etherial glow at the time that men would be struck with wonder and many would kiss his whole frame. It is also said of Mahomet that under deep religious emotion he would fall into a sort of trance, and that many of his utterances given out soon after such a state of trance, have been treasured up in the Koran. Cases have also been known of many saints of Christendom, both men and women, who would faint away under strong religious emotion. To us, Hindus of Bengal both in the Brâhmo Samâj and in the Vaishnava community, it is a fact of repeated experience that men and women faint away during rapturous singing of Sankirtan. What the latter get occasionally, men like Ramakrishna, Chaitanya, and Mahomet got habitually. That he had got the fits from the above mentioned austerities he

personally told me one day. Upon my expressing regret for these fits one day, as tending to further weaken his health, he said—"Yes, my friend, that will kill me. I have got it by trying to literally carry out the injunctions of the Sâdhus who visited this temple."

Then his severe austerities led to another result. It brought about mental derangement for some time. This fact is, perhaps, not generally known. But it is a fact; at least he himself told us so on one occasion. Let me describe that occasion. I was seated with him, when a number of rich men from Calcutta arrived. The saint left us in the midst of the conversation and went out of the room for some minutes. In the meantime Hriday, his nephew and care-taker, began to extol his uncle before these rich men, by narrating some of his great performances. Referring to the above mentioned period of mental derangement, he said, "So great was his love of God, that he became insensible to all outward circumstances of life, for some time, and apparently dead to all external events." Just at that moment the saint was entering the room. He had caught Hriday's last words. Upon his reappearance, he took Hriday to task, for trying to magnify his uncle before others. The saint's words I vividly remember. He said—"What a mean-spirited fellow you must be to extol me thus before these rich men. You have seen their costly apparel and their gold watches and chains, and your object is to extract from them as much money as you can for your uncle. What do I care if these men do not think highly of me?" Then turning to the rich men he said, "No my friends, what he has told you about me is not true, it was not love of God that made me absorbed and indifferent to external life; I became positively insane for some time. The Sâdhus who frequented this temple, told me to practise many things. I tried to follow them and the consequence was my austerities drove me to insanity." That voice of protest raised Ramakrishna many degrees in my estimation. In fact the impression left in my mind, by intercourse with him, was, that I had seldom come across any other man, in whom the hunger and thirst for spiritual life was so great and who had gone through so many privations and sufferings for the practice of religion. Secondly, I was convinced that he was no longer a Sâdhaka or a devotee under exercise, but was a Siddha Purusha or one who had attained direct vision of spiritual truth. The truth of which he had direct spiritual vision, and which had become a fountain of noble impulses in his soul, was Divine Motherhood. He loved to speak of God as his mother, the thought of Divine Motherhood would rouse all his emotions, and he would faint away from excess of excitement when singing of the mothers' love. Yet this conception of Motherhood stretched far beyond an idol or image into a sense of the Infinite. When he spoke or sang about the Mother, his thoughts far outstripped the limits of the four-handed goddess Kâli. One of his favourite songs was—"O Mother, dance, once commingling thy smiles and thy flute" —i.e. commingling Kâli and Krishna. He would often say, only fools make distinction between Kâli and Krishna, they are the manifestations of the same Power. . . .

On a third occasion as I was approaching the temple of Dakshineswar after a long time, I found the saint in his simple and childlike fashion trying to drive away a number of crows from the adjoining trees, with a bow and arrow in his hands. To find him in

that condition was a surprise to me. "What is that? turned an archer?" I exclaimed, whereupon he seemed to be equally surprised to find me coming after a long time and threw away the bow and arrow and ran to my bosom. So great was his delight that he fainted away from excess of emotion. Slowly I took him inside his room, laid him on his bed and waited till he came to consciousness. When able to speak again, he broached to me the proposal of accompanying him to the Zoological Gardens, whither some of his disciples had proposed to take him to see the lions. The manner in which he expressed his joy at the thought of seeing the lions, was charming in its simplicity. He repeatedly asked me, did I not like to see the lions, the celebrated riding-beasts of goddess Durgā? I smiled and said, "I have seen the lions several times." To which he replied—"Is it not a pleasure to accompany me to see them once more?" I said, "Yes, it is a great pleasure, no doubt, but, unfortunately, I have another engagement to attend to. I shall, however, accompany you down to the Sukea Street-crossing in Calcutta, and then shall send for Naren (subsequently known as Vivekananda, who was then employed as a teacher in the Metropolitan Institution) from his school and he will take you to the Zoological Gardens."

At last it was so arranged, and a carriage was brought by a young disciple, who, as far as I remember, became our fellow-passenger in the carriage. But while in the carriage, Ramakrishna insisted upon sitting on my left-hand side on the seat. I could not at first understand his meaning. But as the carriage started he covered his head in the fashion of young married women of Bengal. I asked for the reason of his so doing. He said, "Don't you see I am a woman for the time being. I am travelling with my lover." Saying this he threw his arm around my waist and began to make a sort of dancing movement, seated as he was, as a mark of his great pleasure. At this point there came on his fit or trance, and then I witnessed a scene that I shall never forget. His whole countenance was aglow with a strange spiritual light, and before he became fully unconscious, he began to pray with incoherent words, in the following fashion—"O Mother, my beloved Mother, do not make me unconscious. O Mother, I am going to see the lions in the Zoological Gardens. O Mother, I may have a fall from the carriage. Do, do let me be all right till the journey is finished." At this point he became thoroughly unconscious, leaning on my arm for some minutes. After consciousness had returned he once more began conversation in his usual childlike and simple manner, till we reached the Sukea Street crossing and Naren was sent for. He came at once, as far as I remember, and took my place in the carriage and took his master to the Gardens. . . .

During the last few years of the saint's life, my visits became less frequent than they were before. Two causes contributed to produce that result. First, latterly, through his childlike simplicity he was drawn away by some of his new disciples, into encouraging by his visits and friendship, many objectionable characters such as the actors of the Indian theatres. I did not like to be associated with such men.

Secondly, during his last days, some of his new disciples began to preach him as God Almighty. I was afraid my meeting with such men would give rise to unpleasant discussions. So I kept away. At last when the news of his fast declining health was brought to me one day, I left all work and went

to Dakshineswar. I found him very low. That was before his final removal to a more commodious house on the riverside for treatment. Ramakrishna took me to task for neglecting him. I pleaded guilty to the charge and made a clean breast of it by letting him know the exact causes. I smiled and said,—"As there are many editions of a book, so there have been many editions of God Almighty and your disciples are about to make you a new one." He too smiled and said—"Just fancy, God Almighty dying of a cancer in the throat. What great fools these fellows must be!"

That was my last interview with him, after which he was removed from Dakshineswar, was placed under the treatment of the most distinguished physicians of the town, and was devotedly nursed by his disciples; but nothing could stay the progress of his disease and he passed away, leaving behind him a memory that is now spiritually feeding hundreds of earnest souls. My acquaintance with him, though short, was fruitful by strengthening many a spiritual thought in me. I owe him a debt of gratitude for the sincere affection he bore towards me. He was certainly one of the most remarkable personalities I have come across in life.—(*From the writer's book, "Men I have seen", published by the Modern Review Office, 1919*).

RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

By Girish Chandra Sen

[Girish Chandra Sen was a staunch follower of Keshab Chandra Sen. He was known as the 'Maulvi' of the New Dispensation Church for on him had fallen the duty of studying Islam.]

The Panchavati grove on the bank of the Ganges in the Dakshineswar temple is the place of his Tapasyâ. For eight years through austere Tapasyâ, fasting, and sleepless nights he had reduced his body to a skeleton. He did not practise Sadhanâ according to the prescribed rules of the Yoga Shastra etc. Being led by intense hankering for God-realization he had adopted various methods and practices for controlling the passions, for getting Vairâgya, for the purification of the mind, and for the vision of God. . . . Recently a friend had asked him, "What is the way to God-realization?" He had replied, "Intense desire is the only way. Without His grace this intense desire does not arise. Once I had experienced such an intense desire."

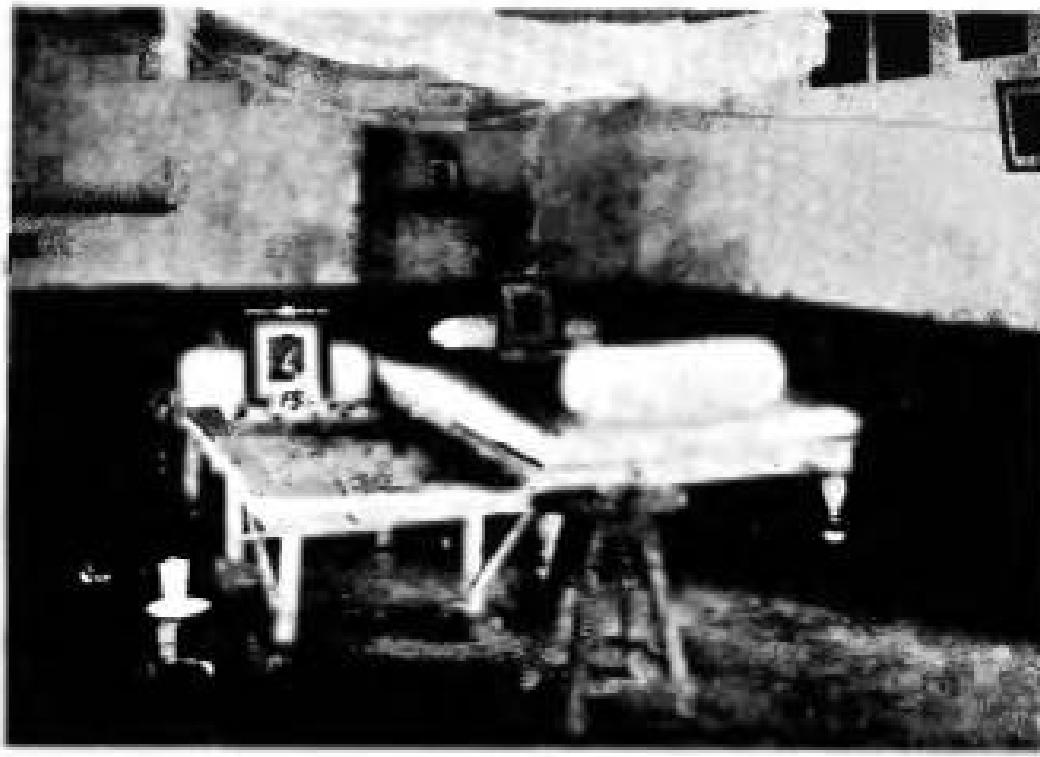
From the very beginning he was deadly against lust and gold knowing them to be the two great obstacles to God-realization, and by hard austerities had attained complete control over these two. To get rid of lust he had worshipped Bhairavi. He used to salute any woman he would come across and would see the presence of the Divine Mother in her. When he was married his wife was seven years old. He came to Calcutta when she was nine years old. In this life he never had bodily or worldly relations with his wife. After many years, it is true that he allowed her to live near him but he did not have any worldly rela-

tions with her, he had full control over his senses. During his period of Sathhanâ, Ramakrishna used to throw coins into the Ganges saying, "Money is earth, earth is money.". . . . Later it came to such a pass that if he touched a coin his hands would get cramped. He gave no thought to his daily needs, he never put by anything for the future. He was extremely dispassionate towards the world and had no faith in the worldly-minded people. He never cared for the wealthy, the learned, Pandits or anybody else. He used to talk to them straight and sometimes would speak to them rather unpleasant truths. On account of that many such people were displeased with him. . . .

He used to get overwhelmed and mad with deep devotion talking of profound spiritual truths, about God-vision, Yoga, and Bhakti or singing the Lord's name,—would be rapt in Samâdhi and stand still like an inert image, and he would laugh and cry and behave like a child or like one drunk. At such moments by giving out great spiritual truths he has made his hearers wonder at it. Really by seeing his divine ecstasies one was spiritually benefitted, the scepticism of the sceptics and the wickedness of the sinful was wiped off. What a great number of drunkards, licentious men and atheists have been reclaimed by seeing his ecstasies, his extreme devotion, and divine life. . . . He had such a sweet nature, his words were so sweet that even a person experiencing extreme miseries would forget everything within a few moments after his coming to him. One would get great solace by seeing his smiling face, his childlike simplicity, his devotion for the Mother's name, and his absorption in Samâdhi. Often the very talk of God used to send him into Samâdhi. In that state the eye lids would get steady, tears of ecstasy would flow from both the eyes, the face would get lighted by a sweet smile and all outward consciousness would be lost,—the whole body would become rigid and motionless like a statue, and he would come to normal state only after the chanting of 'Om' continuously in a loud tone in his ears. He was beyond all social etiquette. Sometimes he used slang expressions but there was not the least trace of impurity in his mind. He always talked of God and religion and never indulged in worldly talks. His conversations revealed great wit and presence of mind. His chosen deity was a mixture of God with form and without form. Uttering the word Kâli or Mother he would become god-intoxicated and tears of ecstasy would roll down his cheeks. Being asked, he had replied, "I do not worship Kâli made of straw and earth (image), my Mother is a Conscious Principle, she is the essence of Satchidânanda—Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. That which is infinite and deep is always dark-coloured, the extensive sky is dark-coloured and so is the deep sea. My Kâli is infinite, all-pervading Consciousness Itself." He did not worship the image. One day when he was going along a road, seeing a man strike at a tree with his axe he burst into tears and said, "My Mother is present in this tree, the axe is striking against Her." He was equally a Vaishnava, a Sâkta and a Vedântin. Yoga and Bhakti were wonderfully harmonized in him. Like Chaitanya he would dance beautifully, keeping time, being overwhelmed with divine intoxication. At that time in the height of ecstasy he would often become stark naked. Again he would be lost in deep Samâdhi motionless and unconscious of the external world. Childlike simplicity, devotion, and knowledge were all seen in him. From the very beginning of his spiritual life there was

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S PARENTAL HOME AT KAMARPUKUR

A CORNER OF THE COURTYARD OF THE DAKSHINESWAR TEMPLE,
WITH THE TEMPLE OF KALI IN THE MIDDLE



SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S ROOM, DAKSHINESWAR

THE COSSIPORE GARDEN HOUSE WHERE SRI RAMAKRISHNA LIVED DURING HIS LAST DAYS

seen in him the manifestation of the harmony of religions and the forecast of the New Dispensation. But for such catholicity could he have taken prohibited food and repeated the name of Allah? In his room along with the pictures of Chaitanya, Nityánanda and others, he had a picture of Jesus also hanging on the walls[1], . . .

It was in the month of March 1875, that Paramahamsa Deva arrived with his nephew Hriday at about 8 or 9 A.M. at the Belgharia garden-house of Babu Joy Gopal Sen. At that time Áchárya Keshab Chandra Sen was practising devotion (Sadhaná) at that place with the ministers. He was cooking his food under a tree and taking it in the open and was observing special austere rules and regulations for attaining self-control and Vairágya. Paramahamsa Deva had first gone to Áchárya's house at Colootolah to meet him. Hearing at that place that he was practising devotion at the above said garden-house, the Paramahamsa had come there. Just at that time Áchárya Deva (Keshab) with his friends was sitting on the *ghat* of the tank in the garden, preparing himself to have a bath. Meanwhile Ramakrishna arrived there in a rickety hackney carriage. At first Hriday got down from the carriage and approaching Áchárya Deva said to him, "My uncle likes to hear about God, he gets into Samádhi due to intense divine intoxication (Mahábhába). He has come to hear from you about God." Saying this he helped Paramahamsa Deva to get down from the carriage and brought him to us. At that time Paramahamsa Deva was wearing only a single piece of red bordered cloth. He had neither a coat nor an upper cloth to cover his body. One end of the cloth he was wearing, he had put on his shoulders. He was looking weak and emaciated. Seeing him the ministers took him for an ordinary man. Coming near, he said, "I hear you have been having God-visions, I would like to know the nature of such visions." Thus the religious conversation began. After that the Paramahamsa sang a song of Rámprasád and in the course of singing he entered into Samádhi. No one took this Samádhi at the time for a high state of spiritual consciousness, they took it to be a kind of feigning. Soon after this, Hriday began to chant in a loud tone 'Om' 'Om' and requested others also to chant it. As requested, all those present also began to chant the sacred mystic syllable. After some time the Paramahamsa came round to some extent and smiled. After that he began to give out deep spiritual truths like one inspired. Hearing them the ministers became wonder-struck. They now realized that Ramakrishna was a divine person and not an ordinary man. Getting his company all were charmed that day and they forgot all about their bath and prayers. It was late that day when they finished their bath etc. . . . A Sádhu can at once recognize a Sádhu. Seeing the Paramahamsa, Áchárya was charmed and the Paramahamsa also became much attached to him. From that day both became deeply united in spirit. Sometimes Áchárya Deva used to go with his followers to the Paramahamsa at Dakshineswar and the Paramahamsa too used to come to Áchárya's house with Hriday. On such occasions the neighbours and relations of our Áchárya used to come to his house, to have a look at the Paramahamsa and there used to be a big congregation. For 5 to 7 hours what a continuous current of bliss and ecstasy in spiritual talks there used to be! Every year after the annual celebra-

[1] Italics are ours.—*Ed. P. B.*

tions of the New Dispensation, Achârya Deva used to go with the Brâhmos to Paramahamsa Deva either by steamer or by boat. Sometimes he would go to his Belgharia Tapovan and send a carriage to get the Paramahamsa. To have spiritual talks and merry making with him was regarded as a part of the celebrations. Our Achârya Deva's life was very much influenced by the Paramahamsa and the Paramahamsa's by our Achârya Deva. It was due to the influence of the Paramahamsa's life that the Motherhood of God was kindled to a great extent in the Brâhmo Samâj. Achârya Deva learnt from him to a greater extent to address God with the sweet appellation of Mother like a simple child, to pray to Her and crave indulgences like a child. In spite of the devotional aspect in it, the Brâhmo religion was more a religion of faith and rationalism. Due to the influence of Paramahamsa's life it became sweet to a great extent. The Paramahamsa also through the help of Achârya's life advanced more towards the formless God, acquired catholicity in religion,[1] and also learnt to some extent the etiquette of social life.

When both Keshab with his party and Paramahamsa used to exchange visits frequently and Keshab began to write in the public press and publish the higher ideals and character of Paramahamsa in books and also in the *Dharmatattwa* and *Indian Mirror* and his sayings were published in a booklet named *Paramahamser ukti*, from then he came to be known everywhere. The Brâhmos used to go to him to learn and get his instructions. Besides the Brâhmos, men and women of other classes also used to go to him in numbers. To give a new religion or preach a new truth or to form a new sect was not the aim of his life. If anybody asked him for instructions he would say, "For that he"; meaning Keshab. But afterwards he gave instructions to many regarding spiritual practice. Many well-educated young men became his devoted disciples. . . .

The Paramahamsa had extraordinary insight into the nature of persons. Seeing the face of a man or after hearing a few words from him he could at once find out what kind of a person he was. Ramakrishna once said, "Many years back I had been on one Wednesday to the Brâhmo Samâj at Jorasanko. I saw at that time young Keshab in the pulpit conducting the service, and hundreds of worshippers sitting on either side of him. I looked intently and saw that Keshab's mind was absorbed in the Brahman, his float had sunk. From that day my mind became attached to him. The rest in the congregation I found were, as it were, sitting with weapons. Seeing their faces I found that in their mind the attachment for the world, egotism, and passions were very strong." From that very day Paramahamsa Deva had loved Achârya Deva. But Achârya Deva did not know him. Many years afterwards at Belgharia they came to know each other intimately on an auspicious moment. There was a great necessity for the Brâhmos at the time to have a contact with him. We have to accept it as the work of Providence. Though we cannot accept Paramahamsa's faith in *toto*—we know that certain principles of his are not approv-

[1] Sri Ramakrishna had realised the Brahman, the Impersonal God as early as 1866 under Totapuri and for six months he was constantly in that state. This was nearly ten years before he met Keshab Chandra Sen. He had also realized before he met Keshab, the Mussulman and Christian ideal of Godhead both of which, especially the former is defined as formless but with attributes. As regards catholicity we refer to writer's own remarks on page 86, the italicized portions.—*Ed. P. B.*

ed by the Brâhmo religion—yet we cannot have the least doubt that the exalted life of this great soul in whom Yoga and Bhakti were predominant, was utilized by Providence for the betterment of the New Dispensation. Keshab, greatly religious, learned, and of world-wide fame, used to sit by the side of this illiterate Paramahamsa like a disciple, like a younger brother, in all humility and hear his teachings with reverence (Shraddhâ) and appreciation. He never used to argue with him. He would assimilate well and adopt in his own life all the valuable things in the Paramahamsa. Keshab Chandra has shown to us how we are to respect Sâdhus and imbibe their saintliness. Many a time before going to the Paramahamsa, he had started out with his mind well prepared by prayers at the time of service in the church for granting respect to Sâdhus.

Paramahamsa Deva had once been to see Âchâryn Deva during his last days when he was ailing from a fatal disease. At that time they had deep spiritual talks. One afternoon Paramahamsa Deva had been to the Brâhmo Mandir with a minister. Entering the Mandir he said, "Nearly three hundred people congregate here to worship God without form, and take His name!" Saying this he was overwhelmed with ecstasy. He never joined any service, for how could he do so, even before the service began he was in ecstasy.

Hearing of the passing away of Âchârya Deva, the Paramahamsa became overwhelmed with grief. He said, "The death of Keshab has taken half my own life away. He was like a great banyan tree, giving comfort and shelter to thousands of people. Where can you get another such tree? We are like the beetle-nut and palm trees incapable of sheltering a single soul."

. . . The Paramahamsa's humility was marvellous. As soon as he met anybody he would salute him before the other could do so. He never liked that his teachings be published, that any publicity be given about him in the papers or he be photographed. Except when he was in a state of Samâdhi and lost to all outward consciousness, it was not possible to take a photo of his. In a state of Samâdhi he never fell on the ground unconscious, nor did he prove a nuisance to people standing by his side by leaping or jumping. Sitting or standing he would become steady and motionless. Such a great soul is a living example of Divine grace. He is a beacon light of hope to souls whose life-boats are almost sinking in the ocean of relative existence covered with the darkness (of ignorance) and so difficult to cross. We have read about great souls like Chaitanya and others in books, but we have been blessed by seeing this life with our own eyes. Ramakrishna never cared for the present-day civilization, he never used to go to any meetings, nor did he give any lectures, or had any connection with books or newspapers. He has shown to the world how one is to attain a high spiritual life by dint of one's earnestness alone, without any help from anyone, through mere Divine grace, Divine help, and spiritual practices. Just as the swan rejects the water and takes only the cream, so the Paramahamsa took only the essence in Hinduism rejecting what all was useless in it. . . .—*(Adapted from the writer's booklet "Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamser Ukti and Sankshiptha Jivani" in Bengali, Fourth Edition.)*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

By Trailokyanath Sanyal

[Trailokyanath Sanyal was a staunch follower of Keshub Chandra Sen and was known as the singing Apostle of the New Dispensation Church. He is famous for his devotional compositions and is the author of *Keshab Charit*, Life of Keshab in Bengali from which this extract is taken.]

Here it becomes necessary to say a few words about Keshub's relationship with Paramahamsa Ramakrishna. He first knew this Mahâtmâ at the garden-house at Belgharia. At the very first sight they became deeply attached to each other. Sâdhus alone bring to light Sâdhus who are forgotten or are unknown to the world. Just as Keshub Chandra in these days has introduced Jesus, Moses, Chaitanya, Buddha, Socrates and Mohammed to the modern educated spiritual aspirants and created in them a respect for Sâdhus, so also he has made known the Paramahamsa to young Bengal. The Brâhmo Samâj has gained much in its devotional aspect due to the exchange of religious ideas between these two great souls. We have already told that Keshub assimilated whatever good there was in anybody. His was not an exact imitation, but he used to give a new form to whatever he learnt from others. What he learnt he could develop tenfold. Paramahamsa's gentleness, sweet child-like faith and devotion influenced Keshub's Yoga, Vairâgya, ethics, devotion and pure religious sense. The manifestation of the devotional aspect and the ideal of the Motherhood of God which is seen nowadays in Brâhmo Samâj is mainly due to Paramahamsa Ramakrishna. Just as he talks like a child with his Blissful Mother and sings and dances in ecstasy at the singing of the Lord's name, exactly in this way had Keshub behaved in his last days. Many know that the worship of God as the Mother and the use of easy and colloquial language in worship and prayer which Keshub adopted of late, was the result of his coming in contact with this great soul. But how many except Keshub were able to assimilate these ideas? Everybody had shared this devotion but no one has been able to assimilate it like Keshub. Again Keshub's influence has refined Sri Ramakrishna's crude views about religion in some respects. He did not recognize free-will or the possibility of householders acquiring devotion and dispassionateness (Vairâgya). If the talk of preaching arose he would say, "For all that he", meaning thereby that Keshub is meant for that. Sri Ramakrishna says, "Many years back I had once been to Âdi Brâhmo Samâj. There I saw everyone sitting silent with his eyes closed. But it appeared to me that internally they were all militant. Seeing Keshub I found that his float had sunk." He meant that the fish was nibbling at Keshub's bait.[1] He had also heard from his Divine Mother that Her work will be done by this person. At present the Paramahamsa is helping the cause of the Brâhmo Samâj in a non-sectarian spirit. The religious world has gained much in many ways by the contact of these two great souls. All those sweet religious ideals to be found in the various sects and sub-sects of

[1] He was very near God-realization.—Ed. P. B.

Hinduism have found a place in the Brâhmo Samâj through the followers of the New Dispensation. What was at one time a very dry puritanic religion, has thus become much simple and sweet. What an ocean of difference between the dry discussions on Vedântic knowledge and talking with the Divine Mother like a child. The use of the colloquial language in worship and prayer began from that day. *(From the writer's "Life of Keshub Chandra Sen" (In Bengali) under the pen-name, Chiranjivi Sarma—1st Edition, Pp. 132, 133.)*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

By Sevak Priyanath Mallik

[Rev. Bhai Priyanath Mallik is a staunch follower of Keshub Chandra Sen and at present a minister of the New Dispensation Church.]

I have had the blessed privilege of seeing Sri Ramakrishna in the flesh and of coming in contact with him. I prayed, sang and danced with him. I cannot now recall the exact date when I first saw him. So far as I remember, I was present at four or five meetings between Keshub and Ramakrishna during the years 1880 and 1883. I had occasions to visit him at other times with my young friends.

Whenever I happened to come to him, he would notice me first, and before I would nod to him, he would nod to me. He conversed and chatted with us, and spoke in parables. He explained religious truths by means of simple and homely illustrations. He used to relate the stories of his Sâdhanâs, how he was driven by the "storm of earnestness" and how he sought the company of Sâdhakas of different cults.

In relating the story of his first sight of Sri Keshub at the Adi Brahmo Samaj, he said, "I did not know *Keshub Babu* then. I saw three Âchâryas seated on the Vedi. The middle one struck me as "the one the float of whose fishing line had sunk". He meant by this that Keshub's soul was immersed in God. Since then he hankered after making Keshub's acquaintance. He was mad to see Keshub. In 1875 he went to Keshub's house at Colootola, and not finding him at home went to the Belghoria Garden where Keshub was then engaged in Sâdhanâ (spiritual culture), with his friends. This garden was named by Keshub, *Tapovana*. Although I was not present on the occasion, I heard the story from the elders who were present there. From this first meeting the hearts of both were drawn and wedded together, as it were, in a spiritual union. Ramakrishna Deva came once or twice to the Bhâratvarshiya Brahma Mandir to attend Keshub's Divine Services. He also came to witness the performance of the religious drama, *Navabrindaban*. He fell into a trance on these occasions.

When Keshub went with all of us by steamer to Dakshineshwar, Ramakrishna on meeting Keshub embraced him and fell into a trance. Again and again he repeated, "Thou art Shyâm and I Râdhâ. I am Râdhâ and Thou art Shyâm" Afterwards they both danced clasping each other's hands, singing,

"The Mother is ours and we are Mother's."

It was a heavenly scene. On another occasion Ramakrishna came to Keshub's house, the "Lily Cottage". His first words were, "Babu, I shall take no food at your house. The *shalas* (fellows) say I have broken my caste by taking food at your place." Then chatting, singing and dancing went on for some time. At such meetings Ramakrishna almost monopolised the conversation. Keshub Chunder hardly said anything. He only expressed his appreciation by smiles and nods. In the midst of the meeting when a tray of fruits and sweetmeats was brought, Ramakrishna exclaimed, as one intoxicated, "No, I shall not eat anything." But after a moment he said stammeringly, "I would take only two *Jilapis*, for *Jilapis* are like the Governor's *landau*, for which the roads are cleared of all traffic." Sitting down to take the sweets he looked this side and that, and asked them not to tell anyone that he was taking food at Keshub Babu's house. But having finished the sweets he shouted out, "Go, *shalas*, go and publish it to all the people that I have taken food at Keshub Babu's, and have lost my caste!" So saying he stood up singing a song of Krishna Jâtra, "*Amâr Jatigiyeche*"—I have lost my caste. He came to see Keshub during his last illness, but I was not there at that time.

On the passing away of Keshub he cried like a little child when he saw Keshub's mother, and said, "Mother, fourteen generations will dance carrying on their heads your entrails," meaning her son, Keshub.

Ramakrishna was a veritable child, a guileless, saintly soul,—one intoxicated with the spirit of God. Narendra was a close friend of mine. We had a Prayer Meeting at No. 1, Nando Kumar Choudhuri Lane, Calcutta, where Babu Rajmohan Bose lived. I used to conduct service and Naren was our hymn singer. One evening while we were having Divine Service, Ramakrishna Deva came with his disciple, Rama Chandra Dutt. I did not know that he was there. After the service he began a sweet Sankirtan; I at once recognised him, and we had an enjoyable spiritual feast. He addressed me as "Âchârya" and asked me to come to him more often. He particularly requested Naren to go. He said, "I am deeply impressed with your hymn-singing, do come to me."

Naren had not been to Paramahamsa Deva before. He rather blamed us for going, as he said, to a "*bhanda* (hypocrite) *Brâhmin*." This I am sure was the first meeting of Ramakrishna and his renowned disciple Vivekananda.

After the service, Babu Rajmohan's daughter, who afterwards became my wife, served Paramahamsa Deva with sweets. He said, "Ma Bhagavati, how could you know I was hungry? Take some, first." After she had taken, he ate.

When Ramakrishna Deva was on his death-bed and was suffering from cancer, some of our friends nursed him along with his disciples. One day I came to attend him. Only about a week before his departure, he called me to his side, and said, "Are you not that Âchârya? Sit down by me, the *shalas* say, I am God. Ask them, can God die of a sore in the throat?"

This was Ramkrishna's last injunction to me; and I am therefore, emboldened to beseech all who worship him as God, to give unto him what is actually his due and not to deify him falsifying his words.

He was an idol-worshipper in his early life, but he was lifted out of the grossness of idol worship, to see with

a clear vision the spirit-God. He said to me that whenever he came to Keshub his "*fourteen* spans Kâli was dissolved into the formless Mother-God." Once he said addressing the idol, "It is thou, O *shali*, that hid from me my true Mother."

Thus I believe that it was to show the way how to grow out of idol-worship to spirit-worship that Ramkrishna was sent by God.

Keshub loved and honoured Ramkrishna as a really God-intoxicated Bhakta of the Hindu School of Culture and a "forsaker of woman and gold."

Ramakrishna Deva looked upon Keshub as a veritable Janaka Rishi. He said, "Keshub is a steamboat dragging along in its train many cargo boats; while I am only a small bit of banana bark, I sink down if any one sits on me"; "Keshub is a banyan tree giving shelter and shade to many; while I am only a slender palm tree." He had a strong aversion to forming a sect.

Ramakrishna strongly discouraged anything like a false show of piety, any unreality such as the wearing of *gairic*[1] and vehemently denounced Kâmini and Kânchan. He forsook his wife, and did not touch coins.

The last rites of Paramahamsa Deva were performed by our friends and his disciples. I was one of the party headed by Bhai Amritalal Bose, who carried the sacred ashes of the Saint in a procession to Rama Dutt's garden "Yogodyan" at Kankurgachi.[1] The ashes were there interred by Bhai Amritalal with prayers according to the "New Samhitâ". Some portion of the sacred ashes is still preserved in my Brahmânandaasram, Bagnan, Howrah.

Let us pray with our ancient Rishis, on this occasion of his birth centenary:—

"Thy blessed soul that hath soared
away to unknown regions,
We pray may return and live again
among us."

May he be reborn in our humble cot of this life!

[1] Readers are likely to get confused reading this. We refer them for more detailed information to *The Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, published by Advaita Ashrama, Third Edition, p. 678.—*Ed., P. B.*

REVERED RAMAKRISHA PARAMAHAMSA

By Bhudas Chatterjee

[Bhuder Chatterjee originally belonged to the New Dispensation Church, but later he reverted to orthodox Hinduism. He is a disciple of Sasadhar Tarkachudamani who is well known as a revivalist in the orthodox section of the Hindu Society. Those who have read the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, by M. might be familiar with this personage. This article is of interest inasmuch as it gives us how the conservative section of the Hindu society looked upon the Master.]

Oh, if the number of devotees, like the great soul whose life we are going to write today, were on the increase day by day, then would the fate of this blessed land of ours be what it is today? Never. People have understood Ramakrishna very little. Having got him they have lost him. Ramakrishna never studied the Bhakti Sutras nor did he discuss the philosophy of Bhakti threadbare. As regards the knowledge of language he was absolute-

ly ignorant. Yet it is very doubtful whether such a great devotee has ever been born since the days of Lord Gauranga. If we consider the disinterested love for God which he has shown in his life, we cannot in any way make ourselves bold to say that he is a man. Even he who has seen Ramakrishna, the incarnation of Love, but once, whatever be his religion, has been struck dumb by his superhuman personality. . . .

At the northern end of the Dakshineswar Kâli Temple on the banks of the Ganges there is a small room. In this room Paramahamsa Deva always used to live and do his work. To the north of the room, at a little distance, there is a big banyan tree. Under this Paramahamsa Deva used to have his spiritual practices. Here underneath the tree he practised various Sâdhanâs. We have heard that there was not a single Sâdhanâ that he had not practised in his own life, be it according to the Vedas, Purânas, Tantras, Koran, Bible or any other scripture. But what is more wonderful is, that whenever he desired to practise the Sâdhanâ prescribed by a particular faith or sect, some great soul who had attained perfection by that path would come to him and initiate him into the mysteries of that path. And Ramakrishna too, being thus instructed and by the intensity of his practice, used to attain the goal within three days. Everyone in the religious world knows about the great Sâdhu, Totapuri. Ramakrishna being initiated into Sannyâs by him got instruction from him as regards the attainment of Nirvikalpa Samâdhi. We have heard that within three days he was able to attain the state of Nirvikalpa Samâdhi, the goal of all Sâdhakas. It is said that Totapuri at this time gave him the name 'Paramahamsa'. . . .

After going round on a pilgrimage to various holy places, he returned back to his own place of Sâdhanâ at Dakshineswar. After that he used to live always at Dakshineswar. Occasionally he used to go out, being invited by devotees. Sambu Charan Mallik of Sindhuriapatti, Calcutta, used to look upon Ramakrishna as a divine person and take him often to his house and serve him with great devotion (Sraddhâ). Wherever he came to his house, there used to be a great congregation of people to see him. Persons actuated by various motives used to come and see him. As soon as anybody came to Paramahamsa Deva, he would salute the visitor bending his head low to the ground, irrespective of the caste or class to which he might belong. One day he met a Pandit named Vaishnava Charan. As soon as he saw the Pandit, Ramakrishna in a state of ecstasy mounted his shoulders. The spectators were surprised at this strange act of his. But Vaishnava Charan seeing the height of ecstasy (Mahâbhâva) in Ramakrishna, began to sing hymns in praise of him, with great devotion. News about his divine ecstasies spread all round and there were very few Sâdhus or Sannyâsins that had not heard of Ramakrishna. We were very much surprised to hear great praise about Ramakrishna from a Brahmachârin at Hardwar. We used to visit Ramakrishna before that but we were not much attracted by him. But returning from Hardwar our respect for him increased a hundredfold. Since then we used to go to him frequently and hear from his lips his nectar-like words of advice and get dumbfounded at his ever new ecstasies at frequent intervals. At this time we used to see his room full with visitors of different faiths. There is no knowing how many were the people of different faiths, Christians, Mussal-

mans, Buddhist, Brâhmos, Jains and followers of many more sects, not to speak of Hindus, that used to come to him and bow low at his feet. We have seen even Keshab Chandra Sen the promulgator of the New Dispensation sitting at his feet with great devotion. Having come in contact with Ramakrishna there was a revolution in his heart. The New Dispensation came into existence as a result of that change in him. Whatever his followers might say, it is our faith, that if Keshab Babu had lived today, his courageous heart would not have hesitated to declare the truth. We were intimately known to Keshab Babu. We had on many occasions discussed with him about Sri Ramakrishna. From what we have gathered from such discussions, it is our confirmed faith that Keshab Babu used to regard Paramahamsa Deva even more than a Guru.

We think Paramahamsa Deva began his ministry from 1879. Before this he had come to know Keshab Babu. He had one great good quality: If he heard of any person as being a great soul, he would go soliciting his acquaintance without being invited, and thus get acquainted with him. Having heard from persons about Keshab's various noble qualities, he one day all on a sudden visited him. At the very first visit he was able to attract the heart of Keshab Babu. Even the promulgator of a new faith like Keshab was charmed by his simple yet profound teachings. And afterwards it was Keshab Babu that became the chief helper in his preaching work and gradually extended the sphere of his activity. He began to visit various religious associations of different sects being invited by them and charmed one and all by his teachings full of devotion. He used to mix with the followers of all faiths equally. The Brâhmos used to bow low before him with great respect regarding him as a great Brahmajnâni; the Vaishnavas showed him great Shraddhâ seeing in him the best of Vaishnavas: the Sâktas would pay great respect to him thinking that he was a worshipper of the Divine Mother alone, and the Vedântins used to praise him profusely as a Sâdhaka of the mystic syllable 'Om'. Thus, followers of every sect included him in their group and regarded him with Shraddhâ and devotion. All the true signs of a perfected soul were seen in him. He never hated any sect or faith. He used to say that just as *aqua*, water, *pôni*, *jal*, all refer to the same thing, water, so also if we address God by the names God, Allah, Ishwar, etc., we will nevertheless be addressing the same God. But just as the mere uttering of the word water without drinking it, will not satisfy our thirst, so also unless we see God inside as well as outside and call on Him with great devotion, the mere repetition of the words God, God, would result in nothing.

There was beauty and sweetness in his teachings. Through parables he would make people understand easily profound truths which are so hard to realize through different philosophies. Amidst hundreds of people he would give one or two teachings as would dispel the doubts of all those present. Even confirmed atheists used to realize the truth due to their association with him. People began to pour in and being charmed with his teachings became his disciples. Even the worst sinners and confirmed atheists began to come to him and surrender themselves to him. He used to love them and cheer them up with words of hopes. Amongst such we know there were some for whom there was nothing in the world that was sinful. What was not expected even of brutes, they used to

do without the least pangs of conscience. Even such great sinners, getting his shelter, have completely changed their life. Now it is difficult to recognize them. That is why we say, is it possible for man to accomplish all this? . . . .

So long as he was in good health he used to come now and then according to his sweet pleasure to Achārya Deva[1] and both used to be rapt in the bliss of devotion and thus enjoy great happiness. Achārya Deva also now and then used to visit him and think himself blessed by seeing him. He used to say, "In this age such a great devotee is very rare indeed." Sometimes he would say, "People have not been able to recognize the greatness of this man. It is not possible also for them. Without being able to realize his greatness and by contrary behaviour towards him, they are doing great wrong to him." One day returning from Paramahamsa Deva he heaved a deep sigh and said, "Seeing Paramahamsa's rare spiritual attainments, my heart is full of bliss that such great souls take birth even now in this country." . . . .

When the devotees of the Lord come into this world for the purpose of preaching religion, then the Lord intentionally, as it were, surrounds them with powerful enemies to test them and thus exhibit ever new phases in His play. The lives of Dhruva, Prahlad, Sankara, Chaitanya and other prophets are examples to this point. Thus, as we find from history that whoever was great had enemies, it seems to us that to have a good number of enemies is a sign of greatness. It is the enemies that spread the greatness of the great, make them fit by making them pass through great ordeals and bring out their hidden greatness. . . . Paramahamsa Deva also had his enemies. As his fame spread, the number of his enemies also began to increase. To disgrace him, many people began to bring all sorts of censures and charges against him and thus tried to prove that he was a man of despicable character. The first charge against him is that he was after fame. The second charge is that being prompted by this desire for fame, he used to mix intimately with the various religious sects and often even used to express religious views in keeping with their faith, just to please them. The third charge against him is that by admitting worst characters to him and thus coming under their influence, he has done great harm to his self. The fourth charge is that though he was a Paramahamsa yet there was no end to his likes and dislikes.

We shall now examine whether these are really charges against him. We have to judge the motive of a man through his actions or endeavours. Therefore to judge whether Paramahamsa Deva was after name and fame or not, we have to scrutinize his actions. But we do not see any purposive action in his life. He had no work in life except that of self-culture. It is true, however, that now and then, being requested by sincere devotees he used to go to their houses and through Kirtan etc. preach broadcast priceless truths. If such be the reason for regarding him as desirous of fame, then such a thing is a thousand times desirable.

As regards the second charge we have only this much to ask, did he of his own accord seek to have intimacy with any particular sect or did he merely fulfil their desire when they came to him and sought his intimacy? He

[1] Pandit Sashadar Tarkachoodāmani.

regarded all faiths as the Lord's faiths. The aim of all religions in this world is to realize God. If the goal is the same, we can say only this much with regard to their differences, that through some the Lord is attained quickly and through others it takes a longer time. But this much is certain, that in the end all men reach the same goal. This is the faith and religion of the Hindu. The Hindu says that where there is sincere devotion, there you have the manifestation of the truth to some extent at least. Truth is common to all religions. As Paramahamsa Deva preached true religion he could not but get identified with truth wherever it was found. That is why Paramahamsa Deva's teachings were in keeping with all faiths.

We are surprised at the third charge. It appears to us that those who give this charge are ignorant of the true nature of a real devotee. The purpose of the devotee's life is to save the fallen. That is why the devotee, the more he dives into the ocean of devotion, the more he dances in ecstasy and says, "drink and distribute." Just as the devotee is solicitous for his own welfare, so is he for the welfare of others. The devotee cannot enjoy for himself the bliss of divine love and be quiet, for he is the god of gods. The heart of Paramahamsa Deva, the best of devotees, would bleed for the low, the miserable and the fallen. He would at once embrace them and take them in his arms. We do believe that by coming in touch with the fallen, the accumulated spiritual wealth of devotees is diminished, but then, the one aim of the devotee is, "drink and distribute." Unless it is distributed the nectar is not well prepared. Therefore the devotees are always eager to distribute, accepting all harm to themselves. That is why Paramahamsa Deva also gave shelter to all that took refuge in him. In this he has done what is expected of a true devotee.

Hearing the fourth charge we are dumb-founded. We are tempted to laugh and cry. People have formed this idea seeing him dressed in various costly costumes. There was a greater chance of such an inference if he was seen only for a short time and that too, rather suddenly. For the devotees used to dress him in such costumes as they liked, and he too like a child submitted to it and would not throw away any of them, so long as they did not stand in his way to God-realization. Those who saw him in that condition formed a wrong impression about him. It was such people that spread scandals about him. But the fools did not know that it is the verdict of history that the devotees of the Lord are always victorious. Who can stand against a devotee of the Lord and do harm to him? Therefore here too the devotee was victorious. All the efforts of the enemies proved futile. It is true that his gross body has fallen, but his spirit, which is eternal and free, is residing effulgent in the heart of every one of his devotees and doing work. The worldly could not understand him, but he has neither lost nor gained anything by it. But amongst devotees, amongst aspirants after truth, and the virtuous, he would be eternally worshipped and revered. People reading this wonderful life of his, will attain immortality. *(Adapted from the Bengali monthly "Veda Vyasa" edited by the writer. Bengali year 1294 (1888) Vol. II. No. 7, 8, 10 and 11.)*

REMINISCENCES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA*

By Aswini Kumar Dutt

[Aswini Kumar Dutt was a Brâhmo. He was well known in Bengal as a political and social leader. He founded the Braja Mohan Institute, a first grade college in Barisal and had great influence on the student population for whose betterment he devoted most of his energies.]

It was perhaps during the Puja holidays of 1881 that I met Sri Ramakrishna for the first time. Keshab Babu was to come that day. I arrived at Dakshineswar by boat, and going up the steps of the landing ghat asked someone where the Paramahamsa was living. "There is the Paramahamsa!"—the man replied, pointing to one reclining against a bolster in the northern verandah facing the garden. When I saw that he wore a black-bordered cloth and reclined in a somewhat queer way, I thought, "What kind of a Paramahamsa can he be?" There he sat leaning against the bolster with his hands clasped across his drawn-up knees. Then I thought, "He evidently is not accustomed to the use of pillows as gentlemen are, so perhaps he is a Paramahamsa." At his right, very near the pillow, sat a gentleman whose name, I learned, was Rajendra Lal Mitra, who afterwards became Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal. A little further off sat some other gentlemen.

After a few moments Sri Ramakrishna said to Rajendra Babu, "Please see if Keshab is coming." Someone went to look and coming back said, "No!" After a brief interval, hearing a sound outside, he again said, "Please look once more." Again someone went and came back with the same reply. Then Sri Ramakrishna smiled and said, "The rustling of leaves makes Râdhâ exclaim, 'Oh! Here comes my Beloved!' You see, Keshab always tantalizes like this!" After some time, at twilight Keshab came with his party.

When Keshab bowed before him touching the ground with his forehead, Sri Ramakrishna returned the salutation in the same manner. Shortly after he raised his head and in a state of semiconsciousness said addressing the Divine Mother, "Thou hast brought the entire population of Calcutta—as if I am going to deliver a lecture! I can't do that! Do it Thyself if Thou likest. I can't do these things!" Then, still in that ecstatic mood, with a divine smile, he said, "I am Thy child. I will simply live and move. I will eat, sleep and do such trifles. I can't give lectures." Keshab Babu's heart was overflowing with emotion as he looked at Sri Ramakrishna. Seeing this state of the Paramahamsa I thought, "Is this only a pretence?" I had never seen anything like it before, and I was not a credulous man.

Coming back from this exalted state Sri Ramakrishna addressing Keshab said, "Keshab, once when I went to your temple, I heard you say, 'Plunging into the river of devotion we shall be carried straight to the ocean of Sat-chidânanda.' Then I looked up (at the gallery where Keshab's wife and other ladies were sitting) and thought, 'What shall become of these ladies then?' You are householders, how can you reach

* Rendered from *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathâmrita*, Part I, by M.

the ocean of Sat-chit-ânanda all at once? You are like the mongoose that has a stone tied to its tail. If something happens, it runs up and sits in a niche in the wall. But how can it remain there? The stone pulls it and with a thud it lands on the floor. You may practise a little meditation, but the weight of wife and children will drag you down. You may dive into the river of devotion, but you must come up again,—dive and come up again. It will be like that. How can you dive down once for all?"

"Is it altogether impossible for householders?" Keshab Babu asked.

Sri Ramakrishna: "You see, so long as man is under the sway of Mâyâ, he is like a green cocoanut. If you take the tender part of it out, you can't help scraping a little of the shell with it. But the man who has gone beyond Mâyâ is like a ripe cocoanut. The kernel is free from the shell—when you shake it, you hear that it is so. The soul then gets loose from the body. It is no longer attached to it.

"It is the ego that is the cause of all trouble! The wretched 'I' is almost indestructible. It is like the peepul tree that grows from the rubbish of a dilapidated house. You may cut it down today, but tomorrow you will find it growing from the roots again. The same is the case with the ego. You may wash a cup in which onions have been kept, several times, but the strong odour persists."

In the course of the conversation he said to Keshab Babu, "Well Keshab, is it true that your Calcutta Babus deny the existence of God? One such Babu was going up the stairs. He took one step, but while taking the next one he said, 'Oh, my side! My side!' and fell unconscious. There was a hue and cry for a doctor. But before he came the man was dead. And such people say, 'There is no God!'"

After an hour or so the Kirtan (devotional music) commenced. What I then saw I shall probably never forget in this life or in the life to come. All began to dance, Keshab included, with Sri Ramakrishna in the centre and the others in a circle around him. In the course of the dance Ramakrishna suddenly stood motionless. He was in Samâdhi! It continued for a long time. Hearing and seeing all this I understood that he was a real Paramahamsa. . . .

I went another day. When I bowed down to him and took my seat, he said, "Can you bring me some of that thing—half-sour, half-sweet—that begins to fizz when you push down the cork?" "You mean lemonade?"—I asked. "Yes," he said, "Will you bring me that?" I think I brought him a bottle. So far as I remember, he was alone that day. I asked him a few questions.

Myself: "Do you observe caste?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "Well, not much to boast of. I ate a curry at Keshab Sen's house. Let me tell you what happened once. A man with a long beard (a Mussalman) brought ice for sale, but I didn't feel inclined to take it. A little later, some one brought me a piece of ice from that very man and I chewed it up. You see, caste restrictions fall away by themselves. When cocoanut trees and palm trees grow up, the leaves drop off by themselves. Caste observances also go like that. But don't tear them off."

Myself: "What do you think of Keshab Babu?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "Oh, he is a saintly man."

Myself: "And Trailokya Babu?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "A nice man and a good singer."

Myself: "And Sivnath Babu?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "A good man. But he argues too much!"

Myself: "What difference is there between the Hindus and the Brâhmos?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "Not much. When they play on oboes here, one man holds the same note right along, while another plays different melodies. The Brâhmos are keeping on the same note —the formless aspect of God; but the Hindus enjoy His various aspects.

"God without form and God with form are like water and ice. Water when cold enough becomes ice. The heat of knowledge melts ice into water, and the cold of devotion freezes water into ice. It is the same thing, called by different names." . . .

He told me a little of his religious practices. He also spoke about Totâpuri. Then I asked him, "How can I realize God?"

"Well," he replied, "He is always drawing us as a magnet draws iron. Only when the iron is covered with dirt, it is not attracted. As soon as the dirt is washed off the mind by weeping, it is instantly drawn to Him."

As I was noting down his words, he remarked, "Look here, only crying 'hemp' will not bring intoxication. You must get the hemp, rub it in water and drink it." Later he said, "You have to live in the world. So have your mind highly intoxicated with the thought of God. While you are at work, let that feeling of inebriation be with you. You cannot of course be like Suka Deva and drink and drink till you lose all consciousness of the body.

"If you will be in the world, give Him power of attorney, make over all your responsibilities to Him. Let Him do as He likes."

All this time Sri Ramakrishna was seated on the floor. Now he got up and stretched himself on his cot. Then he said, "Please fan me." I began to fan him and he was silent. After a while he said, "Oh! It's so hot! Why don't you just dip the fan in water?" I remarked, "Ah, you have also your likings!" He smiled and said, "Yes, why not?" "Very well," I said, "have your full measure of them." I cannot express in words the immense pleasure I derived from his company that day. . . .

A little later he got up, and after repeating 'Om' several times commenced to sing a song that began: "Dive deep, dive deep, my mind, in the ocean of divine beauty." Scarcely had he rendered a few lines when he himself dived deep and fell into Samâdhi!

When the Samâdhi was over he began to pace the room and with both hands began to pull up his wearing cloth till it reached the waist. One end of it was trailing on the floor and the other end was hanging loose. Nudging my companion, I whispered, "See, how nicely he wears his cloth!" A moment later he threw away the cloth with the words, "Ugh! What a nuisance! Off with it!" He began to pace up and down the room. From the northern end he brought a stick and an umbrella and asked, "Do these belong to you?" Scarcely had I replied "No", when he said, "I knew it! I can judge a man by his stick and umbrella. They must belong to that man who was here some time ago and swallowed a lot of food."

He sat down, still nude, on the northern end of his cot, facing the west and began the following conversation:

Sri Ramakrishna: "Well, do you consider me ungentlemanly?"

Myself: "Of course not. Why do you ask that?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "Well, Sivnath and others think otherwise. When they come I have to wrap a cloth somehow. Do you know Girish Ghosh?"

Myself: "Which Girish Ghosh? He who conducts a theatre?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "Yes."

Myself: "I have never seen him, but I have heard about him."

Sri Ramakrishna: "A good man."

Myself: "They say he drinks."

Sri Ramakrishna: "Let him! How long will he continue that?

"Do you know Narendra?"

Myself: "No, sir."

Sri Ramakrishna: "I wish very much that you meet him. He has passed the B. A. examination and is unmarried."

Myself: "Very well, I shall meet him."

Sri Ramakrishna: "Today there will be a Kirtan at Rama Dutt's house. You may meet him there. Please go there this evening."

Myself: "All right."

Sri Ramakrishna: "Yes, do. And don't forget."

Myself: "It is your command and I must obey it. Surely I will go."

He showed us the pictures in his room and asked if a picture of Lord Buddha could be had. I answered, "Very likely."

Sri Ramakrishna: "Please let me have one."

Myself: "Yes, I'll bring one when I come again."

But, alas! I never had the opportunity. . . .

I met him only four or five times. But in such a short time we became so intimate that I felt as if we had been class-mates. How many liberties I took when speaking with him! But no sooner did I leave his presence than it flashed on me, "Great God! Whom had I been speaking with?" My whole life has been sweetened by what I got from him during those few days I spent with him. The memory of that elysian smile is still with me, shedding unending bliss.

A DAY WITH RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHANSA

By Nagendranath Gupta

[Nagendranath Gupta was the Editor of the *Tribune*, Lahore, for a long time.]

In 1881 Keshub Chandra Sen, accompanied by a fairly large party, went on board a steam yacht belonging to his son-in-law, Maharaja Nripendra Narayan Bhup of Kuch Behar, to Dakshineswar to meet Ramakrishna Paramahansa. I had the good fortune to be included in that party. We did not land, but the Paramahansa, accompanied by his nephew Hriday, who brought a basket of parched rice (মুড়ি) and some *sandesh*[1] for us, boarded the steamer which steamed up the river towards Somra. The Paramahansa was wearing a red-bordered *dhoti* and a shirt which was not buttoned. We all stood up as he came on board and Keshub took the Paramahansa by the hand and made him sit close to him. Keshub then beckoned to me to come and sit near them and I sat down almost touching

[1] A kind of sweet.—*Ed., P. H.*

their feet. The Paramahansa was dark-complexioned, kept a beard, and his eyes never opened very wide and were introspective. He was of medium height, slender almost to leanness and very frail-looking. As a matter of fact, he had an exceptionally nervous temperament, and was extremely sensitive to the slightest physical pain. He spoke with a very slight but charming stammer in very plain Bengali, mixing the two "yous" (আপনি and তুমি) frequently. All the talking was practically done by the Paramahansa, and the rest, including Keshub himself, were respectful and eager listeners. It is now more than forty-five years ago that this happened and yet almost everything that the Paramahansa said is indelibly impressed on my memory. I have never heard any other man speak as he did. It was an unbroken flow of profound spiritual truths and experiences welling up from the perennial spring of his own devotion and wisdom. The similes and metaphors, the apt illustrations, were as striking as they were original. At times as he spoke he would draw a little closer to Keshub until part of his body was unconsciously resting in Keshub's lap, but Keshub sat perfectly still and made no movement to withdraw himself.

After he had sat down the Paramahansa glanced round him and expressed his approval of the company sitting around by saying "বেশ বেশ! বশ সব পদ্মলোচনা চোখ! (Good, good: They have all good large eyes)." Then he peered at a young man wearing English clothes and sitting at a distance on a capstan. "উনি কে? ওকে সাহেব সাহেব দেখছি। (Who is that? He looks like a Saheb)." Keshub smilingly explained that it was a young Bengali who had just returned from England. The Paramahansa laughed, তাই বল মশাই, সাহেব দেখলে ভয় করে কি না! (That's right. One feels afraid of a Saheb)." The young man was Kumar Gajendra Narayan of Kuch Behar, who shortly afterwards married Keshub's second daughter. The next moment he lost all interest in the people present and began to speak of the various ways in which he used to perform his Sâdhanâ. "Sometimes I would fancy myself the Brâhminy duck calling for its mate. (আমি ভাকতুম চকা আর আমনি আমার ভিতর থেকে হা আসত চকি!)" There is a poetic tradition in Sanskrit that the male and female of a brace of Brâhminy ducks spend the night on the opposite shores of a river and keep calling to each other. Again, "I would be the kitten calling for the mother cat and there would be the response of the mother. আমি বলতুম মিউ আর সেন খাকি বেড়াল বলতো ম্যাও!)" After speaking in this strain for some time he suddenly pulled himself up and said with the smile of a child, "জ্ঞান মশাই গোপন সাধনার সব কথা বলতে নেই (Everything about secret Sâdhâna should not be told.)" He explained that it was impossible to express in language the ecstasy of divine communion when the human soul loses itself in the contemplation of the deity. Then he looked at some of the faces around him and spoke at length on the indications of character by physiognomy. Every feature of the human face was expressive of some particular trait of character. The eyes were the most important, but all other features, the forehead, the ears, the nose, the lips and the teeth were helpful in the reading of character. And so the marvellous monologue went on until the Paramahansa began to speak of the Nirâkâra (formless) Brahman. "ওই যে নিরাকার রূপ তাহাই ধারণা চাই! (The manifestation of the Formless has to be realized.)"

He repeated the word Nirākāra two or three times and then quietly passed into Samādhi as the diver slips into the fathomless deep. While the Paramahansa remained unconscious Keshub Chunder Sen explained that recently there had been some conversation between himself and the Paramahansa about the Nirākāra Brahman and the Paramahansa appeared to be profoundly moved.

We intently watched Ramakrishna Paramahansa in Samādhi. The whole body relaxed and then became slightly rigid. There was no twitching of the muscles or nerves, no movement of any limb. Both his hands lay in his lap with the fingers lightly interlocked. The sitting posture of the body (ধ্যানস্থ) was easy but absolutely motionless. The face was slightly tilted up and in repose. The eyes were nearly but not wholly closed. The eyeballs were not turned up or otherwise deflected, but they were fixed and conveyed no message of outer objects to the brain. The lips were parted in a beatific and indescribable smile, disclosing the gleam of the white teeth. There was something in that wonderful smile which no photograph was ever able to reproduce.

We gazed in silence for several minutes at the motionless form of the Paramahansa and then Trailokya Nath Sanyal, the singing apostle of Keshub Chunder Sen's church, sang a hymn to the accompaniment of a drum and cymbals (খোল করতাল) As the music swelled in volume the Paramahansa opened his eyes and looked around him as if he were in a strange place. The music stopped. The Paramahansa looking at us said, "এরা সব কারা ? (Who are these people?)" And then he vigorously slapped the top of his head several times, and cried out, "নেবে যা ! নেবে যা ! (Go down, go down)!" No one made any mention of the trance. The Paramahansa became fully conscious and sang in a pleasant voice, "কালী মা কি কল করেছে, কালী মা কি কল করেছে ! (What a wonderful machine Kāli the Mother has made)!" After the song the Paramahansa gave a luminous exposition as to how the voice should be trained to singing and the characteristics of a good voice.

It was fairly late in the evening when we returned to Calcutta after landing the Paramahansa at Dakshineswar. *(Extracted from the writer's article on "Some Celebrities" in the May, 1927 number of the "Modern Review".)*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ON GOD AND THE WORLD, FREE WILL AND RESPONSIBILITY

By M.

[M. is a householder disciple of the Master and well known as the author of the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. The few extracts that have been rendered here from the original in Bengali give a clear idea of the Master's views as to the possibility of householder's acquiring spirituality and man's freedom and responsibility.]

It was evening. The lamps on the verandah and in the visitors' room at Balaram's house were lighted. The Master after making obeisance to the Mother and repeating the Mantra is singing. The devotees all round are hearing him sing. Girish, M., Balaram, Trailokya and others are still present.

The devotees wanted to raise before Trailokya what he had written in his life of Keshab Chandra Sen regarding the Master's changing his views with respect to householder's life after his contact with Keshab. Girish raised the topic :

Girish (To Trailokya) : "What you have written about Master's changing his views is not correct. He has not changed his views.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Trailokya and others) : "To one who has attained the bliss of God, the world tastes as without salt. One who has a costly shawl cares no longer for a piece of broad cloth."

Trailokya: "I am talking only of householders, not monks."

Sri Ramakrishna: "What is all this that you are saying? Those who advocate practising religion while leading the worldly life, if they once taste the bliss of God, they lose their relish for the world. All their enthusiasm for work vanishes. Gradually, as the bliss becomes more and more intense, they cannot work, and they seek that bliss alone. Can the pleasures of the senses compare with the bliss of God? Once a man tastes it, he runs wildly after it. Then who cares about the world?

"There may be innumerable lakes and rivers and seas full of water, but the Chatak (an Indian bird) won't drink that water, though it be dying of thirst. It would be waiting for a drop of rain. 'All other water is like dust to it.'

"They talk of harmonizing religion and enjoyment! When a man drinks just a little, he may see things in their proper order. But he can't do so if he is dead drunk.

"When a man tastes of the bliss of God, no other pleasure appeals to him Then talk of lust and wealth is galling. The man becomes mad for God, and has no liking for money, etc."

Trailokya: "If a man lives in the world, he must accumulate some money. He has to practise charity—"

Sri Ramakrishna: "What! First accumulation of money and then God! And how great is their charity and kindness! They spend thousands of rupees in the marriage of their daughters, but the next door neighbour with his family may be starving, and they feel constraint in giving him a handful of rice,—they have to think long before doing so! While people are starving, they think, 'Never mind, whether neighbours live or die, it is of little consequence to me,—let me and my family live well.' And they talk of kindness to all beings!"

Trailokya: "Among householders also there are good men. Pundarika Vidyanidhi, the follower of Sri Chaitanya, was a householder."

Sri Ramakrishna: "He had drunk of the bliss of God up to his neck. Had he drunk a little more, he could not have lived a householder's life."

Trailokya kept silent.

Girish: "Then what you have written in your book is wrong?"

Trailokya: "Why, doesn't he admit that a man may be religious even while in the world?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "He may, but he must live in it after the attainment of knowledge, after the realization of God. Then he remains unaffected by the evils of the world. . . . There is no attachment for lust or gold in his life. His life is absorbed in devotion, devotees and the Lord. . . ."

When Trailokya left, the Master said to Girish and others, "Do you know what they are like? A frog was born in a well. It never saw the earth. So it would not believe that there was such a thing as the earth! They have had no taste of the bliss of God, and so

they are talking of the 'world' and so on. . . . They are going in for both world and God. Unless they have actual experience of divine bliss, they cannot understand it. It doesn't matter. They are not to blame. Everyone cannot comprehend the Absolute. . . .'"[1]

Free Will and Responsibility

Sri Ramakrishna (To devotees): "If one realizes that it is the Lord that is doing everything then one has attained freedom in this very life. Keshab had come with Sambhu Mallik. I told him, 'Even the leaves of a tree do not move without His Will.' Where is there room for Free Will? Everyone is under His Will. Totapuri was such a great Jnâni. He had attempted to drown himself. He was here for eleven months. He had an attack of colic and so acute was the pain that he went to drown himself in the Ganges. There was a sand-bank near the *ghat*. He went far into the river and yet there was only knee-deep water. He understood and returned. I too once had rheumatic pains and I had attempted to run a knife across my throat. That is why I say, 'O Mother, Thou art the mechanic and I am the machine. I am the chariot and Thou art the charioteer. I move as Thou directest. I do as Thou makest me do.'"[2]

*

Sri Ramakrishna: "The Paramahamsa is beyond the three Gunas. He has the three Gunas and yet has not them. Just like a child he is not bound by any of these Gunas. That is why the Paramahamsas allow children to come to them, so that they may learn their innocence.

"A Paramahamsa should not lay by anything for a rainy day. This ideal is not for householders. They have to save for their family."

Tântrik Devotee: "Have the Paramahamsas no sense of sin and virtue?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "Keshab Sen had asked me this question. I told him, 'If I tell you more then your church will break up.' Keshab said, 'then stop, sir.'

"As to sin and virtue—when one attains the state of a Paramahamsa one sees that it is the Lord that makes man do good and it is He again that makes him do evil. Are there not sweet and bitter fruits? Some trees have sweet fruits, some again yield bitter and sour fruits. He has created the mango tree which yields such delicious fruits and He again has created the hog-plum tree which yields sour fruits."

Tantrik Devotee: "Yes, sir. In the hills you find rose beds extending as far as you can see."

Sri Ramakrishna: "The Paramahamsa sees in all this the glory of His Mâyâ. Good and bad, virtue and vice —all these stand explained when one attains a high state of realization. In that state there can be no sect or church."

Tantrik Devotee: "Does not Karma yield results?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "Yes. You have that too. Good work yields good results, and bad work bad results. If you take chillies, will it not give a burning sensation. All this is His play."

Tantrik Devotee: "What is the way out for us since we have to suffer the results of our work?"

Sri Ramakrishna: What matters it

[1] *Sri Ramakrishna Kathâmrita*, by M., Vol. III. pp. 172—174; 177.

[2] *Sri Ramakrishna Kathâmrita*, by M., Vol. V. p. 96.

if work yields results? The case of His devotees is different."[3]

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Brâhmo devotee: "If He makes me do everything then am I not responsible for my sins?"

Sri Ramakrishna (smiling): "Duryodhana also had said thus: 'As I am directed by you, O Hrishikesha, sitting in my heart, so do I do.' He who has the true conviction, 'The Lord is the doer and I am not the doer,' he cannot commit any sin. A perfect dancer never takes a wrong step. Unless the mind is purified one does not have faith in the existence of God."[4]

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Sri Ramakrishna: "I had told Keshab, 'content with what comes to you without effort' etc. The son of a rich man has no thought as to his food etc. He gets his allowance every month. But then Narendra is such a great soul, still how is it he is not above wants? If one gives all his mind to the Lord, He sees to all his wants."

M.: "Yes, the Lord will meet his (Naren's) wants. There is still time."

Sri Ramakrishna: "But if there is intense Vairâgya, one does not care for all that. One does not think 'I shall put in order all my worldly affairs and then I shall practise Sâdhanâ.' (Laughing) Goswamin lectured the other day. He said, 'If I can save ten thousands, out of that I can meet all wants. Then I can call on the Lord free from all worries.' Keshab Sen also hinted to that effect. 'Sir, if one should put in order all matters connected with his property first and then think of the Lord—is it not possible? Will it be in any way detrimental to him?' I said, 'If a person has intense Vairâgya then the world appears to him to be a well and all relations like so many serpents. Then he does not think of saving money or putting his property into order. The Lord alone is the Reality and all the rest is unreal. To think of property leaving God—what an ideal!' "[5]

[3] *Ibid.* Vol. V., pp. 61-62.
[4] *Ibid.* Vol. IV. p. 21.
[5] *Ibid.* Vol. II. p. 317.

REMINISCENCES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Swami Turiyananda

How wonderfully Sri Ramakrishna taught each man so as to remove his particular wants! He used to illustrate it saying: "A mother has made various curries out of a fish. She doesn't give all her boys the same thing. She gives to each what would exactly suit his stomach." The Master followed this in practice also.

Once Swami Yogananda heard somewhere reproaches against Sri Ramakrishna. But he pocketed the affront and later reported the matter to the Master. Hearing this the Master said, "They abused me and you kept quiet!" And he rebuked the Swami.

Some time after this event, one day Swami Niranjanananda was coming to Dakshineswar by boat. A number of people were criticizing Sri Ramakrishna. The Swami was exceptionally strong. He forthwith came out of the cabin and placing his legs across began to roll the boat saying: "You are abusing Sri Ramakrishna. I shall immediately sink this boat. I would like to see who dares

to oppose me." They were all dismayed, and besought him to stop. When Sri Ramakrishna heard this, he said: "You fool, if they abused me, what was that to you? Let everybody say what he likes, what matters it to you?"

The teaching was according to the need of the recipient. Where can you find a teacher like him?

Once a gentleman came to Sri Ramakrishna from Jubbulpore. He was a scholar, an M.A., and was very frank, but he was of an agnostic turn of mind. Consequently he had much discussion with Sri Ramakrishna. He confessed that he had great mental unrest, but he would not pray to God, because, as he said, there was no proof of His existence. Sri Ramakrishna said to him, "Well, I suppose you have no objection to praying like this, 'If Thou really art, then listen to my prayer.' If you pray like this, it will do you good." The gentleman thought over it deeply and then said that he had no objection to that sort of prayer. Sri Ramakrishna asked him to follow the advice and come to him again. The gentleman came again. He was a changed man. Touching Sri Ramakrishna's feet, he wept as he said, "You have saved me!" If one happened to be married but later regretted and informed him of his intention to embrace the monastic life, he would say, "wait, don't give up the world. If you are sincere everything will be set right. You have only to pursue faithfully the course laid down in the scriptures." He never said, "Leave everything and come. "If you are sincere"—that is what he used to say, because he knew the contents of everyone's mind. He used to tell the parable of a woman in love. "She attends to all her household duties but her thoughts are on her lover. When in this way her whole mind goes to her lover, she breaks the family ties and follows the man of her heart. Work with one hand and serve the Lord with the other. When the time comes, you will be able to serve Him with both hands. And the time does come if one is sincere."

Even men like Girish Babu had a place with Sri Ramakrishna, who could fit in with everybody. But what we do is to try to mould all according to our own ideas. Whereas he used to take everybody where he was and push him forward. He never disappointed anybody by failing in the attempt to mould him according to his own light. He had a distinct relation with each devotee and maintained that throughout. Through humour he would teach them a good deal. Ah, what a teacher he was! Where can one get a teacher like him?

What a fund of humour we noticed in him! It was unique. One day Keshab Babu was to visit Dakshineswar. Even before the appointed time, Sri Ramakrishna put on a red-bordered cloth, covered his body with a decent *chaddar*, and with his lips crimsoned by the chewing of betel began to pace the verandah of his room in expectation of Keshab Babu. When Keshab Babu saw him in that state he remarked, "Ah, today you have dressed yourself with extraordinary care. What is the matter?" "Why," replied Sri Ramakrishna smiling, "today I have to charm Keshab! That's why all this trimming." At this Keshab Babu began to laugh.

Sri Ramakrishna's humour used to create side-splitting laughters. He would say, "I keep people in the right mood by introducing secular topics now and then." Once a Brâhmo devotee referred to Keshab Chandra Sen and Pratap Mazumdar, in their very presence, saying that they were like

Gaurânga and Nityânanda. Sri Ramakrishna was close by. Keshab Babu asked him, "What then are you?" Sri Ramakrishna at once replied, "I am the dust of your feet." At this Keshab Babu said, "He is never to be caught napping." Every word of Sri Ramakrishna was instinct with a wonderful power. He used to snatch the hearts of people, as it were.

He was greatly attached to truth. He once had an engagement with Sj. Jadu Mallik. But he forgot about it, being engrossed in conversation with a number of visitors. At 11 P.M., when he was about to retire for the night, he suddenly remembered it. Immediately he had a lantern lighted, and accompanied by Swami Brahmananda, went to the garden. Finding the gate closed, he put one foot in and shouted, "Here I have come." Sri Ramakrishna once taunted Pandit Sivnath Sastri who failed to keep his promise to visit Dakshineswar with the words, "You are all such sane people, but how can you speak an untruth? You call me insane, but never does an untruth escape my lips!" Wishing to keep a secret the incident of the Kâlighât priest's kicking him while in a state of Samâdhi being jealous of Mathur Babu's regard for him, he asked Hriday to elicit from him a promise not to mention it to anybody. Hriday at first objected. But Sri Ramakrishna made him elicit the promise from him three times, and then remarked, "Now it will never escape my lips." For the good of the priest he thus put himself under a vow to observe silence on the matter.

His humility was wonderful. Hriday was ordered to clear out of Dakshineswar. The Durwan came and said to Sri Ramakrishna, "You will have to leave this place." "What do you mean? It is not I, but Hriday," replied Sri Ramakrishna. The man said, "No, my master has ordered that both of you should go." This decided the question. He put on his slippers and moved towards the gate. Trailokya Babu[1] saw this from the concert room, ran and fell at his feet, saying, "Sir, why are *you* going? I have not asked *you* to quit." Without speaking a word Sri Ramakrishna came back. Just see, there was not a bit of animus in his renunciation. And how we raise a dust over our deeds! Had we been in his place, we would surely have given the Babu a piece of our mind. But Sri Ramakrishna said nothing—he was as ready to go away as to return.

He used to be shabbily dressed, so much so that one day a man mistook him for a gardener and ordered him to pluck a rose for him, which he immediately did. Some time after, that very man came to know about his mistake and stammered out an apology. At this the Master said that there was nothing wrong in it as one asking for help should be assisted by all means.

He used to give no other blessing except this, "Mother, let them have illumination—let them be conscious of their real nature." Râkhâl Mâhâraj (Swami Brahmânanda) then used to live with him. It was his relatives who brought him to the Master. But when they found that he was about to renounce, they did not like it. First of all they spoke to Sri Ramakrishna. He did not pay much attention to it. Suresh Babu then used to spend something on the comforts of the devotees about Sri Ramakrishna. One day Manmohan, a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna and a relation of Râkhâl Mâhâraj, said, "Suresh Babu does not like that Râkhâl lives here." Immediately Sri Ramakrishna called out, "What! Who is Suresh? What has Suresh got to do

[1] Grandson of Rani Rasmoni.

here? Hallo, throw all that (some bedding etc.) away—remove them at once. (Whenever the Master got excited everybody would be terribly afraid. None would dare come near.) Because these boys have good characteristics that tend to spirituality, I keep them with me. And I pray to Mother to bless them so that they may realise the Self. My idea is that they should first attain Realisation and then they may live anywhere they like." Hearing this Suresh Babu fell at his feet and with tears in his eyes said that he had never told such a thing. That it was all false.

Sri Ramakrishna knew a lot about things. Girish Babu once said to him, "You are my superior in every respect—even in wicked things." At this Sri Ramakrishna said, "No, no, it is not so. Here (meaning, himself) there are no Samskâras. There is a world of difference between knowing a thing by actual experience and learning about it through study or observation. Experience leaves impressions on the mind which it is very difficult to get rid of. This is not the case with knowledge through study or observation."

Once when I told him that my life's ideal was to attain Nirvâna, he reproved me for entertaining such a low ideal. He said, "The granny likes the play to go on." I said to him: "But what of that? Why should *I* play?" He at once rebuked me saying: "Bah! How selfishly you talk! The whole bliss is in the continuance of the game. The granny dislikes those players who prefer to loiter about her. But she stretches forth her hand to one who after a vigorous play comes back to touch her. Haven't you noticed how, in a game of dice, the expert player sometimes gives up an invulnerable position willingly? He plays again and by a few masterly throws of the dice gets back to his former position."

I asked him if this was possible. He answered: "Yes, quite possible through the grace of the Mother. Must not a man believe in the infinite power of God? Can a man who, when a fish-bone gets stuck in his throat, touches the feet of a cat in humble supplication and makes obeisance to a date-tree,[1] dare to deny God? What do you mean? Well, you prattle about knowledge, but He has subjected man to the curse of sleep which renders him so helpless that even a dog might kick him in that state and he would not know anything of it!"

An hour of congregational singing in the company of the Master used to fill us with such an exuberant joy that we would feel transported, as it were, into an ethereal region. But now even meditation fails to evoke that celestial bliss, or even a semblance of it. That bliss would abide in us for a week continually. We used to feel intoxicated, though we did not know the why or how of it. Who will believe it? It is difficult to convince anyone.

One day I arrived at the Dakshineswar Temple when the Master was taking his dinner. A number of cups containing various preparations were arranged before him. Someone perchance thought these an unbecoming luxury, fit only for a Râjasic life. Sri Ramakrishna at once said: "Well, the tendency of my mind is ever towards the Infinite. It is by such Râjasic devices that I hold it down to the lower planes, otherwise I could not have talked with you." "How strange!" I said to myself on hearing him, "Others seek to attain Sattva by overcoming Rajas through rigorous discipline of food, whereas he has to forcibly check

[1] This refers to the common belief that such conduct gets rid of the bone.

his mind from rising to the Sāttvic plane!" Out of infinite mercy, he once vouchsafed me the realization that every action and movement of his, nay, even his footfall was meant for the good of others.

Those who profess to be the children of Sri Ramakrishna must have Yoga, Bhakti, Karma, Jnāna, nay, everything. For, Sri Ramakrishna stands for the synthesis and harmony of all religious paths. The spiritual growth of a person following a particular line was the rule in the past. But now one should have an all round development combined with a magnanimity of heart to tolerate others.

(Adapted from his conversations)

A MODERN HINDU SAINT

By Charles H. Tawney, M.A.

[Charles H. Tawney was the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, in 1868. Earlier he was the Principal, Presidency College, Calcutta. It is doubtful whether he actually saw the saint of Dakshineswar. But being a contemporary of the saint he must have heard about him. The present writing is a review by him of a collection of the saint's teachings by one of his disciples.]

Like a true mystic Ramakrishna attached the highest importance to intent meditation. In this he was not above taking lessons from the fowler or the angler. A story is told of a devotee meeting a marriage procession crossing a plain and seeing a fowler undisturbed gazing intently at his quarry; the saint bowed his head and hailed the fowler as his Guru or spiritual guide.

So too with the angler. "An angler was catching fish. A devotee went to him and said, 'My friend which is the road to such and such a place?' At that moment a fish was pulling at the angler's float, so he concentrated all his attention on the fish, and when that business was over, he turned round and said, 'What did you say?' The devotee bowed his head and said, 'You are my spiritual guide (Guru). When I meditate on the Supreme Being, I will imitate you in not turning my attention to anything else until I have finished the business that I have in hand.' "

Ramakrishna's sayings abound in homely illustrations of this kind, paddy-birds, cranes, kites, crows, mangoe trees and other everyday objects of life in Bengal are employed by him to point a moral. He compares the religious hero struggling with the harassing temptations of worldly existence to the locomotive dragging at rapid rate a long line of carriages; even the pernicious habit of *ganja*-smoking is made to yield an edifying lesson. A true devotee seeks the company of other devotees as a *ganja*-smoker derives no pleasure from smoking alone.

In one case the saint borrows an illustration from an article of European luxury: "A spring couch when one sits upon it, gives way and when one rises up resumes its previous position. So when a worldly man hears a religious discourse, religious feeling gains power over his mind, and when he enters the world again, the feeling no longer continues." The following illustrations will interest the folklorist: "As a magnet-rock hidden in the depths of the sea suddenly draws from a ship its nails and other iron fittings and causes it to go

to pieces and sink, so when the true spiritual knowledge arises in the soul filled as it is with selfishness and self-conceit, it sinks like the ship in the sea of God's love." It is well known that *The Imitation of Christ* is very generally read by the Bengalis educated in our schools and colleges and it is perhaps possible to trace the influence of this book upon the mind of this latter day Hindu Sage.[1] He urges his disciples to avoid contention and subtle disputations, not to place too much reliance on books, and to avoid too much familiarity with the female sex. He does not run directly counter to the prejudices of his countrymen, but rather rises above them. He holds that for a perfect man caste distinctions are absolutely non-existent, but for an ordinary man they are necessary. In the same way he does not consider the orange garb of the Sannyâsi to be an indispensable requisite, but the wearing of it produces a feeling conducive to religion as canvas shoes and torn garments are connected with the idea of humility and boots and pantaloons with that of pride and self-conceit. The following extracts are especially characteristic: "As many men in this world have heard of the object Ice; but have never seen it with their eyes, so there are many preachers of religion who have only read in treatises of the nature of God, but have not seen Him in their lives. Again, as there are many who have seen Ice but never tasted it; so there are many preachers who have caught a glimpse of God from a distance, but have never penetrated into the real essence of God. Only those who have tasted Ice can describe its real properties. So only those who have communed with God in such ways as that of submissive service can describe His true attributes."

"To teach people about God on the strength of having read about Him in books is much the same as to teach people about Benares on the strength of having found that city in the map."

The following parable shows the necessity of perseverance in the religious life. "A certain person went to dig a tank. After he had dug two cubits deep a person came and said to him: 'My friend why do you spend your labour in vain, you will find no water underground here; you will find nothing but sand. He immediately left the place and began to turn up earth in another place. Then another person came to him and said, 'My friend here there was formerly a tank. Why do you fruitlessly worry yourself? If you go a little further south and then dig, it is probable that you will find excellent water.' He immediately followed his advice. But in the next place another person came and discouraged him. In the same way wherever he fancied a spot, someone came and dissuaded him from going on with his digging and induced him to leave it. The consequence was that his tank was never dug. In the same way many have become bankrupt in the way of Religion. The man who has gained faith one day loses it the next when he falls into trials and temptations and at the end it may be that he may become a total atheist or at any rate he becomes convinced that it is impossible to become religious in this life."

It is interesting to observe that his teachings contain some positively appalling etymologies used for the purpose of edification. Such a phenomenon is not altogether unknown in Europe. Whatever may be thought of the culture of the Saint Ramakrishna it is impossible to read his sayings without conceiv-

[1] That Sri Ramakrishna was indebted to *The Imitation of Christ* as the writer seems to think is a startling information to us. It is hardly necessary to add that Hinduism is replete with teachings as to renunciation of gold and lust.—*Ed., P. B.*

ing a genuine respect for him. But the paramount importance of the work seems to us to consist in the fact that it contains the idea of a teacher who has profoundly influenced his educated fellow countrymen. It must be remembered that it is written by an Indian for Indians and is not an article prepared for European consumption. Such books should be literally translated into English. Probably more could be learnt from them with regard to the real feeling of seriously-minded Hindus than from volumes of travels written by gentlemen who rush through India at railway speed and associate only with European officials or Europeanized natives 'of the boot and pantaloon' type reprobated by this Bengali Saint.—(*The Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review and Oriental and Colonial Record, January 1896. 2nd Edition 1903*).

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Swami Shivananda

I have not yet come to a final understanding whether he was a man or superman, a god or God Himself. But I have known him to be a man of complete self-effacement, master of the highest renunciation, possessed of the supreme wisdom and as the very incarnation of Love; and as, with the passing of days, I am getting better and better acquainted with the domain of spirituality and feeling the infinite extent and depth of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual moods, the conviction is growing in me that to compare him with God, as God is popularly understood, would be minimising and lowering his supreme greatness. I have seen him showering his love equally on men and women, on the learned and the ignorant, and on saints and sinners, and evincing earnest and unceasing solicitude for the relief of their misery and for their attainment to infinite peace by realizing the Divine. And I dare say the world has not seen another man of his type in modern times, so devoted to the welfare of mankind.

He looked upon name and fame with extreme disgust. His example and precepts deeply impressed on us the extreme insignificance of worldly joys before the ineffable bliss of God. He lived day and night in Divine ecstasy; and Samâdhi which is so rare and inaccessible, was perfectly natural to him. It is no wonder, therefore, that the idea of a God-intoxicated man being intimate with the details of everyday life and instructing people thereon, and yearning to remove the sorrows of men and women who approached him with the tales of their worldly afflictions, should appear contrary and unnatural to those who had not witnessed his life. But we have seen innumerable such instances in his life; and there may be a few householders still living, who are feeling themselves blessed by remembering his infinite mercy and his eager attempts at relieving the sufferings of men. . . . To him there was neither good nor evil: he saw that the Divine Mother abides in all beings, the difference being only in manifestation. He visualized the Divine Mother in all women and revered and addressed them as his own mother.

By actually practising the doctrines of Hinduism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, etc., he demonstrated the

truth of all religions; he found his own realizations tallying with the descriptions of the different scriptures,—the Upanishads, the Bible, the Koran, etc., and he declared that the Truth is one, being called and worshipped variously by the various religions of the different countries of the world. I have seen many true seekers of God, professing other creeds, come to him to solve their spiritual problems. And it is by seeing him that I came to believe in the truth of such Incarnations and prophets as Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed, and feel their infinite mercy. He never antagonized anyone's spiritual mood or ideal. He helped all who came to him, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, high and low, to advance along the spiritual path according to their individual inclinations.

He was surely wide awake to the infinite sufferings of the world. He not only relieved the individual sufferings of those who came to him, but also removed collective suffering on several occasions and advised Swami Vivekananda and his other disciples to do the same. . . .

It was naturally not always possible for one like Sri Ramakrishna, ever living on high spiritual elevations, to relieve earthly sufferings of the poor, but it will be wrong therefore to think that he was unmindful of them. What he himself practised and gave out in aphoristic utterances were and are being subsequently realized and practised by Swami Vivekananda and others. It was impossible for him to look after even his own requirements while dwelling on the high spiritual planes. He, therefore, transmitted his spiritual ideas apparently under Divine guidance to those who were fit to quickly assimilate those high spiritual truths and devote themselves to the welfare of mankind. The greatest of them was Swami Vivekananda—so we heard from the Master and felt ourselves. Therefore, we find as we study the life of the Swami, that as on the one hand he preached the wonderful message of religious harmony, so on the other he preached the universal creed of service by giving secular and spiritual knowledge, food, medicine, etc., to the needy, so that having all their wants fulfilled, they might be by and by led to the domain of spirituality. In fact, Swamiji was the greatest interpreter of the Master's life and a commentary on the Master's aphoristic utterances on deep and noble spiritual principles. I have doubts if any man will ever be able to fully determine the infinitude of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual realizations.

I have now come to a stage of realization in which I see that God is walking in every human form and manifesting Himself alike through the sage and the sinner, the virtuous and the vicious. Therefore when I meet different people I say to myself: "God in the form of the saint, God in the form of the sinner, God in the form of the righteous, God in the form of the unrighteous."

The Lord, being pleased with Prahlād's prayers and hymns, asked him what boon he desired. He replied, "Lord, forgive those who oppressed me: in punishing them Thou wilt be punishing Thyself, for verily Thou abidest in everything."

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

Section II

OFFERING TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA FROM A FRENCH PILGRIM

JIVA IS SIVA

By Romain Rolland

[It would be presumptuous on our part to introduce M. Rolland to our readers, so esteemed and well known is he all over the world. In this article, the writer deals with one aspect of Sri Ramakrishna's message—the ideal of service to man seeing God in him, which is of the utmost importance to the modern world in which oppression of the weak has become a common crime.]

It is related that when Sri Ramakrishna, in the first days following his great ecstasy in the bosom of identity —and this was after Totapuri's departure—allowed his consciousness to return to earth, he saw two boatmen quarelling in hatred. And because of this hatred, as from a wound, his heart was bleeding; and he screamed; the sufferings of the universe were torturing him. For all the pains of the world were imprinting themselves into the tender flesh of his reawakening consciousness.

What would he have felt, what would he have suffered, in these days of the present world, when the whole humanity seems given up to hatred, when war rages or smoulders everywhere under the ashes, between nations, between races, between classes!

But the mighty Swan (Paramahamsa) had wings that enabled him to hover above life. If he did not try to detach himself from life, as so many mystics do, to avoid its sufferings, it is because universal love, which was to him a second sight, revealed to him, in a flash, in the presence of human misery, that "Jiva is Siva,"—that the living being is God,—that whoever loves God must unite himself with Him in sufferings, in misery, even in errors and excesses, in the terrible aspect of human nature.

We all know that he took away his great disciple Vivekananda from the fascination of the fathomless God in order to force him into the service of men. And that is what you, following his example, have been able to accomplish, you whose monastic Ramakrishna Mission, like your emblem, the swan, covers the unhappy with its wings and helps them as brothers. You have carried out the pregnant saying of your Master :—"*If you want peace of mind, serve others! . . . If you wish to find God, serve man! . . .*"

The enfeeblement and the ruin of so many religions lies in the fact that they have forgotten this saying. They have forgotten man. And man, in his turn, forgets them. He has learned to help himself without God,—(as one of our European artists, and one of the most religious too, Beethoven, proclaimed when he said to those who called upon God for help :—"O man, help thyself! . . ."). He has even learnt to help himself against God,—whom he identifies with those Churches, which, too often, stand against the oppressed masses as the courtesans or the handmaids of power. Has not the Catholic Church, the most powerful of these Churches in Europe, laid down the cynical rule of ranging itself on the side of any power that has victory, provided only that it respects the church privi-

leges? Thus they associate themselves with the injustice set up by force. The churches should not then wonder that oppressed peoples in their revolt against unjust force, associate the former with the force from which they want to liberate themselves: Although not conscious of it, those seething peoples, even when they believe themselves to be without God or against God, are nevertheless, to be regarded as the living God, while in their fight for justice, in their ascent towards light, "*Jiva is Siva.*" . . . And we ought to recognise this truth.

We live in a world turned upside down. And, indeed, the masses have always been downtrodden. But they had not, up to this day, the knowledge and the consciousness of that universal oppression, which has been revealed to them by the increased means of communications and the progress of international solidarity. We may no longer remain indifferent to those peoples who are today making a desperate effort to break their chains and set up a more equitable and more human order. And this is no longer permissible especially to us, your friends in the Occident who do not happen to possess like you the faith in survivals (lives after death). Time is pressing us. The wave of men's sufferings is drowning us like a tide. We must fly to their help. Even if we had before us the eternity of "lives after death," each one of these lives is a "living thing" which has its own duties and its laws corresponding to the particular time of its birth and the human surroundings in which it has its course. Each single life is neither permitted to leave undone all the present good it is capable of doing, nor to decline to fight, with its total might of today, all the iniquities of the time being. The Ramakrishnite of the West that I am does not admit that for one's own salvation, one should withdraw from action, when it is urgent to act in order to help the oppressed. I remember the holy anger of the great disciple when he exclaimed to one of his brethren who was endeavouring to avoid the tragedy of the present world in order to betake himself to the sweetness of divine contemplation. "*Put off to the next life the reading of the Vedanta, the practice of meditation! Let this body of today be consecrated to the service of others!*"

And this immortal prayer:

—"*Would that I could be born and reborn again and suffer a thousand miseries, provided I might adore and serve the only God that exists, the sum-total of all souls, and, above all, my God the evil-doers, my God the unfortunates, my God the poor of all races!*"

Oh! what an error, too common among religious God-lovers, to think that their love diminishes and that their soul is lowered in value on account of intercourse with men. On the contrary, it expands and is revivified because of embracing the whole and entire Being, the innumerable Being, with its million forms ever in motion, ever advancing as they are, like a Ganges.

Doing thus, you will serve, by being wedded to it, each one of the forms of the living God;—but without ever losing the feeling and the very presence of the all-powerful Unity, wherein these conflicting million forms find harmony. It is not doing a wrong to the unchanging Divine Peace that hovers over the storms of Existence, if one holds out a hand to those who struggle in those storms. Vivekananda did not cease repeating to his Sannyasis that they had taken two vows, and that, if the first was "*to realise the truth*," the second was "*to help the world*" . . . . "*To help men to stand erect, by themselves . . .*"—Let us help them, then, those peoples who, "*by themselves and*

alone," heroically try *"to stand erect!"* Let us co-operate in their efforts! Even in this manner it will be possible for us afterwards to co-operate in the harmony of warring forces.

You are the bearers, in this storm-tossed world, of the Supreme Harmony wherein must blend and melt away all combats and opposite efforts. It is your proper rôle, your privilege, and your sacred duty: to radiate peace, order and unity in the chaos in which peoples are blindly at odds with one another. Be, like Sri Ramakrishna, the wide-spreading banyan tree in whose shade thousands of souls, weary and wounded in the fight, come for shelter and peace. Pour on them the balm of reconciliation, which is the fruit of reason, no less than of love! We know well that the most wicked are but misguided. They know not what they do. The greatest leader of the liberated peoples, Lenin of the U.S.S.R., victim of a dastardly outrage, calmed the vengeance of his friends by telling them, with his intelligent smile:—*"What's to be done! Every one acts according to his knowledge."*

The misfortune of the world comes from its want of knowledge. Let us then teach it to know. Let us enlighten it, by preventing it from doing harm,—from harming itself! For he who harms his neighbour, does not know that it is himself whom he is harming. Another of our great men of Europe, the inspired poet Victor Hugo, speaking of those who wanted to harm him, uttered these beautiful words, so allied to the wisdom of India:

—"Oh! fool, who thinkest that thou art not I! . . ."

It is the Supreme miracle of Ramakrishna that in him "thou" is "I", that the whole world is not only reflected, but incarnate in a man's heart,—that God is realised on earth, in his universality and his multiplicity . . . . *"Jiva is Siva."* . . .

And Ramakrishna works in him—in us—this divine Identity.

RAMAKRISHNA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ABSOLUTE AND THE FINITE GOD

By Prof. James B. Pratt

[Prof. James B. Pratt is the Chairman of the American Philosophical Association and Professor of Sanskrit in Williams College, Williamstown, Mass. U.S.A. In this article he shows how the Teaching of Sri Ramakrishna solves the age-long controversy between the Absolute and Finite God.]

When I was a graduate student of philosophy in Harvard, some thirty-five years ago, my two great teachers, William James and Josiah Royce, were constantly at odds over the question of Pluralism and Monism. The divergence between them had its influence on their views concerning nearly everything in heaven and on earth, but it came to a climax over the problem of the nature of the Divine. Royce, as all the world knows, or used to know, was the prophet of the idealistic Absolute, while James was the champion of the Finite God. In their views upon this question my two philosophers were, of course, only representatives of an age-long controversy in which all the great philosophies and religions have been interested, and upon which no defini-

tive conclusion has ever been reached. Both sides have found advocates among Christian thinkers, and even among Jews and Moslems. Mahâyâna Buddhism is divided between the Amadists, to whom Amida Buddha, a great but essentially finite conception, stands as God, and the thinkers who derive their teachings from the Tendai and related monistic philosophies. In no religion is the division of thought more fundamental or more to the front than in Hinduism. I need only mention the names Sankara and Râmânuja, Advaitism and Bhakti, to bring home to the reader the contrast intended.

The two views of the Divine are so opposed that it is plain in their extreme forms they cannot both be true. And much can be said in criticism of each. The Absolute of Western Royceian Idealism is regarded as the All-Knower, who, just in virtue of being an All-Knower must be conceived as experiencing identically all that each finite mind experiences, and thus including within one grasp and one eternal time-space the totality of Being. Such a conception has obvious difficulties. How an Omniscient Being can share the experience of ignorance it is hard to see. Sankara's Advaitism and its attempted solution of the same problem by means of the conception of Ajnâna is not more satisfactory. For those, moreover, who insist that the Divine shall be worthy of worship, the facts of evil make the conception of such an all-inclusive Absolute very unsatisfactory. And for many, the heart demands a more personal Divinity than either Sankara or Royce can provide.

The Finite God of James and of the Bhakti sects satisfies the longing for a personal relation between divine and human; and also is able, from the very fact of His finitude, to avoid many of the difficulties arising from the problem of evil which the concept of the inclusive Absolute has to face. There is no logical difficulty, moreover, in thinking His relations to personal and finite minds. Yet the advance of Science, and the increasing repugnance to the conception of interruptions and interference in natural laws is, for many, making the conception of the Finite God less easy to maintain; and for another group of minds the conception, whether defensible or not, seems too little and too limited. To those who have heard the call of the Infinite Divine, the admirable moral God, struggling with us and for us and ever doing His best, makes no appeal.

Yet, just because neither of these conceptions is fully satisfactory, each of them is to some extent needed by the religious consciousness. The religious soul longs for an all-inclusive Divine, yet longs no less for a divine personification of Goodness which it cannot merely bow before but worship and love. The English philosopher Bradley, in one of his later essays, declared as his mature conclusion that these two demands of the religious consciousness were too deep-seated to be eradicated, yet too mutually contradictory to be reconciled. Here then we have the crux of religious philosophy and of the religious nature. What shall, what can, we do about it? What attitude should the religious thinker take toward this difficult problem?

The answer that many give is to surrender all thought of the Absolute and seek to satisfy themselves with the Finite God—as James did. Another answer is to accept the Absolute and give up all hope of retaining the moralistic and personal aspects of the Divine. It is not surprising to find that so deeply religious a soul as Ramakrishna was not willing to take either of these courses, but insisted upon retaining

religion in its wholeness, and seeking to satisfy both the demands of the religious nature.

In his attempt to do this, he sometimes used a purely practical method, sometimes he appealed to theory. "One day in winter," we are told, "a certain householder disciple, who was a college professor, came to see the Bhagavân. Sri Ramakrishna was seated on the southern veranda of His room, and He was smiling. After a short conversation He asked: 'Do you prefer to meditate on God with form or without form?' The disciple hesitated and answered: 'I prefer to meditate upon God as the formless Being rather than as a Being with form.' The Bhagavân replied: 'That is good. There is no harm in looking at Him from this or the other point of view. Yes, to think of Him as the formless Being is quite right. But do not go away with the idea that that alone is true and that all else is false. Meditating upon Him as a Being with form is equally right. You, however, must hold on to your particular conception of God until you have realized and seen God.'[1]

The advice thus given was psychologically wise. The religious man sooner or later is pretty sure to find in his heart both the demands we have considered. It is well, therefore, to satisfy both; and since they may well interfere, it is well (unless one has an intellectual interest in the matter) to let the two demands alternate with each other. But not everyone can be thus satisfied; and for these more intellectual natures Ramakrishna had a more intellectual answer. It consisted in the hypothesis that the Ultimate Reality, which is God, must necessarily appear differently to different finite minds, and will, in fact, have an infinite number of differing aspects. Some of these will be in sharp contrast to others, some may even seem to us mutually contradictory; yet all will be real, all will be, in their way, aspects and revelations of the One Divine. "God is one, but many are His aspects. As one master of the house appears in various aspects, being father to one, brother to another, and husband to a third, so one God is described and called in various ways according to the particular aspect in which He appears to the particular worshipper."[2] "There is no distinction between Impersonal God (Brahman) on the one hand and Personal God (Sakti) on the other. When the Supreme Being is thought of as inactive, He is styled God the Absolute (Suddha Brahman); and when He is thought of as active—creating, sustaining, and destroying—He is styled Sakti or Personal God. God is absolute eternal Brahman as well as the Father of the universe. The indivisible Brahman, pure Existence, Intelligence, and Bliss, is like a vast, shoreless ocean without bounds and limits in which I only struggle and sink, but when I approach the ever sportive Personal Deity, Hari, I get peace like the sinking man who finds the shore."[3]

[1] *The Gospel of Ramakrishna*, pp. 62-63.

[2] *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, p. 10.

[3] *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*, pp. 6-7.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

(Diary Leaves)

By Prof. Nicholas de Roerich

[Prof. Roerich is one of the leading figures of the world in contemporary cultural life. In this appreciative article on the great saint he shows how the thoughts about the Good, which Sri Ramakrishna so generously taught, would awaken the best sides of human hearts irrespective of their nationality.]

We are in the deserts of Mongolia. It was hot and dusty yesterday. From far away thunder was approaching. Some of our friends became tired from climbing up the stony holy hills of Shiret Obo. While already returning to the camp, we noticed in the distance a huge elm-tree—"karagatch," lonely towering amidst the surrounding endless desert. The size of the tree, its somewhat familiar outlines, attracted us into its shadow. Botanical considerations lead to believe that in the wide shade of the giant there may be some interesting herbs for us. Soon all co-workers gathered around the two mighty stems of the karagatch. The deep, deep shadow of the tree covered over fifty feet across. The powerful tree-stems were covered with phantastic burr growths. In the rich foliage birds were singing and the beautiful branches were stretched out into all directions, as if wishing to give shelter to all pilgrims.

On the sands, around the roots, innumerable trails made by animals were visible. Next to the broad imprints of a wolf were small hooves of the dzeren, the local antilope. A horse had also passed here and next to it was the heavy footstep of a bull. All sorts of birds had been here. Apparently the entire local population visited the welcoming shelter of the giant. The elm-karagatch especially reminded us of the huge banyan trees of India. Such trees were the meeting place of blessed gatherings. Many travellers found there both bodily and spiritual rest. Sacred narratives were chanted under the inviting branches of the banyan tree. And thus the lonely giant karagatch in the Mongolian desert vividly turned our memory to the shadow of the banyan. The mighty branches of the karagatch reminded us also of other great achievements of India. What a joy to think of India !

Thoughts turned to the radiant giant of India—Sri Ramakrishna. Around this glorious name there are so many respectful definitions. Sri, Bhagavân, Paramahamsa—all best offerings through which the people wish to express their esteem and reverence. The consciousness of a nation knows how to bestow names of honour. And after all, above all most venerable titles, there remains over the whole world the one great name—Ramakrishna. The personal name has already changed into a great all-national, universal concept. Who has not heard the Blessed Name ! The conception of goodness and benevolence truly befits him. Except for petrified hearts, who would oppose the Good !

We recollect how in various countries has grown the understanding of the radiant Teaching of Ramakrishna. Beyond shameful words of hatred, beyond evil mutual destruction—the word of Bliss, which is close to every human heart, spreads widely like the mighty branches of the sacred banyan

tree. On the paths of human searching, these calls of goodwill were shining like beacons. We ourselves witnessed and have often heard how books of Ramakrishna's Teaching were as if unexpectedly found by sincere seekers. We ourselves came across the book in a most unusual way.

Hundreds of thousands, even an entire million of pilgrims gather on the memorable day in the name of the Blessed Bhagavân. They gather, being called by an inner impulse of the heart, in goodwill and they become rejuvenated by blissful remembrances and strivings. Is this not a most remarkable expression of the voice of the people! This is the nation's judgment, the reverence of the people, which cannot be compelled nor forcefully commanded. As wonderful lights they spread from one to another forming an inexhaustible flame, hence such national reverence is not dimmed, but radiates throughout the times of contemporary world commotions.

Too many crises grip the people at present. It could happen that the spirit of the people could become confused and distracted from the spiritual fundamentals. The wail about the shattering of the foundations is so often heard nowadays. But is not this million of pilgrims, who assembled by their own free will, the best living proof that above the confusions of today, there lives in the hearts an inexhaustible spirituality and striving towards the Good. We are optimists and conquer all obstacles through goodwill.

Behold, on an unbearably hot day, not being frightened of distances, pilgrims are hastening, in order to venerate the memory of Ramakrishna. Is this not a remarkable event! For it is not an official duty which brings together all the multifarious travellers. A pure heart and a sincere striving imperatively leads them to the places consecrated by the name of Ramakrishna. Such a spiritual gathering is the most precious evidence in our days. It is wonderful that amidst the heavy labour, amidst doubts, amidst depression, people yet can be lit by the flame of gratitude and veneration. Their hearts call them together. They are gathering not for destruction, nor for quarrels, nor for insults, but in order to unite their thoughts upon the Good.

Great power is contained in a united benevolent thought. Humanity should value such sublime manifestations, which are the cause of all these unifying and constructive thoughts. Creative is the thought of Good! The good never destroys, it untiringly elevates and builds. By commands of good are affirmed those eternal foundations, which have been ordained to humanity on all the best tablets. The call of the Blessed Bhagavân for creative Good will for ever remain the great spiritual heritage of humanity.

Light is especially precious during the hours of darkness. May the Light be eternally preserved! In his parables about the Good, Ramakrishna never belittled anyone. And not only in the Teaching, in parables, but in his own deeds he never tolerated bemeaning. Let us remember his reverent attitude towards all religions. Such broad understanding will move even a stony heart. In his broad outlook, the Blessed Bhagavân of course possessed a real straight-knowledge. His power of healing he in turn gave out freely. He never hid anything useful. He exhausted his strength in innumerable blessed givings. And even his illness of course was due to such constant self-sacrificing outpouring of his spiritual energy for the healing of others. And in these generous gifts Ramakrishna manifested his greatness.

HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS GATHER ON THE MEMORABLE DAY IN THE NAME OF THE BLESSED BHAGAVAN

BEHOLD, ON AN UNBEARABLY HOT DAY, NOT BEING FRIGHTENED OF DISTANCES PILGRIMS ARE HASTENING, TO VENERATE THE MEMORY OF RAMAKRISHNA

In all parts of the world the name of Ramakrishna is venerated. Also is revered Swami Vivekananda, who symbolizes true discipleship. The names of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and the glorious host of their followers remain on the most remarkable pages of the history of the spiritual culture of India. The astounding depth of thought, which is characteristic of India, the beautiful manifestation of Guru and Chelâ—remind the whole world of basic ideals. Ages pass, whole civilizations change, but the Guru and the Chelâ remain in the same wise relationship, which was since antiquity established in India. Many millenniums ago the words of Wisdom were already recorded in India. And how many more millenniums were they preserved even before, in verbal transmission. And in this sacred mouth to ear transmission they were kept perhaps even safer than on written records. The ability to keep up the correct meaning depends on a developed wise consciousness and in this is contained the application of precious stones of the past for the radiant future.

Not only the everlasting value of the Teaching of Good affirmed by Ramakrishna, but precisely the necessity of these words especially for our times is unquestionable. When spirituality, as such, is being so often refuted through wrongly interpreted formulae, then the radiant constructive affirmation as a beacon becomes especially precious. One has but to know the colossal number of editions of the Ramakrishna Mission. One has but to remember the large number of cities in which this Mission has its branches. These figures require no exaggeration. There is no unnatural nervousness and no premeditatedness in these quiet thought-creating gatherings. Everything is deeply realized not in tumult and rush, but grows in highest commeasurement.

The thoughts about the Good, which Ramakrishna so generously taught, should awaken the best sides of human hearts. Ramakrishna always preached against deniers and destruction. He was in all respects a builder for the Good, and his admirers should unfold on the examples of his Teaching the best hidden treasures of their hearts. Such beneficial creativeness is very active. And it naturally is transmuted also into best achievements on all paths of life. Gathering on the memorable day of Ramakrishna's anniversary, the pilgrims do not fear the dust of the road, they are not frightened by the fatiguing heat, but they are filled with a striving towards the Good, towards the great service to humanity. Service to Humanity—great is this ordainment of Ramakrishna !

Reverence to the Teacher !

"I recall a small Hindu who found his Teacher. We asked him : 'Is it possible that the sun would glow to you, if you would see it without the Teacher ?'

"The boy smiled. 'The sun would remain as the sun, but in the presence of the Teacher twelve suns would shine to me !'

"The sun of wisdom of India shall shine because upon the shores of a river there sits a boy who knows the Teacher."

Tivur Khada (Mongolia).

Aug. 7th, 1935.

RAMAKRISHNA AND WHAT HE STANDS FOR

COUNT HERMANN KEYSERLING

[Count Hermann Keyserling is an international figure and needs no introduction from us. In this very short article he has pointed out the necessity of such a great soul as Ramakrishna for a world steeped in aggression.]

A long time has elapsed since Hindu Saintliness was a main object of my interest and studies. In the years of full maturity each and all who feel responsible for spiritual progress of mankind have to limit themselves exclusively to the creative task cut out for them by their inborn and acquired abilities. But when I think back now to the years 1911—14, when Indian wisdom was my daily food, I cannot help being overcome by a feeling of particular warmth, when concentrating on the saint of Dakshineswar. He does indeed stand for something eternal. For Bhakti in its aspect of gentleness, of unworldly goodwill, for a kind of "charity" which is probably the most truly Christian of all but which has almost disappeared in the West, owing to the ever-increasing aggressiveness which is specially Western variety of Truth-seeking. The age we are living in since the War is probably the least propitious to the culture of Bhakti, the world has known for a thousand years. There will be evermore wars, evermore bloodshed, evermore violence. India itself will no doubt be carried away, sooner or later, by that same spirit of aggressiveness. All the more necessary do I think the permanence and influence of such centres of love as are able to survive in a chaotic world. Theirs will be the rôle of the monasteries in Europe during those invasions of the barbarians which initiated our middle ages. All my best thoughts and wishes will always accompany all work carried out, and on, in Ramakrishna's spirit.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

BY C. Y. CHINTAMANI

[Mr. Chintamani is well known in India in the political field and as Editor of the paper, the *Leader*, Allahabad. In this short article he appeals to his countrymen to make use of the wisdom Sri Ramakrishna has bequeathed to us—a legacy which is fundamentally spiritual.]

It is an unexpected and I know an unmerited honour to be called upon to contribute to the pages of this publication rightly reserved for profound students of religion and philosophy. I am a mere man of affairs. If, however, a deep and abiding sense of the greatness of the subject and of the eternal truth of the religion and philosophy preached—and practised—by him be a small qualification, I may humbly claim to possess it.

Sri Swami Vivekananda is, I should think, about the only other Hindu and Indian who can share with his Guru, Sri Paramahamsa Ramakrishna, the dis-

tinction of being the greatest man of the last century in India. I wonder if in recent times there have been another Guru and another disciple of such equal eminence. Between them they gave a new life to India and Hinduism. If we cannot make use of the wisdom they offered us, we are indeed unworthy of being their countrymen and co-religionists.

At no time was the necessity greater of Hindus learning the lesson of the lives and teachings of the two Swamis than today when faith has become anaemic, indifference to religion reigns supreme, and hostility, not merely from outside, makes itself heard every now and then. It is a sad mistake that some Hindus make when they think to achieve political emancipation by ignoring, disregarding, disowning and contemning their noble spiritual heritage. This is very un-Hindu-like and has not, I am convinced, even the merit of leading to success. It is Swami Vivekananda's teaching that politics cannot, and ought not to, be divorced from spirituality. Great Indian leaders, such as Ram Mohun Roy and Dadabhai Naoroji, Mahadeo Govind Ranade, and Gopalkrishna Gokhale, and today Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, have always acted on this principle. And where have been the political leaders greater than they?

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Sri Swami Vivekananda in their eternal abode among Devas, Munis and Rishis, must be feeling sad at the attitude to Hindu religion and philosophy now becoming rampant. May I here draw attention to two contributed articles inserted in the *Leader* of December 4 and 9, 1933, of which the authors were "S.V." and "S.R.P."? The former describes the relation of politics to spirituality, the sublimity of Hinduism and the duty of Indian patriots while the latter deplores the attacks on Hinduism now common and stresses the necessity of counter-propaganda. I may be permitted to transcribe the latter:

"In the coming struggle for political freedom and economic advancement, the beginnings, which have already become somewhat noticeable, will be markedly prominent, of an attack on religion in general and Hinduism in particular. This is unfortunately the effect of the present-day tendencies of materialism which have been left as a legacy by the West. It may be that in the fulness of time political freedom will be gained, but that must not be purchased at the cost of religion. In England, America and other Western countries the campaign to discredit the Hindu religion which has been started in right earnest is at least understandable though not justifiable. But what can we say of those in India itself—sons of this sacred Bharatavarsha—the land of sages and saints, where truthfulness and everything noble in man once held sway—who are carrying on propaganda on similar lines, thus unconsciously playing into the hands of the enemies and bartering the fair name of this holy land? Not even a mess of pottage is received in return. We should ask patriotic Indians, as earnestly as we can, to carry on a counter-agitation within reasonable and possible limits, which will expose all the lies that are spread in the name of Hinduism. Many of the doctrines which are ridiculed and many of the practices condemned must not be taken literally, for every one of them has a distinct moral attached to it and has a distinct esoteric significance."

The celebration of the centenary of the birth of the divine Paramahamsa will prove to be a great blessing to India and Hinduism if it should turn men's thought more to religion. The longer one lives the stronger is one's conviction apt to grow, that no civilization, no progress, is worth anything in the long run, or will yield prosperity and happiness, or will endure, which has not a religious basis. Religion is morality, religion is life. And what people are there on earth who may more justly feel proud of their religious heritage

than the Hindus? Hinduism is Dharma; it is Sanâtana Dharma. And यतोधर्मस्ततोजयः —Where there is righteousness there is victory to be sure. One more word. Let not the divine teaching in the *Gîtâ* be ever overlooked by any Hindu—स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः —Better is death in one's own religion. This is the motto which Sri Ramakrishna would give to all Hindus.

RAMAKRISHNA AND VIVEKANANDA

By Prof. Ernest P. Horrwitz

[Prof. Horrwitz is a Professor of the Hunter College, New York City, and a great Indologist. In this short article he shows how the message of these two prophets of New India will reclaim erring mortals from gloom to light.]

Ramakrishna and Vivekananda shaped Neo-Vedânta. They dared live up to the truth which they realized, and had little regard for the world's cheap sneers or empty flatteries. Creedless, yet benevolent to every creed, not competing with the world's religions, but supplying a common platform for all, Neo-Vedânta seems pre-eminently fit to function as a sort of international arbitration court between wrangling sects, and settle theological disputes without fear or favour. Every denomination within every faith is inclined to raise the war-cry: my creed alone is true; only my saviour is divine! But Neo-Vedânta, world-wide in its sympathies, points to the one divine and dynamic Life which is profuse in all of God's messengers, Moses and Mohammed, Buddha and Jesus. Ramakrishna fulfilled the same charitable mission of reclaiming erring mortals from gloom to light. Like a ship furrowing the seven seas, the Bengal God-man left behind him a long and luminous trail which the restless waves of Mâyâ or cosmic nescience threaten to efface and obliterate. The great enemy is not so much atheism as sickly individualism which scatters broadcast the poisonous seeds of injustice, coercion and oppression. National hatreds and rival armaments shoot up everywhere. Neo-Vedântists must show themselves worthy of Ramakrishna's generous legacy. His clients are duty-bound to uphold, by cultural means, a classless society, and to visualize common and collective initiative in the place of paltry self-interest. They must not rest on their laurels, but align themselves with the new culture which realizes that the next historic step, inevitable, though transitory, is to be the liquidation of plutocracies, and the socialization of world-empires. Vivekananda first pinned his hopes on America, but late in his life on Russia. Ramakrishna once implied that he would re-incarnate in the 21st century in the north-west, in Russia.[1] Soviet planning, neither nationalistic nor theistic, has some points in common with the Ârya Samâj. Several of Dayananda's ideas fit well into Lenin's creation. Noble Tatar blood flowed in the veins of Vivekananda and Lenin, the respective founders of Neo-Vedânta and the New Russia. Vivekananda, priding himself on his Mongolian descent, once said: the Tatar is the wine of the Human

[1] Sri Ramakrishna simply said north-west and did not mention any place.—*Ed., P. B.*

race! Individualism is the product of settled life and industrialism; universalism, spiritualized by Aryan culture, characterizes the Ural-Altaic rover, the free nomad and hunter. Soviet Russia is denounced in democratic countries as Godless; she is indeed atheistic, but in the sense in which Buddhism discards personal gods and rigid, intolerant creeds. The chrysalis of divinity has turned into the butterfly of humanity, that fairest flower in the garden of the soul.

I have no temple and no creed, I celebrate no mystic rite;
The human heart is all I need wherein I worship day and night.
The human heart is all I need, for I have found God ever there.
Love is the one sufficient creed, and comradeship is purest prayer.

Vivekananda loathed the bourgeoisie, and loved the proletariat. The former, money-making and pleasure-loving, are utterly selfish and a danger to real progress. Peasants, cobblers, sweepers have more self-reliance and capacity for work than the contemptible middle-man who calls himself educated. Through long ages the proletariat has silently worked and produced the world's wealth, without a word of complaint to their heartless slave-drivers. Modern education brings the depressed classes to the fore, and shows the inferiority complex of burgherdom. Money is dead capital; the nation's living wealth is hard personal labour which builds body, mind and soul. Neo-Vedānta preaches the gospel of labour, as the *Gītā* does. Sooner or later the capable and industrious worker will get in position above the middle-man, that imbecile and parasite of society. Capital drifts into the hands of the worker whose skill is Yoga: *yogaḥ karmasu kausalam!* He is a hero, a brave fellow, a lion in human shape; wealth approaches him: *udyoginam puruṣha-sinham upaiti lakshmīḥ.*

RAMAKRISHNA FELLOWSHIP OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION

By Dr. Kalidas Nag

[Dr. Kalidas Nag is the Editor of *India & the World* which is working for a better understanding between the East and the West. Sri Ramakrishna, he says, is the latest of the God-intoxicated sages from the villages, showing that the unwritten mystic literature transmitted through oral tradition has some life-giving force in it which therefore should be surveyed and collected.]

"A truly religious man should think that other religions also are paths leading to truth. We should always maintain an attitude of respect towards other religions."

These words of Sri Ramakrishna will ever shine as the noblest revelation of Modern India and, in fact of present-day humanity. The more we are hurt by others or hurt others in matters religious, the more we feel the need of a serenity of spirit which develops spontaneous and sincere respect for our fellow-believers and sister faiths. The essential element, the thing that counts, is faith in God and belief in the reality of God in Man. Granted that, intolerance becomes an impossibility and tolerance and true Bhakti (devotion) a matter of course.

But alas! education, academic as well as social, comes to disturb tolerance, develops a false sense of superiority or religious pride and degrades religion into a battle ground of creeds and egos! The more we pretend to know about other religions the more we treat with condescension or veiled disdain the faiths other than our own! The 19th century ushered into existence a much vaunted science of Comparative Religion; but what to speak of developing in its European protagonists a real understanding of non-European religions, the so-called science remained largely a mass of occidental theorising which more often patronized than illumined the non-Christian faiths.

Against this essentially wrong and irreligious attitude, 19th century India took a noble stand through Rammohan Roy, and Keshab Chunder Sen, Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Each spoke his own language expounding his special realization but there was one point of unity. All four of the great sons of India were men of burning faith and prescribed for us the discipline of respectful understanding of fellow-believers. When the sudden influence of Western education made the attitude of nihilism or anti-religion almost fashionable for a while, those four great leaders brought the benighted generation back to faith, to their traditional will to believe. From what a catastrophe they saved us and to what new spiritual conquests they goaded us even when we were unconscious, would be clear to us if and when we would organize a comprehensive study of that spiritual crisis in our national history illumined by the serene faces of those leaders.

Unfortunately for us, such a study is neither projected as yet by our Universities nor provided for by other important seats of learning outside. The political and economic, the social and literary problems of modern India have been studied more or less thoroughly by generation of scholars. But how few have tackled as yet with the main spring of our culture and spirituality! A few of our modern Institutes or Cultural Foundations no doubt encourage, very creditably, in spite of their limited resources, the study of religions and allied subjects but their attention is confined more or less to the past revelations, texts and personalities in our religious history.

We want, on the contrary, a special focussing of our attention, a special Faculty (in our Universities, Maths and Maqtabs) for the study of the miracles of our Modern Faith and miracle workers of our spiritual regeneration. The death centenary of Raja Rammohan Roy (1933) is over. The birth centenary of Brahmananda Keshab Chunder Sen is coming (1938) and connecting the two, stands the unique figure of the unlettered sage Sri Ramakrishna overflowing with love and respect for all beings and all faiths. Towering personalities like Swami Vivekananda of India and Romain Rolland of Europe have been drawn to Ramakrishna by an attraction which baffles analysis. Yet through the speeches and writings of those great souls, from Swami Vivekananda's address at the Chicago Parliament of Religions (1893) to the publication of Rolland's 'Ramakrishna' (1929), the name of Ramakrishna and his mystic revelations have reached the souls of millions uniting the East and the West in an unique spiritual fraternity.

Can we imagine a moment more propitious for the inauguration of a permanent Foundation for the study of modern Indian Religions under the blessed name and inspiration of Sri

Ramakrishna? Scholars and mystics of various countries irrespective of caste or creed may be invited to study in India and give the public the benefit of their studies of the religious and mystic currents of Indian soul from the obscure villages to the learned academies. Sri Ramakrishna is the latest of the God-intoxicated sages from our villages and we should provide at once for the survey, collection and publication of the as yet unwritten mystic literature of Indian villages transmitted by our village minstrels and mystics through oral tradition. Our folk religion, and literature have not yet been explored adequately and I beg to appeal on this solemn occasion, thanking the Editor of the *Prabuddha Bharata* for extending to me the hospitality of its columns, for a thorough survey of that uncharted ocean of our Folk religion and culture, permanently assured under the auspices of the RAMAKRISHNA FELLOWSHIP OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION. It will be the noblest tribute of the nation to the memory of a person whose love blessed India and the whole world in expectation of a new era of spiritual Liberty and lasting Fraternity.

RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

BY THE RT. HON.
THE EARL OF RONALDSHAY, P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., ETC.

[Lord Ronaldshay, now Marquess of Zetland, is the Secretary of State for India at present. As Governor of Bengal, some years back, he had the opportunity of studying India on the spot, the result of which he has given to the world in his *The Heart of Aryavarta* from which this extract is taken. His picture of Sri Ramakrishna shows his deepest insight into things Indian.]

The temple of Dakshineswar, a few miles above Calcutta, is easily picked out by any one steaming up the river (Hughly), by means of a group of tall casuarina trees, which can be seen from afar, standing in the temple grounds. It was built by a pious Bengali lady, Rani Rasmani, in the year A.D. 1855, and it was here that the famous saint of Dakshineswar spent the greater part of his life. Few men have made a deeper impress upon the mind of Bengal in recent years than Gadadhar Chatterji, known to history as Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, and his chief disciple Narendra Nath Dutt, better known under the title of Swami Vivekananda. At a time when the craze for the ideas and ways of the West was at its height, those men stood for the ancient ideal of the East, for renunciation in an age of megalomania, for simplicity at a time when discoveries in mechanical science were making life elaborately complex.

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Born of Brahman parents on February 20, 1834, (?) Gadadhar Chatterji found himself drawn to a religious life from his boyhood, and he became an assistant priest at the temple of Dakshineswar from the date of its construction in 1855. He was no scholar, yet he possessed the power of attracting to himself men of light and leading of the day—Keshub Chandra Sen, Pandit Isvar Chandra Vidyasagar, Bankim Chatterji and Protap Chandra Mazumdar amongst others. The latter, one of the most devoted followers of Keshub Chandra Sen, seems to have been forcibly struck and a good deal puzzled by

the influence which Ramakrishna exercised over educated men. "What is there in common between him and me?" he asked. "I, an Europeanised, civilised, self-centred, semi-sceptical, so-called educated reasoner, and he, a poor, illiterate, unpolished, half-idolatrous, friendless Hindu devotee? Why should I sit long hours to attend to him, I who have listened to Disraeli and Fawcett, Stanley and Max Müller, and a whole host of European scholars and divines?. . . . And it is not I only, but dozens like me who do the same." And after due deliberation he comes to the conclusion that it is his religion that is his only recommendation. But his religion itself is a puzzle. "He worships Shiva, he worships Kâli, he worships Râma, he worships Krishna, and is a confirmed advocate of Vedântic doctrines. . . . He is an idolator, yet is a faithful and most devoted meditator of the perfections of the One formless, infinite Deity. . . . His religion means ecstasy, his worship means transcendental insight, his whole nature burns day and night with a permanent fire and fever of a strange faith and feeling."[1]

He studied the doctrine of the Vedânta at the feet of one Totâ Puri, a holy man who took up his abode at the temple for the space of nearly a year. But it was along the path of worship (Bhakti) rather than by way of knowledge (Gnâna) that he sought for the solution of the mystery of the universe. By temperament he was a mystic rather than a philosopher. The narrative of his life and teaching recalls inevitably the emotional figure of Chaitanya. Like the great Vaishnava saint of Nadia he gave vent to his pent-up feelings in song and dance. Hymns to the deity sung by his favourite disciples reduced him to tears, and frequently induced in him a state of trance. He was subject to such trances from his boyhood, his first experience taking place at the age of eleven, when, according to his own account, he suddenly saw a vision of glory, and lost all sense-consciousness while walking through the fields. His knowledge of God was intuitive, and he never felt the need of systematic study. A discussion on the subject of the study of the Scriptures was once in progress among his disciples when he exclaimed, "Do you know what I think of it? Books—sacred scriptures—all point the way to God. Once you know the way, what is the use of books?" A young man, typical of the educated middle classes of the day, obviously proud of his scholarship and knowledge of books and men, proceeded one day to the temple, attracted by the growing fame of the saint.[2] On learning that he was no scholar and had no use for books, he expressed extreme surprise, and at his first meeting embarked upon an argument with him on the subject of image worship. Ramakrishna swept aside his scholarly arguments. "Why must you worry yourself about things above you and beyond your reach?" he asked. "Does not the Lord of the universe abide in the temple of the human body and know the innermost thoughts of men? Seek then to know and revere God. Love God. That is the duty nearest you."

Apparent contradictions were nothing to him. God is the Absolute, the One,

[1] From a monograph entitled "Paramahansa Ramakrishna," republished from the *Theistic Quarterly Review*.

[2] Professor M. N. Gupta, a teacher in Calcutta who subsequently became a devoted disciple of Ramakrishna, and under the nom-de-plume of "M" wrote an account of his life and teaching entitled the "Gospel of Sri Ramkrishna." . . . The sketch of the saint and his teaching which I have drawn in this chapter is based upon Professor Gupta's narrative.

the All, the Brahman of the philosopher. But that does not prevent him from manifesting Himself in different aspects in His relations with the phenomenal world—as Krishna in His aspect of divine love, as Kâli in His aspect of creator of the universe and saviour of mankind. And when you realise God, such things cease to puzzle. "Sir, is it possible to see God?" asked the scholar. "Certainly," came the reply. "Cry unto the Lord with a yearning heart, and you shall see Him." It is clear from the testimony of his disciple that he himself constantly attained that pitch of spiritual exaltation which is called by the Hindus Samâdhi, a state of trance induced by God-consciousness—that communion with the Infinite enjoyed by the Rishis of old and spoken of by Professor B. N. Sen as the bliss of Brahman, which is beyond all words and above all reason.

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With even scantier consideration he brushed aside the question of the apparent partiality of God. "Am I then, Sir," asked Pandit Vidyasagar on one occasion, "to believe that we come into the world with unequal endowments? Is the Lord partial to a select few?" To which the Master replied, "Well, I am afraid you will have to take the facts of the universe as they stand. It is not given to man to see clearly into the ways of the Lord."

The value which he attached to ratiocination and inspiration respectively, is well illustrated by a scene which took place one afternoon in the presence of a number of his disciples in the grounds of the temple. "Is there any book in English on the art of reasoning?" he asked one of his Western-educated followers. He was informed that there were such treatises and, as an example, was told of that part of logic which dealt with reasoning from general propositions to particulars. He appeared to pay little attention to these explanations, which evidently fell flat upon his ear. And looking at him a little while after, his would-be instructor marvelled and became speechless. I give the description of the scene in his own words. "The Master stands motionless. His eyes are fixed. It is hard to say whether he is breathing or not. . . . The smile on his lips shows ecstatic delight that he feels at the sight of the blessed vision. Yes, he must be enjoying a vision of unequalled beauty which puts into the shade the refulgence of a million moons! Is this God vision? If so, what must be the intensity of Faith and Devotion, of Discipline and Austerity which has brought such a vision within reach of mortal man?" The writer goes on to tell us that he wended his way home with this unique picture of Samâdhi and the ecstasy of divine love vividly reflected in his mind, and that there echoed within him as he went these words, "Be incessantly merged, O my mind, in the sweetness of his love and bliss! Yes, be thou drunken with the joy of the Lord!"

Ramakrishna did not dissent from the monistic explanation of the universe. It was only that he was driven by temperament to attach far greater importance to the Personal Aspect of God. The Absolute of Sankara could be realised, but only in perfect Samâdhi. On one occasion half returning to consciousness from a state of trance he was heard exclaiming, "Yes, my Holy Mother (Kâli) is none other than the Absolute. She it is to whom the six systems of philosophy with all their learned disquisitions furnish no clue." But when a man returned from Samâdhi he became a differentiated ego once more, and was thrown back upon the world of relativity so that he perceived the world-system (Mâyâ) as real. Why?

Because with the return of his egoity he was convinced that he as an individual was real; and "so long as his ego is real to him (real relatively) the world is real too, and the Absolute is unreal (unreal relatively)." He laid constant stress upon this.

The saint returning from Samâdhi could say nothing about the Absolute. "Once differentiated, he is mute as to the undifferentiated. Once in the relative world his mouth is shut as to the Absolute and Unconditioned." And since Samâdhi was not achieved by the average man, he must meditate upon and commune with the Personal God, for "so long as you are a person you cannot conceive of, think or perceive God otherwise than as a Person."

In Ramakrishna's own case this latter difficulty was undoubtedly a predilection as much as a necessity, for by temperament he was emotional rather than critical. "As a rule," he declared, "the devotee does not long for the realisation of the Impersonal. He is anxious that the whole of his ego should not be effaced in Samâdhi." And the reason which he gives is the one to be expected from a man of his temperament. "He would fain have sufficient individuality left to him to enjoy the Vision Divine as a person. He would fain taste the sugar in place of being one with the sugar itself."

His creed was summed up by him during a visit to Pandit Sasadhar in Calcutta one afternoon in 1884. Many paths lead to God, the path of knowledge, that of works and that of self-surrender and devotion. The way of knowledge is for the philosopher. His object is to realize Brahman the Absolute. He says "Neti, Neti" ("not this, not this"), and so eliminates one unreal thing after another until he arrives at a point at which all discrimination between the Real and the Unreal ceases. The way of works is that laid down in the Gitâ, to live in the world but not to be of the world; to practise at all times an exalted altruism. Neither of these paths is easy to travel in the present age. It is almost impossible in these materialistic days to get rid of the conviction that the self is identical with the body. How, then, can a man understand that he is one with the universal soul, the Being Absolute and Unconditioned? Similarly with the way of works. A man may form a resolution to work without expectation of any reward or fear of punishment in this world or the next; but the chances are that consciously or unconsciously he will get attached to the fruit of his work. Let a man then choose the way of worship and seek communion with the Personal God, for the path of love, adoration and self-surrender to God is the easiest of all paths. It teaches the necessity of prayer without ceasing, it is in this age "the shortest cut leading to God." (*"The Heart of Aryavarta", published by Constable and Company Ltd., London. Second Printing.*)

Only come to my Divine Mother and you will receive not only Bhakti if you will, but also Jnâna. You will see Her not only in Bhâva Samâdhi, manifesting Herself in Sakâra Rupa, Forms Divine, but you will also realize Her as Brahman the Absolute, in that Nirvikalpa Samâdhi in which all self is effaced and there is no manifestation whatsoever, even of the Divine Forms, for it is Nirâkâra Rupa transcending all idea of form.

—*Sri Ramakrishna*

RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA

By Sir Narayana Chandavarkar

[Sir Narayan Chandavarkar was a Justice of the Bombay High Court. Earlier he was well known in political circles in India and was once the President of the Indian National Congress. He was also a leader of the reforming section of Hindu society in Bombay.]

The late Raja Ram Mohon Roy and Keshab Chandra Sen rendered immortal services to India by trying to invigorate and fill the soul of India by means of Western literature and the Christian spirit. For when you are apt to be too fond of your own home, of your own little corner, of your own country, then you are apt to dislike it and look to other countries, for familiarity is apt to breed contempt, and you are apt to ignore the beauty that is in you and in your home and country. This could be done only by living aloof for some time from all those things with which you are daily familiar. A villager patient had under protests to go to a different place for a change to recoup himself at the recommendation of his doctor, and even though he had not left his village before even for once, on his return he found it to be much more grand, sublime, beautiful and invigorating. After having drunk deep of the Western literature and the Christian spirit introduced by the above named Bengali pioneers, people began to go to England and America, and the life that was lived by them there and the experience gained and the changes wrought on their minds, enabled them to see in the right light the grandeur of our country, just as the patient was able to find out the goodness of his village after his return to it from his forced exile. Therefore it is that after we had been captivated by this Western literature, civilization and politics and Western activity, and we were going in for it, the period of revival came. Most of us, in fact all of us, went through the period of revival. I had passed through it, lived through it and fought in it. I distinctly recollect that its first symptoms were seen about the year 1877 when there was a reaction. There was reaction in religious reform, reaction in social reform and reaction in all sorts of reforms. That symptom was a protest against the blind following of all that was Western and an endeavour to prevent this blind following, an endeavour to see that we ought not to take any Western civilization, swallow it, eat it and suffer from indigestion; but take only as much of it as is necessary in order to refine ourselves, our souls, our civilization, our literature and religious spirit. The loadstone of this Eastern civilization, the man who really typified the ancient soul of India and lived and worked as the vindicator of it and was steeped in the Eastern civilization, is the master, the originator of Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He led the life of an ascetic, he led the life of a prophet. He discarded all the luxury and comfort of life. He went about and talked of God. There is one thing for which India has stood from the ancient times, and if there is one thing which India will always insist upon retaining, if there is one thing which will save her, it is the spirit of asceticism, it is the capacity which she has herself built from the ancient times, which is,

"Leave mortal, sensual enjoyment and luxury, leave even your dress and everything and rush mad for immortal Spirit." Religion is no religion, civilization is no civilization, if at the back of it there is not what is called that spirit of asceticism, the spirit of flinging away life in order to gain it. There are those who say that this spirit of asceticism did a lot of harm to India. But let us understand this lesson from Swami Vivekananda as taught to us by him, by the teachings of his Great Master, the part of truth and falsehood in it, in order to find the real Asceticism; and when India has understood and lived it, she will be able to occupy her proper place amongst these European nations.—*(Extract from a speech delivered at the Vivekananda birthday anniversary celebrations, Bombay, 1936).*

RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA

By His Highness the Yuvaraja of Mysore

We are living in an age of reason when we can no longer fall back on mere blind faith. To be believed, to be made the basis of human action, everything has to be proved. Awakening India subjects her religion to this critical test and desires the eternal truths propounded in the Vedas to be given to her in their pristine purity. In her movement of reform and in her onward march of progress, she wants a form of religion, rationalistic with an all-welding force to help her along rather than hamper her at every step with superstitions and blind faiths. Such an establishment of Dharma, based upon the eternal truths of the Vedas has been given to us by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. We have but to hear of his life to see what a comprehensive grasp of the eternal truths of religions he held, which made him realise God, the Kingdom of Heaven, in each religion, thus proving the psychological basis (of religion) irrespective of caste, creed or sect. If Sri Ramakrishna did this for the world, what has Swami Vivekananda done for it? Well, he was the great apostle of this teaching to the world. He has done us special services for which we cannot be too grateful. The Swami advocated a practical Vedânta, a Vedânta making for a new National Spirit, a spirit of public service, wherein the subjective vision of the One should be transformed into the objective service for the many. He knew that the modern transition in India could not come to full fruition if the people were not taken into account. Therefore while in the West one finds him uttering the philosophy of the Vedânta, urging the Western world to meditation, in the East one finds him urging the people to action, to cultivate the spirit of public service, the spirit of religious national life, the spirit of social unity and the spirit of social reform whose method is to be a growth from within.—*(From a speech delivered on the 25th January, 1914 at the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore, on the occasion of the birthday anniversary celebration of Swami Vivekananda.)*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Sir V. P. Madhava Rao, C.I.E.

[Sir V. P. Madhava Rao was an orthodox Brahmin of S. India and a great statesman. He was Dewan for three premier Native States in India in succession.]

In India the mind of the youth is confused by two points of view as regards the universe and the life of man in the universe. There is the old Hindu ideal and there is also the modern ideal of the industrial life of England, which is mostly divorced from religion and which is based upon what they consider to be the natural law or the requirements of modern times. The highest development of character is not possible in the absence of religious belief. Sri Ramakrishna emphasized this truth. He also impressed upon the people that Sannyâs did not mean flying away from the world but uncompromising independence towards the world. These truths are being recognized in Europe today and the more thoughtful minds there are rebelling against the material civilization of the Continent and trying to go back to religion based on morality and principles for the conduct of life. Self-control, concentration, and self-conquest are inculcated with great force only in the Hindu religion. All their efforts would be lacking in deeper meaning if they are not correlated to a great spiritual life as a whole. The world of senses and the earthly life are only stages of preparation for the higher and spiritual world. The philosophical and the religious spirit discovered by the great Hindu sages is slowly permeating the West. The great lesson of Sri Ramakrishna is the restatement of the old Sanâtana Dharma. He lived amongst men and demonstrated the possibility of obtaining complete control over the senses and concentrating one's mind on the Divine—*(On the occasion of Sri Ramakrishna birthday celebrations at Madras in 1917.)*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Sir Jadunath Sarkar, C.I.E.

[Sir Jadunath Sarkar was for some time the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University and is famous for his researches in Indian History.]

Today this Parishad is sanctified by having a picture of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa Deva in its bosom. During his lifetime he had shown the way to Freedom to thousands of devotees. Everyone had recognized in him one who had really seen God. Amongst those who had seen him and recognized the manifestation of the Great Power in him are to be found not only Hindus but also Brahmos like Keshab Chandra Sen, and rationalists like Dr. Mahendra Lal Sarkar. Whether we believe in an Avatâr or not, all of us recognize that light can be transmitted through the help of sparks of fire. It is many years since the earthly life of Paramahamsa Deva came to an end. But the light that he brought to this world is still burning. Even today

millions of people, men and women, rich and poor, scholars and the illiterate, the happy and the miserable, the high caste and the low, reading his life and hearing his teachings, have been able to tune their life to a higher key. His life has brought solace to many a heart afflicted with sorrow and has shown that the Kingdom of Heaven can be brought to this earth.

The father is recognized most through the son; that is why the greatest gift of Sri Ramakrishna is Swami Vivekananda who has brought about a new epoch in Bengal and India by inseparably combining with the Jnâna and Bhakti Yogas of his Guru that Karma Yoga which is so very essential today. Let the portraits of these two great prophets of this age shed their pure light and remain for ever effulgent for this nation on their road to Freedom.—*(At the unveiling ceremony of Sri Ramakrishna's portrait at the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, Calcutta, on 14th December, 1935.)*

GREAT HEART*

(Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa)

By J. Caldwell-Johnston

A white flame burning in a swampy place,
Mere squelchy wilderness of reed and briar,
Tussocks and rotten turf-stuff, and the mire
That sucks and slavers round each planted pace;
The wide, unwinking sky's blind-seeing face,
Moonless, unstarred, where now and then mock fire,
Dancing, deludes wan hearts and feet that tire,
Yet deeper, deathward, lures into the maze—
God made of thee a beacon. We to thee
Tend not, but circling keep upon our road.
Thou givest us the light, wherewith to see
Our stumbling-stones, and our too-heavy load
Thou easest. Yea, thou, standing steadfastly,
Smilest on us the sure, sweet Smile of God.

* From the *Asiatic Review*, London.

THE INDIAN MIRROR

[*The Indian Mirror* (the Sunday issue of which was known as *The Sunday Mirror*) was an organ of the Brâhmo Samâj at the time when these writings which we have quoted below appeared in it. We have every reason to believe that the extracts quoted from the issues for the years 1876, 1878, and 1881 were written by Keshab Chandra Sen.]

THE BRÂHMO SAMÂJ

Ramakrishna, a Hindu devotee known as a Paramahamsa, now living at Dakshineswar, is a remarkable man, and appears to have attained an extraordinary elevation of moral character and spirituality. Several Brâhmo missionaries who have visited him from time to time speak highly of his devotion and purity and his deep insight into the realities of the inner world. Though a true Hindu he is said to sympathize heartily with the Brâhmos of the advanced school. *(Sunday, February 20, 1876.)*

A VISIT TO THE YOGI OF DAKSHINESWAR

Ramakrishna is not educated in the English sense of the term. His views may be anything but pleasant to hear and his notions of gallantry or propriety are such as will probably shock the fastidious tastes of Western critics. I can assure the reader, however, if the Yogi is not gallant is pure. If there is not warmth in his feelings about a woman, the place which he assigns her in the kingdom of God is far higher than any which the passions of men might reach. Our good hermit thinks that any extended a scale of devotion or communion is impossible so long as there is lust to distract or a woman to seduce the heart from the way of heaven. Every devotee should be absolutely proof against any influence of the kind. In that the mind being free from every sort of distracting influence, may proceed uninterruptedly to its earnest search of the Almighty; but how to be thus free, how to be proof against lust?

The method is to resort to the most violent pains for the purpose of extinguishing lust. If I am asked to state my opinion as to whether the mode alluded to is practicable or beneficial I shall say that I do not know. For surely it has been feasible in one or two cases, or why was it resorted to at all? But to enforce it as a rule in all cases would be the height of absurdity. The same remark perfectly applies to Sri Ramakrishna's method. But let us see what it is. I have to only recall the figure used in my last letter, viz. that the door-keeper at the mansion of heaven is a woman; now in what way is one to overcome the superior power of this being? Sri Ramakrishna says there are three ways of doing it.

The first is what is called the "heroic" method—and its principle is the defeat of sin brought on by indulgence in sin. Let a man go straight to the door-keeper and attain satiety and complete reaction by indulging in every sort of sexual pleasure. This is the most hideous principle which depraved imagination has invented for the purification of the heart. Yet it is a melancholy fact that hundreds, thousands of depraved men and women are pursuing this suicidal course at the time of the day.

The second method consists in assuming the female nature. If a man puts

on a woman's dress, imitates her manners and cultivates the tenderest feelings of female nature and in this way forgets his own manhood, verily he cannot look on woman with evil eyes. He greets her as his handmaid and in this way gets access to heaven.

The third is called the "filial" method and it means that the devotee is to learn to call a woman by the name of Mother: For if he is a son he cannot possibly commit lust in his heart. Now this may appear to most readers as transcending God's evident intentions and violating nature's beneficent laws. But the fact is there. Ramakrishna owes much of his success to the last mentioned method. The trial and temptations which he voluntarily underwent are marvellous to those who "since it is hard to combat learn to fly." He was tempted in a hundred different ways—but from every blast of the furnace he came out and shone as the purest and brilliant metal. *(June 15, 1879.)*

NOTE

The Paramahamsa of Dakshineswar to whose hermitage we paid a visit on the occasion of the moonlight festival completely lost his senses when he heard the procession chant the name of God before him. This is what we call being intoxicated or maddened by communion with God. The very sight of a man showing his love to Hari renders him literally insensible with joy. The sight we saw there is worth seeing by all means. *(November 2, 1879.)*

NOTE

The Paramahamsa of Dakshineswar is rousing the spirit of Devotion and spreading the love of God among the educated classes in the city. Last evening there was a devotional festival at the house of Babu Rajendranath Mitter. *(December 11, 1881.)*

EDITORIAL NOTES

Friday was the day set apart for our autumnal festival. So we went to Dakshineswar to pass a few hours in a friendly talk with the good Paramahamsa with whom our readers have become probably quite familiar by this time. More than fifty gentlemen were present on the occasion. The first thing that as usual edified us was the sight of this holy person in a trance. Ramakrishna is a man marvellously susceptible of religious impressions and whenever he hears somebody speak lovingly and genuinely of the Lord, he is so much moved that he cannot contain himself and much against his own will is literally lost in rapture of his emotional pleasures. He loves our minister and whenever we accompany the latter to Dakshineswar on a visit to the good man, the first thing that greets our eyes is a profound, respectable, sincere and affectionate bow on each side and then the complete immersion of the saint in a few minutes' trance. That is the work of love. He regains his consciousness little by little and when he is half awake begins the conversation as edifying in its nature as it is marked by all the humour and humility that characterizes a genuine son of God. One thing is remarkable about his discourses. He never states many propositions, but the largest portion of what he says is taken up with illustrations. And what illustrations they are! Facts drawn from the commonest incidents of life, familiar sights and commonplace details are combined and enlarged upon with such infinite sagacity and humour as suffice to suggest, as soon as you have taken your seat before him for a few minutes, that

you are before no ordinary person. The subject of our talk on Friday last was the renunciation of self—a topic which he always likes to descant upon. Two obstacles, according to him, lie in the path of spiritual regeneration—the love of woman and the love of money, and on this day he discussed whether it was possible for a regenerated man to live in the world and yet be above it. Those who affect piety are not necessarily above the world, for like vultures and kites they soar very high, heavenward as they presume and yet their hearts are towards the drains and ditches where lie the carcasses they feed upon. But one who is freed from self remains in the world like a cord that is burnt: the similitude of the cord is seen, but the least wind disperses the ashes; like the boiled paddy that seems like the grain and is yet unable to produce other grain; in other words the liberated soul moves about in the world, takes part in its affairs, and retains every semblance of the ego, and yet it is not in reality the ego, but something above it. It is possible for such a soul to remain here in activity and yet be unsullied and unaffected by the passing impurities, as it is possible for a flint stone to remain immersed in water and when brought out, to give the same sparks of fire that came from it when it had not touched water. The flint does not lose its fire by being immersed, and so the liberated soul does not lose its heavenly warmth even when it is compelled to touch the impurities of the world. *(October 9, 1881.)*

THE LATE RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

i

Ramakrishna Bhattacharji, better known in the Hindu community as Paramahamsa of Dakshineswar, was born on the 10th of Falgoon, 1884, at Sripore Kamar Puker in the District of Burdwan. His father Khudeeram Bhattacharji, was a devout Brâhmin and in all respects a true Hindu. On the young Ramakrishna the qualities of his parents must have exercised more than usual influence. A peculiarly religious temper seems to have taken powerful hold of his mind and it continued the ruling principle through life. In his 12th year he came to Calcutta with his eldest brother Rameswar Bhattacharji and lived in Jhamapukur, where the latter founded a *chatushpaty* or a school for Brâhminical learning. Here Paramahamsa continued his studies in Sanskrit for some time. Paramahamsa always deprecated Brâhminical learning which, he said, instead of making a man religious, only secured him an oblation of rice and plantain. But though not distinguished for scholarship, Paramahamsa had a gift of strong commonsense and quick apprehension. He could argue learnedly with the most erudite Pandits of the day and understand and explain the most abstruse passages of the Sanskrit scripture. In 1832 the stupendous temples of Dakshineswar were founded by the late Rani Rashmoni. Paramahamsa's eldest brother Rameswar Bhattacharji was appointed priest of the temple of Kâli. After his death Paramahamsa succeeded to his office. He did not hold it for a long time, but resigned it for higher devotional exercises. The acquaintance which he here formed with Hindu ascetics of various denominations, seems to have caused a considerable diversion in his religious opinions. The teachings of these Yogis had an abiding effect on his whole life. From this time he secluded himself entirely from the world and passed his days in prayer and contemplation in an obscure corner on the riverside of the temple

garden. This place known as Panchvati is held in sacred veneration by many of his followers. Here

"Remote from man, with
God he passed his days
Prayer all his business, all his
Pleasure praise."

The great doctrine of his religion was the renouncement of Kâmini-Kânchan, that is, humanities and wealth. The late Paramahamsa was held in the highest respect by all sections of Hindu community. The educated Hindus appreciated his teachings highly and among his followers were many graduates and undergraduates of the University. The great Brâhmo leader, the late Babu Keshab C. Sen had a profound love and respect for him. If faith, love, self-sacrifice, purity of character and entire resignation to the will of the Almighty be the chief qualifications of a religious man, they found their highest perfection in him and the veneration of the people was not misplaced.—*(August 21, 1886. Originally it appeared in "The Englishman.")*

ii

The much respected Ramakrishna Paramahamsa of Dakshineswar who was ailing for some months past from scrofula, breathed his last at about 1 A.M. on Sunday, the 15th instant. The disease had gradually undermined his health, but it was not expected that the end would come so soon. On the day in question, he had taken his evening meal, and had, as usual, retired to bed. A song which was being sung by some of his attendants awoke him and he joined with them, but a short while after, they did not hear his voice, and thought that he had as was his wont gone into ecstasy (Samâdhi). As, however, he continued in this state for a somewhat longer time than usual, they touched his body and felt his pulse, when it was found that he had ceased to breathe and was no longer living. The very evening he had asked one of the medical men who visited him, whether his disease was a curable one, but having received no satisfactory reply he was heard to say that he was prepared to die any moment.

The next evening his body was removed to the burning *ghat* at Cossipore. The funeral procession was followed by a large number of his followers, friends and admirers who had hastened to the spot to have a last look at his face. The party entered the *ghat*, chanting hymns in praise of Hari. The cot containing the body was then laid down on the side of the river and all the men sat down on the bare ground, forming a circle around the dead body. Babu Troylokhya Nath Sanyal, the singing minister of the Brâhmos, sang a few songs suited to the occasion. After the songs had softened to some extent the hearts of the sorrowing multitude, the body was placed on the funeral pyre and in an hour and a half the burning was complete. A few bones only were taken to be interred at a suitable spot.

Ramakrishna began life as a priest in one of the shrines at Dakshineswar. Here he practised devotion, Yoga and austerities, such as is customary with Hindu devotees. The outcome of all this was a religion which is as liberal as possible. Ramakrishna combined in his own person a Hindu, a Mohammedan and a Christian. In fact, he made no distinction of castes and creeds and his constant wish was that the followers of all religions, being freed from mutual jealousies, would all unite in brotherly love, and sing in praise of the Almighty. He was an unlettered man, but his commonsense was strong

and his power of observation keen. He had facility for expressing his ideas in such homely language that he could make himself easily understood by all on intricate points of religion and morality. His childlike simplicity and outspokenness, his deep religious fervour and self-denial, his genial and sympathetic nature and his meek and unassuming manners won the hearts of those who came in contact with him, and music from his lips had a peculiar charm on those who heard him sing. Among others the late Babu Keshab Chandra Sen was very fond of his company and used to spend hours with him in religious conversation. The most remarkable feature in his life was that he succeeded in reforming the character of some young men whose morals were very corrupt. Graduates and under-graduates vied with one another in becoming his followers and many of them have already renounced the world and have adopted the life of ascetics. During the last few months of his illness, it was a touching scene to see the tender care and love with which these young men attended him day and night. Now that he is no more, may the spirit of love and kindness and the high moral tone which he has imparted last for ever, and bear golden fruits.—*(August 19, 1886.)*

iii

With the exception of a few people in and around the city, Paramahamsa Ramakrishna was not much known in the country. But he was a devotee of the true type. Born of a poor Brâhmin family in Jahanabad in the Hooghly district, Ramakrishna was not fortunate in receiving a good education, secular or spiritual, in his younger days. When he grew up to be a man, his brother, who was a priest, brought him down to Calcutta to relieve him of his priestly duties, but Ramakrishna was averse to this as he always entertained a feeling of intense hatred towards the so-called Brâhmin priests. A few years after, his brother died and he was induced by his friends and relations to fill the place of his brother for the support of his family, which he did with great reluctance. At last, Ramakrishna was relieved by a nephew of his, and he commenced to pave the path for his journey to the happy land. Days and nights, weeks and months, he passed on the banks of the holy Ganges, meditating and communing with the supreme being whom he styled by the name Divine Mother. Ramakrishna's divine exercises became gradually so strong that when he performed it he used to lose all external sensibility. I had the good fortune of seeing him and conversing with him many a time, and I had been out of humour to see him performing the exercises when his body used to become void of animation. Anyone who touched at that time his body, found it to be as stiff as a plank. Mr. Cooke, the American evangelist, who came to this country a few years ago, once witnessed Ramakrishna's divine exercises and he expressed his great surprise at it and remarked that he was not aware before that a man could become so much immersed in divine spirit as to lose all perception of the external world. It is about ten or twelve years since the late Babu Keshab Chandra Sen found Ramakrishna out, and from that time he came to be known to some persons. Ramakrishna was very fond of Keshab Chandra Sen and before his death, he expressed his desire to pass the remaining days of his life in the sanctuary at the Lily Cottage, the residence of the departed Brâhmo leader. Ramakrishna in his habits was simple and unassuming. He had a peculiar faci-

lity in expressing deep spiritual truths in homely and impressive language. All sections of the community mourn his loss. The other day his ashes were buried in the garden house of one of his disciples, on which occasion hundreds of educated persons were present. A procession of several graduates and undergraduates of our University was formed when the ashes were conveyed to the garden house.—*(September 10, 1886.)*

THE NEW DISPENSATION

[*The New Dispensation* is an organ of the New Dispensation Church founded by Keshab Chandra Sen. We have every reason to believe that the following extracts from its issues of various dates were written by Keshab Chandra Sen.]

HOPEFUL SIGNS

Those who have watched the later phases of religious thought and life in Calcutta must have been struck to find how the venerable Paramahamsa of Dakshineswar is serving as a marvellous connecting link between the Hindus and the Brâhmos of the New Dispensation. There have been a series of religious meetings of late in the houses of respectable Hindus, in which the representatives of the two communities were harmoniously blended together so as to form a unity of thought and devotion, which was alike striking and interesting. The proceedings of these meetings generally embrace hymns and discourses by the Paramahamsa, questions and answers and *kirtans* of a most enthusiastic character. Ladies of high caste Hindu families congregate behind the *purdah* in the upper verandah and listen with the deepest interest. Learned Pandits, educated youths, orthodox Vaishnavas and Yogis gather in numbers, some from curiosity, some for the sake of Sâdhusanga, good company, others for acquiring wisdom and joining the *kirtan*. We have invariably found in such occasions an outburst of living devotional enthusiasm—a mighty wave of rapturous excitement—sweeping over the whole audience. The effect is wonderful. Theological differences are lost in the singing wave of love and rapture. What this spiritual fusion and loving union may lead to in the end who can divine? The ways of the Lord are past finding out.—*(Sunday, January 3, 1883.)*

NOTES

The great devotee, the Paramahamsa of Dakshineswar, had another long interview with the minister and his friends at Lily Cottage whither he had been invited on the 21st instant. The Paramahamsa, though he could not be much over forty-two, looked more aged than he did the last time he was seen. His singular merits suffer no diminution, but attain greater maturity with the progress of time. Simple as a child, yet sensible and shrewd, he loses nothing of the utter inebriation of God's love. He has a strong attraction for every class of Brâhmos who flock to enjoy his communion wherever he goes.—*(Sunday, July 30, 1882.)*

TWO GREAT MINDS

The venerable Paramahamsa lately paid a visit to the eminent philanthropist and scholar, Vidyasagar. Why did he call? What earthly or unearthly advantage did that recluse expect from such a visit? The Paramahamsa has a passion for great minds. His curio-

sity to see distinguished men is most ardent. He is ever asking his friends to show him great things and in this he is at times most importunate. Now he is off to see a lion. Now his heart is bent on witnessing steam force as it propels a steam launch up the river. He is impatient to have a look at a cathedral with its prayerful thousands. And among beasts and things inanimate he would honour the great, so also among the human species. Curiosity alone, deep and impulsive, led the devotee of Dakshineswar to Vidyasagar's house in Calcutta. No prospect of earthly good actuated him.

"Eminent sage," said the devotee, "I come as little muddy stream into the vast deep sea (Sâgar)."

"Yes," replied Vidyasagar, "but you must remember, venerated sire, that the sea is full of salt water, and if a fresh water stream mixes with it, it too becomes salt and loses all its sweetness."

"It is not Avidyâ Sâgar which indeed is to be shunned but Vidyâ Sâgar that draws me into its welcome-waters" was the rejoinder.

"But the sea hath its dangers and perils," said Vidyâsâgar, "and thousands of monsters hide themselves in its treacherous waters."

"Are there not pearls in the deep water of the sea? In search of those pearls I am here. The sea is famous for its hidden treasures. Great is your value, Vidyasagar," said Paramahamsa. —*(Sunday, September, 1882.)*

KARMAYOGIN

[*Karmayogin* was a nationalist paper during the days of the first outburst of nationalism in Bengal. The following two extracts from it were written by Sri Arabinda Ghose.]

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The 'Utsav' of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is an event that annually stirs Calcutta to its depths. Year after year the number increases, of those who believe that the birth of the sage of Dakshineswar has been the critical event of the present age in India. Some believe this, for one reason; others for another. The devotee sees in him the last of the Avatârs. The historian sees the keystone of the idea that constitutes Hinduism. The partisan feels that he satisfies all parties and conflicts with none. The philosopher finds in him the living embodiment of the highest Vedânta. And even amongst the workers, there are some who derive from the spectacle of his birth the faith that inspires and sanctions all their struggles.

*

The world could not bear a second birth like that of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, in five hundred years. The mass of thought that he has left, has first to be transformed into experience; the spiritual energy given forth has to be converted into achievement. Until this is done, what right have we to ask for more? What could we do with more?

Religion always, in India, precedes national awakenings. Sankarâchârya was the beginning of a wave that swept round the whole country, culminating in Chaitanya in Bengal, the Sikh Gurus in the Punjab, Sivaji in Maharashtra, and Râmânuja and Madhwâchârya in the South. Through each of these a people sprang into self realization, into national energy and consciousness of their own unity. Sri Ramakrishna

represents a synthesis in one person of all the leaders. It follows that the movements of his age will unify and organise the more provincial and fragmentary movements of the past. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is the epitome of the whole. His was the great superconscious life which alone can witness to the infinitude of the current that bears us all onwards. He is the proof of the Power behind us, and the future before us. So great a birth initiates great happenings. Many are to be tried as by fire, and not a few will be found to be pure gold; but whatever happens, whether victory or defeat, speedy fulfilment or prolonged struggle, the fact that he has been born and lived here in our midst, in the sight and memory of men now living is proof that

God hath sounded for the trumpet
That shall never call retreat!
He is sifting out the hearts of men
Before His judgment seat;
Oh, be swift my soul, to answer Him:
Be jubilant, my feet!
While God is marching on!

(5th Chaitra, 1316)

THE AWAKENING SOUL OF INDIA

. . . The nineteenth century in India was imitative, self-forgetful and artificial. It aimed at a successful reproduction of Europe in India forgetting the deep saying of the *Gitá*: "Better the law of one's own being though it be badly done than an alien Dharma well followed; death in one's own Dharma is better, it is a dangerous thing to follow the law of another's nature." For death in one's own Dharma brings new birth, success in an alien path means successful suicide. If we had succeeded in Europeanising ourselves we would have lost for ever our spiritual capacity, our intellectual force, our national elasticity and power of self-renovation. That tragedy has been enacted more than once in history, only the worst and most mournful example of all would have been added. Had the whole activity of the country been of the derivatives and alien kind that result would have supervened. But the life breath of the nation still moves in the religious movement of Bengal and the Punjab, in the political aspirations of Maharashtra and in the literary activities of Bengal. Even here it was an undercurrent, the peculiar temperament and vitality of India struggling for self-preservation under a load of foreign ideas and foreign forms and it was not till in the struggle between these two elements the balance turned in favour of the national Dharma that the salvation of India was assured. The resistance of the conservative element in Hinduism, Tamasic, inert, ignorant, unereative though it was, saved the country by preventing an even more rapid and thorough disintegration actually taking place and by giving respite and time for the persistent national self to emerge and find itself. It was in religion first that the soul of India awoke and triumphed. There were always indications, always great forerunners but it was when the flower of the educated youth of Calcutta bowed down at the feet of an illiterate Hindu ascetic, a self-illuminated ecstatic and "Mystic" without a single trace or touch of the alien thought or education upon him, that the battle was won. The going forth of Vivekananda, marked by the Master as the heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it, was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake not only to survive but to conquer.—*(From Karmayogin, 12th Ashadh, 1316.)*

THE INDIAN REVIEW AND THE BENGALEE

RELIGIOUS PROGRESS IN INDIA—RAMAKRISHNA'S PLACE THEREIN

The history of religious progress in India is a fascinating subject, but we shall consider it only in so far as it is necessary to narrate it for explaining Sri Ramakrisha's place in the history of Indian thought. When the ancient and sublime religion of Aryâvarta was in danger of being buried under ceremonialism and sacredotalism, Buddha appeared on the scene. He tried to reconstruct religion on a purely ethical and philosophical basis. But this was too difficult for the masses to comprehend and superstition worse than those ever prevalent before came to dominate the minds of the people. At this time Sankara appeared and brought new life to the simple and sublime Vedântic faith and his work was carried on by Sri Râmânuja and Madhwâchârya. After the inroad of Islam into India, there were various reconstructions by Râmânanda, Kabir, Nânak, Chaitanya and Dâdu. They introduced a democratic element into religion and emphasized the supreme importance of Bhakti. Since then a new force began to operate in Indian society. When the English came to India, a new leaven was introduced into the old civilization. They came here as the most modern exponents of Greek culture with its insistence on the value and beauty of the outward world and its emphasis on the importance of the political life. The utilitarian and scientific modes of thought began to exercise a great fascination over the mind of educated India. But as Swami Vivekananda pointed out again and again the genius of India is essentially religious, reconstruction began to be attempted. Raja Rammohan Roy wanted to found a new theism, Swami Dayananda Saraswathi wanted to go back to the simple faith of the Vedas. . . . Brâhmoism also was founded as a protest against ceremonialism and did not attempt at a synthesis. Hence it also had no chance of establishing itself in the land. Thus at this time when the whole land was in a ferment and faiths were rising and declining with astonishing quickness, there was born a man who was destined to continue the traditional faiths of the land and give it a new vigour and life by a new synthesis of his own. He is the last of the great batch of teachers who have handed on the lamp of spiritual knowledge in undimmed lustre from time immemorial in our land.—*(Indian Review, 1908).*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The great teacher Ramakrishna Paramahamsa who was the inspirer of the loftiest spiritual ideals of Vivekananda has exercised a profound and enduring influence upon the spiritual life of his generation. Not only Vivekananda, but the great Keshub Chunder Sen imbibed some of the most fruitful of his spiritual ideals and not a little of the catholicity which marked his latter-day teachings from the saint and hermit who lived in the quiet seclusion of the garden at Dakshineswar and incarnated in his personality—the spiritual aspiration of ancient and modern India. Among the great spiritual teachers of the world Ramakrishna Paramahamsa will take his place in the front-rank. In deep and hourly communion with the impalpable, the invisible spirit pervading the universe, he had more of spiritual insight and illumination than what

has been vouchsafed except to the most gifted; and Vivekananda was his chosen disciple. Ramakrishna was the Teacher and Vivekananda the Preacher. Ramakrishna was the fountain of inspiration; Vivekananda drank deep at the fountain and tempered the spiritual enthusiasm of the Master with an intellectuality that was his own and that had been broadened and strengthened by converse with the East and the West. Carlyle has told us in one of those sayings that will live, that the history of a nation is the history of its great men. There is a large substratum of truth behind this saying. A history of any particular epoch is the history of the forces, social, religious and political, which are operative in that age and are moulding the life of the community. A great man embodies the dominant forces of the time in any particular department of human action. He expresses them with emphasis. He gives them a direction all his own and imparts to them a volume and intensity which derives its impulse from the fervour of his enthusiasm. Ramakrishna and Vivekananda are great men in this sense. They are shining spiritual guides who will, for all time to come, influence the spiritual aspirations of the educated and the thoughtful among our countrymen. *(Editorial, The Bengalee, April 29, 1913. Edited by the Late Sir Surendranath Banerjee.)*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By Nivea MacDonald

O Master, long have we waited in this far-off land
On the western rim of the Western World
By the shores of the Western Sea.
Yea, long have we waited, dear Master.

Waiting, waiting, waiting—hungering and thirsting for Thee, though in this present life we knew not of Thee as Thou didst come again to the children of men.

But, at last, by devious ways and over weary paths, our wandering feet brought us to one of Thy devoted children who have come in Thy name to bring to the Western World Thy message of Love and Liberation, of Soul-Freedom and God-Consciousness. . . .

*

And so, O Ramakrishna, Master,

We, thine other children, thy children of the West, beside thy children of the East, salute Thee!

On this, Thy natal day, with thankful and reverent hearts we come to lay at Thy dear feet the offerings of our love.

OUR OBLIGATION TO THE ORIENT

By Sister Nivedita

[Miss Margaret E. Noble, better known as Sister Nivedita, the talented disciple of Swami Vivekananda, who devoted her life to the service of India and has interpreted Eastern ideals to the West in her books, points out in this article how at the present day while the West is experiencing the absence of any direction in religious life due to the assertion of freedom of thought which has ruptured the church, Indian thought is destined to usher in a second Renaissance.]

I was lecturing yesterday, and some ladies begged me to lay all my stress on what the Orient had done for us. The idea of Christians that salvation is not a great universal fact of human life, but something only to be found through the medium of their Church or their creed, that "the pursuit of the soul by God" is not so much in the nature of all things everywhere, as it is a peculiar process carried on under definite conditions in a definite guise. This idea, far from being a horrible blasphemy, has been a mental safeguard, a boundary, like rivers and mountains, ensuring to the peoples within its pale, the highest possible development of their creed's influence on their thought and aspiration. The same has been true of the Moslem faith, which divides the whole world into the Faithful and the Infidels.

In both cases we reach the same faults, militarism and imperialism, the clash of the Faith upon the world as upon something opposed to it. All war is Civil War, for all Humanity is One. Wherever we find Civil War, we want a higher synthesis, which shall include the opposed unities in a larger *federal* unity.

We may take it that the only way of reconciling differences is to *include* them. This is the assertion that we call *Freedom*. The *ethos* of Christianity is Life, an actual Divine Life, circulating through the whole body, but the instant we assert exclusiveness in any way, in any function of ours, we are making our religion a matter of the form of the vessel that *contains* life, not life itself. There is a reason for this, however. Christianity is *Life*. It is life that came to us from the East, and was transmitted to us through the agency of an Imperial people, a people earnestly stretching out their own hands in the strange new prayer of a subject people, eager to warm and satisfy their hungry sense of Divinity in all the pain and need of humanity by the vision of the Crucified God.

To the Roman people's keen sense of sovereign dignity it was suddenly revealed that in the Mock Kingship of the Silent Prisoner, clothed in purple, crowned with thorns, holding a reed in his hand, and receiving from the boisterous soldiery the wild inverted homage of scourging and blows and taunts, that in that Mock Kingship there was more royalty than in all the pomp of Emperors and conquerors. The Son of God stood as it were on the low, lonely hilltop of Calvary, outlined gigantic against a quiet sky. Below Him surged the great ocean of Humanity—beating restlessly, hopelessly, to and fro against His feet. The robe of His splendour was the brutality of man, and as the proud world stood still to gaze into His Eyes, it heard the wondrous voice

thrill to Earth's remotest confines is the tone that is known only to the soul.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you!"

What wonder that they crowded round Him? The hem of His garment, the touch of His Hand, the dust of His Feet, that was enough. They received from him Life, and they handed it to their children, so much we know.

But the Romans were an imperial, a military people. They had the *results* of Greek and Alexandrian metaphysics before them, but not that deep philosophical yearning which would urge them to leave the avenues ever open to further progress along similar lines. They were without sense of the Sacramental value of ideas in defining limits, without the possibility of imagining the potential vastness of intellectual assertions. To them the world of their day, the shores of the Mediterranean and more or less of Europe, had become the Church of the Redeemed, and a great multitude it was "which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues."

They never dreamt of questioning that the formulæ that fitted the mind of the Romans of their day would fit all minds always and enable them to gain access to the Living Water of spiritual Life.

How the crash came we know. Printing and the rediscovery of culture conspired together to unveil to the Christian consciousness the unexplored vastness of the intellectual world and half of Christendom asserted the right of the individual to choose belief.

Alas, the freedom of thought had to be asserted by the rupture of the Church, and the Schism in its turn offered only a limited and temporary definition of what its own freedom meant. Every pioneer of Religious freedom knows how few are the Protestants who can carry their Protestantism to its logical conclusion. But the inner core of the new movement was the fact that had given it birth. Men's perception in themselves of a new passion, *the Passion for Truth*, as distinct from a mythology. The passion for mythology had led to mediæval art, the passion for truth now led to Modern Science, and just as Art reacted on its Mother, the Mediæval Church, to produce the Renaissance, so Science has reacted on its mother, the Religious Freedom of Intellect, to produce a new religious era. For we of the 19th century are celebrating a second Renaissance. Today it is not the discovery of Greece that has changed the face of the world but the discovery of *India*.

We had suddenly awakened to the defects in our forefathers' building. They had *defined* the consequences of the truth of the Christian mythology. The question of its own truth or untruth they had not considered. Today the faith of Western nations is reeling to its fall, because the Universities have discovered (and this is no laughing matter, to do so is always the function of Universities) that the Christian mythology is only true as a mythology —no more and no less. The dream of our faith as something by itself, alone of its own kind, founded on a rock of historical certainty, proved infallible by its universal and indefinite adaptability, has faded away from us.

The literary study of the Bible and the scientific study of the universe have combined to lead souls to a place where the mythological aspect of the Gospel masks all others. In all sincerity hearts cry out for the moorings of their childhood, but the waves and the billows of doubt are the whole reply. "Truth! Truth! Truth!" implores the spirit of man, and "Truth, or your God!"

queries back the mocking spirit of the age.

Once more our Western humanity surges and beats about the hillside of Calvary, with Eyes turned to the lone and beloved Figure of the Son of God. But the sadness of the multitudes today is too often the sadness of farewell, or the cynicism which is often the scar of the wound of such an experience. In one hand man has grasped the fact that Consecration, Renunciation, Self-Sacrifice to the uttermost is the law of Life. In the other hand he holds only a few ashes where once were the joyous reasons and justifications for self-sacrifice. Far away in her primitive simplicity of living, the Aryan land pursues her round of lofty thought. The anguish of our Western age would be a child's puzzle to her. Her humblest scholar, dealing with his dearest myth, will distinguish between Eternal Truths or *Vedas*, and Symbolic Truths or *Purânas*.

When Jesus says, thou shalt love the Lord thy God, he will say "it is a Veda," but when we read, Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, "it is a Purâna."

And India knows better than to dread the effect on her mythologies of such a distinction, for she knows that mythologies have a function of their own, and just what that function is.

But there is another point in our plight today. The men in whom the 'hunger for truth' is most awakened are the men most religious. The men, therefore, who for Truth's sake bid farewell to Christianity, are the most religious of the religious.

Yet has the Church no room for them. Here and there we find a pastor or a congregation who *tolerates* such, but where is there anyone who *welcomes* the atheistic crisis as the entrance to a new and more living realization? Yet if it has come in the way of *growth*, it must be so. If this man is really more religious than his fellows, the Church, before any, ought to be able to recognize the fact.

India, once more, can show her how. In that great civilization, spending its national energy on Religion, there is, in the mind of the commonest peasant, *an unbroken series from the fetish-worship of the savage or the cupboard-love of the baby, on to the impatience of all images* and symbols and gifts of the saint who sees God by direct perception of the soul, the Brahmajnâni as he is called, a direct, unbroken series. And the crisis that proves the destiny of Sainthood is the moment when it comes to a man to say, "All this is untrue, I will have no more to do with forms, however beautiful, with tales however tender or tragic, this dream of the unreal—I will merge myself with uncreated fire. For like as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after *Thee*—Thou True! and so on."

Every educated person knows that wherever the empire-building Tartar or Persian or Greek or Arab brought this land in contact with the outside world, a mass of spiritual influence immediately flooded the world from here. The very same circumstances have presented themselves once more before us . . . . . and the same work has already begun. . . . . Millions, I say deliberately, millions in every civilized land are waiting for the message that will save them from the hideous abyss of materialism into which modern money-worship is driving them headlong, and many of the leaders of the new social movements have already discovered, that Vedânta in its highest form can alone spiritualize their social aspirations.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

THE LITTLENESS AND THE GREATNESS OF MAN

By J. T. Sunderland

[J. T. Sunderland is well known throughout the country as a friend of India. Though man physically looks insignificant as compared to the vast universe around him, yet, he says, as spirit he is exalted and great. His greatness as such is inherent which nothing can destroy.]

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained,
What is man, that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man, that thou visitest him?
For [yet] thou hast made him but little lower than God,
And crownest him with glory and honour."

Psalm 8 : 3-5. Revised Version.

This fine poetical passage of the old Hebrew psalm expresses very vividly the thought of the littleness, yet the greatness, of man.

As the psalmist looks up into the night heavens above his head, so far-reaching and so wonderful, and sees the moon and the stars shining so gloriously, and moving with majesty through the wide spaces, a feeling of awe comes over him, and a sense of his own insignificance, and he exclaims with a reverence and humility which we can well understand—

"What is man"—puny, insignificant man—"that thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man that thou visitest him?"

This is the psalmist's first feeling. But the next moment he catches a glimpse of something in man which transcends all this seeming littleness, something greater than the stars, and he exclaims again. Yet, after all,

"Thou hast made him but little lower than God,
And crownest him with glory and honour."

The feeling of the insignificance of man in the presence of the greatness of nature, and especially in the presence of the vastness and splendour of the heavens above, is one that has been very common in all ages. Today it is widely present. Since the rise of modern astronomy, which makes the heavens incomparably more vast than the boldest mind dreamed in the ancient times, this sense of disproportion between the physical littleness of man and the vastness of his environment, becomes very much more clear and strong.

When the Hebrew writer looked up to the sky what did he see? A wide expanse which he called the firmament, stretching its dome like a blue tent over the earth. In it were set, in some mysterious way, the sun, moon and stars, movable, having it for their duty to serve as signs for men, to mark off the seasons, and to give light to the earth by day and night. All revolved around the earth, were very small as compared with the earth, and were created solely for the benefit of the earth and its inhabitants. The earth was the largest thing the Hebrew thinker knew anything about; and even that, as it

lay in his conception, was very limited compared with our earth of today.

How has the rise of the modern science of astronomy changed all this! The earth, though it has grown to be many times larger than the Hebrew thinker understood, is now known by us, not to be the centre of the universe, or the largest object in nature, but relatively only a mere speck amidst the immensities of creation. The silent, mysterious, changeful moon, from a pale sky-lamp, has become a world. The sun does not revolve about the earth, but the earth and all her sister planets revolve about him. The stars, from curious wandering torches of the night, have become gigantic worlds, and centres about which worlds revolve. Vast as we think our solar system, even it occupies but a small corner of space, while beyond it stretch worlds, and systems, and galaxies, innumerable and illimitable.

We are startled, amazed, awed, almost struck dumb by the vast, the incomprehensible, the well-nigh unbelievable magnitudes and distances that our astronomers are revealing to us. Professor Shapley of Harvard University tells us of a universe so vast that our sun is 57,000 "light years", that is, 250 quadrillions of miles, distant from its centre; and Professor Hubble of the Wilson Observatory, tells us of "universes of universes", each one of which contains "millions of suns".

Such is the situation as we see it today. If the men of the ancient world had reason to feel humble and insignificant in the midst of their little universe, what shall be said of ourselves, in the midst of the universe that modern astronomy reveals—which compared with that of the ancient Hebrew is as infinity to a hand breadth?

I think we all have seen times when this thought of man's physical littleness in the midst of the universe has come to us with painful and almost overwhelming force. We have asked ourselves, can it be possible that the Creator of all these innumerable worlds which the telescope reveals, the Architect of this limitless temple of the stars and the galaxies, thinks about or cares for men? Is it reasonable to suppose that our little lives are any more important to him, or of any more value in the universe, than a snowflake on a mountain top, or a bubble on the sea?

I suppose all of us have had experiences somewhat like this: You pass through a great crowd of people, no one of whom you have ever seen before, or expect ever to see again. You say to yourself, who are they? What is the significance of all these lives? In what respect do these human beings differ from the birds that fly in flocks over the fields? or the midgets that swarm in the sunshine? From any other world—even from the moon, the nearest of all the world,—no one of them can be seen, even with the most powerful of all known telescopes: so that with a little distance all are reduced to the same level, bird and midget and man.

You stand on some high eminence in the midst of a great city, and see the thronging thousands threading and blackening all the thoroughfares below you as far as your eye can reach, each man seeming no larger than an ant crawling along the pavement; and how easy it is for you to think of the city as an ant hill, and all the cities and towns and villages and hamlets of the world as simply ant hills of differing sizes, inhabited by ants of a peculiar variety, but as indistinguishable from a few miles up in the air, not to say from any of the worlds around us as any real ant hills of the fields or woods!

If then we are so isolated from our sister planets—members of the same world-family with ourselves,—and if all we do is unknown and of no consequence to them, what shall we say of the incomparably more distant worlds that illuminate the night sky and make up the whole universe outside our little solar system? And what shall we say of the great God of all—the mighty Creator and Ruler of all? With so vast affairs on hand, will he stoop to notice or care for us, the frail creatures of a day, who people this little dust-grain that we call the Earth—this speck on the far-away rim of his creation?

Above all, is it not the most arrant presumption for creatures so insignificant as we, to dream of a perpetuation of our being beyond death? When worlds perish—and worlds a thousand times larger than our own, shall we, the ephemeral dwellers on this bit of wandering clay, hope to escape?

It is in these ways that the marvellous revelations of modern astronomy seem to many minds to belittle man, and press him down into insignificance and hopelessness, robbing him of whatever dignity and importance in the universe he once seemed to have.

And now, what are we to answer to all this?

You see the matter is not something speculative merely, it is intensely practical. These questions which I have suggested are being asked in ten thousand places in the world today. And many very thoughtful and intelligent people do not see how to answer them. Thus they darken many lives. Indeed, who among us is there that has not at some time in life passed through hours when their black shadow has fallen upon himself.

Is there any light? Yes, I think there is.

I think there are several considerations which throw light upon the subject before us. And first this:

Mere size is only a slight indication of value or importance. The earth is not necessarily less important than a world a million times larger than itself; and man is not necessarily physically unimportant because his body is small. An elephant is larger than a man, but it is not for that reason higher in value. Many of the small countries of the world far surpass in importance other lands that are a hundred times more extended. Little Greece outweighs a thousand vast Siberias; and London, which is but a point upon the face of the earth, is more important than a thousand arctic or antarctic continents. A single Plato, or Shakespeare, counts for more in the life of the world than whole races of Kaffirs and Bushmen; just as a diamond, which can be held between the thumb and finger, may have more value than a huge mountain. In the same way, comparing worlds with worlds, it is not unusual to find the smaller much more highly developed than the larger. Our sun has a mass 816,000 times greater than that of the earth, and a volume 1,250,000 greater than that of the earth, yet the earth sustains very high forms of life, while the sun probably has upon its surface no life at all. It seems likely that the huge suns of space generally are much less mature than their planets.

Thus we see that the human race is not necessarily unimportant because it has its home in one of God's smaller worlds, any more than an individual is necessarily unimportant because he lives in little Athens instead of in vast Tartary. Mere bulk signifies nothing. Beings of highest nature and sublimest destinies may as fittingly dwell in bodies six feet high as six thousand, and on this fair earth of ours, small

though it be, as on the surface of the hugest bulks of matter in the universe.

But even if we grant that the revelations of modern astronomy do seem to dwarf man, it should be borne in mind that science is making known to us other revelations, the effects of which are clearly the opposite. There is rising to view a universe below man, no less wonderful than that of the starry heavens above him. And if the effect of knowledge of the one is to overshadow man, the effect of knowledge of the other is correspondingly to exalt him. Thus the microscope makes good any loss of exaltation or dignity that comes to him from the telescope.

A few facts will help us to see something of the range and splendour of this universe below humanity.

If we catch a butterfly in the summer time, we shall find left upon our hand from the butterfly's wing, something which we shall be likely to call dust. Looking at it with the greatest care, we shall not be able, with our unaided eyes, to see that it is anything more than fine dust. But bring a microscope and see what that reveals to us. Now we discover that this so-called dust consists of a mass of beautifully coloured and exquisitely fashioned feathers, arranged in as perfect order as the feathers of a bird, yet so minute that a single square inch of the wing contains a hundred thousand of them.

How small and simple a thing is a water-drop! Yet a water-drop is a world. A cubic inch of stagnant water is calculated to contain a billion living and active organisms. Says an eminent New York biologist: "I placed some clean Croton water, which had been boiled, in a clean vial, and broke into it a few stems of the broom from a clothes wisp. In four days the vial was crowded with monads in numbers that surpassed estimate, but of which it is safe to say that the two ounce vial contained more than the entire number of the human race from the days of Adam to the present time."

Ehrenberg, the great German naturalist, tells us that there is a deposit of slate in Bohemia covering forty square miles to the depth of eight feet, each cubic inch of which is found by microscopic measurement to contain forty-one thousand millions of infusoria.

So it is that the microscope opens to us worlds beyond worlds, where the unaided eye can see nothing, and where until modern science came on the scene it was supposed nothing existed,—worlds as wonderful as those made known to us by the telescope, but filled with living beings as much smaller than man as man is smaller than the great suns in the heavens.

A leaf of a tree is a world. The tree itself is a universe. You see little with your naked and untrained eye. But bring your microscope, and put yourself under the instruction and guidance of a skilled scientist, and he will brush away the veil that blinds your vision, and let you see mystery beyond mystery, and wonder beyond wonder, until, everywhere you look, doors open and avenues unroll themselves leading out into infinities of the minute, as endless and awe-inspiring as the immensities to which the telescope invites.

Even man's own body is a universe. "In each drop of human blood there are three million vitalized corpuscular disks. Considering all the drops made up in this way, man is a cosmos, his veins galaxies through whose circuits these red clustering planets perform their ceaseless revolutions."

Nor are these amazing facts the end; they seem to be hardly more than the beginning. Our physicists, chemists, and others who are penetrating down, down into the minute beyond the reach

of any possible microscope, tell us that they are finding entities (called by them protons, electrons, neutrons, and other mysterious names) which are almost infinitely smaller still.

Thus we see that man stands midway in God's creation. If there are worlds and systems and galaxies below him, no less are there worlds and systems and galaxies above him, and in him. If the infinities in the heavens belittle him, quite as much do the infinities of the grass blade, the drop of water, his own physical organism, and the protons, electrons and the rest, exalt him.

When, therefore, any one presumes to reproach us with our littleness, and pointing up to the starry heavens, asks, do you believe that the God of those countless worlds pays any attention to you? we may well point down to the infinities of the minute, and reply: I believe that the Universe-Intelligence which never forgets these can be trusted to take care of me.

This brings me to the thought that the greatness of man is not physical but spiritual. It is by virtue of his mind, not his body, that he is exalted. What matters it, therefore, whether the physical universe which he dwells in be great or small? Can the heaping up of vast physical dimensions dwarf mind —mind that knows no dimensions, and spurns all physical limits? Is spirit overshadowed by standing in the presence of the greatest possible aggregation of matter? Can we say of a mountain that it is greater than a thought? or of the vastest ocean, that it makes insignificant the intellect that fathoms it, and turns it into a highway, and speaks across it as if its thousands of miles were inches, and makes servants of its fiercest waves? Do all the worlds the telescope reveals, that cannot think, belittle the human mind that can?

No, however completely modern astronomy may take away the old primacy of the earth among the heavenly bodies, it can never disturb the greatness of man so long as man remains the thinker. He is great with a greatness which is inherent in his own nature, and, therefore, which is independent of any possible discoveries that science can make in the material realm. He is great because he can *know*, and *reason*, and *distinguish right from wrong*, and *hope*, and *love*, and *worship*. These things he can do because he is a *spirit*, for these are the attributes of spirit. But the greatest world the telescope ever saw, considered as a mere physical mass, is as impotent to do one of these things as is the smallest molecule or atom that floats in our earthly air. Here it is that we see the infinite superiority of man to all possible physical magnitudes and greatnesses whatever, though they be worlds countless as the sands of the seashore, filling the immensities of space with their shining splendours.

It should be borne in mind that man feels awe in the presence of the starry heavens not because of his own insignificance, but really because of *his own greatness*. It is the divine in him that thrills at the great sight. A stone or a clod feels no sense of awe. A brute beast looks up with indifference to the same stars and constellations that bring man to his knees in adoration. The brute is indifferent because he lacks mind. The man admires and worships because he knows, understands, feels; has the correlate of the great heavens in his own greater soul. Wrote Victor Hugo: "There is one thing grander than the sea; that is the sky. There is one thing grander than the sky; that is the human soul."

To *think* the world is to be *superior* to the world. To *know* the stars is to be *greater* than the stars.

The sun is very large in size. His vast bulk makes the earth seem very small by comparison. But what of that? Need that abash man? Can the sun, big as he is, measure himself? or weigh himself? or calculate his path through the heavens? or understand even one of the laws which he blindly obeys? But man can do all these things. Therefore man, though his stature be but five or six feet, is greater than the sun.

The science of astronomy tells us much about the galaxies. But did we ever think, it tells us quite as much about man? Man's mind not only keeps pace with every advance of astronomical knowledge, it is the cause of it. If the heavens declare the glory of God, still more they declare the greatness of the human soul, for it is only because man's soul is great that he can recognize the greatness and glory of God in the heavens.

Thought and love are the creative forces of the universe. Because man thinks and loves, he is a creator—a creator in the finite sphere, as God the Infinite Thinker and Lover is the creator in the Infinite sphere.

"All minds are of one family," said Channing. If this is so, then I am related to the Divine Mind. I am not merely a being created by God's power; I am kin to him, because I am spirit, as he is spirit; because I know, as he knows; because I love, as he loves. Therefore I have a right to look up in his face—even though that face shines with the light of infinite galaxies—and say: "Thou art in some large true sense my Father, I am not a thing tossed from thy hand. I am thy *child*; thy great nature is in me."

But perhaps the most overwhelming proof of the greatness of man, and of his superiority to all material things, comes to us from the great doctrine of Evolution.

It used to be supposed to the contrary. Evolution was long feared. Because it linked man's creation with natural processes, and suggested his development from lower forms of life, it was thought to degrade him. But now all this is changing. Profound and philosophical students are more and more coming to see that evolution immeasurably elevates man. As he is unquestionably the culmination of all that has gone before him, so he furnishes the most reasonable and adequate explanation of it all. The evolutionary process has travelled a long road from its beginning in fire-mist to what we see on the earth today. But the progress has all been an ascent, and the culmination is man. From the inanimate to the animate, from lower forms of life to higher, from brute to man—that has been the order. Thus man stands on the summit of creation—its crown and its goal. When the physical reached the limit of its possibilities, then mind came in. Henceforth mind was king, and man the thinker wore a dignity second only to that of God the Infinite Thinker.

It is not given to us to know in how many worlds the evolutionary process has reached the same height that it has reached here; but if anywhere it has, then it must have produced there in some sense the spiritual counterpart, and brother of man,—I mean, some being who can know and understand, as man can; some intelligence able to "think God's thoughts after him", as man is able; some being, the crown and consummation of the evolutionary process in that other world, or those other worlds, as man is in this; and, therefore, some being who in some true sense is God's image and child there, even as man is here.

Thus it seems to be no extravagance if we say that the whole evolutionary process, from the first movement of primordial matter until this hour, has been one long travailing in pain of the universe to produce (in this world and we know not in how many others) man or his equivalent,—that is, to produce intelligent spirits, children of the Eternal Reason and Love.

Have we not here, in the costly origin and high nature of man, and in the Fatherhood of God, a key to man's destiny? If man has cost the universe so much, and if his nature is so lofty, must there not be awaiting him a destiny to correspond? Is he not intended for a career greater than can be bounded by this inch of earth and this moment of earthly time? Is the Creator of all things irrational, that he should destroy his highest creature as soon as made? Is the universe a failure, that its most perfect product should be only an ephemera? If man is God's child, and thus a partaker of the highest attributes of the divine, can he die? Must he not be heir to an immortality parallel with that of God?

We may believe that the Creator can easily enough spare some of his worlds, for he has plenty of them. But can he spare a being without whom the worlds lose their significance? That is the question wrapped up with the problem of man's nature and destiny.

Men talk about worlds and systems and constellations overshadowing and belittling humanity! Can the less overshadow and belittle the greater? Can fire-mist, or earth, or rock, or any material thing, no matter how stupendous its volume or bulk, overshadow spirit, or eclipse the glory of *mind*?

The universe is God's palace, and a marvellous palace it is. But is not a child more than any building? What father of you is there, who if you had a palace, so vast that it stretched from the Great Bear to the Southern Cross, and so glorious that the Milky Way roofed it, and Sirius and a million other blazing suns were the lamps that gave it light, would not straightway say, My child is more than it all?

So, as I go out under the sky at night, with no one near, and look up into the glorious and illimitable heavens, I hear in the silence a voice speaking down from the Eternal Throne: O man, whom I have made only a little lower than myself, thou art more to me than all else. I did not create thee for my palace; I built my palace—all this glorious palace of green earth and shining heavens—*for thee and such as thee*. Before suns and stars were, I loved thee. Even whilst thou wert yet cradled in far-away fire-mists, I watched over thee. Our destinies are one; nothing shall ever pluck thee out of my hand or my heart.

And then, as the voice from on high dies away, I hear another voice, not less divine, rising out of the silences of my own soul, and responding as deep answereth to deep: O God of my life, in thee do I trust. From thee I came when I entered into this earthly room, so beautiful, of thy Universe house. Here thou givest me to live a few brief years, with thee, led by thy hand, studying thy wonders in nature and my own soul, learning life's lessons, helping my brothers as best I may, doing the work which thou givest me to do. I thank thee for this earthly sojourn.

Soon shall I go forth again; I do not know where, but thou, my Father, knowest. It is enough that I shall be still with thee. Death will but open the door to other rooms of thine infinite house. I am not afraid. All worlds are beautiful where thou art. Even hell would be safe with thee.

I believe that essentially this is the attitude to be taken today by the intelligent believer in astronomy and all modern science,—by one who accepts every word of their marvellous revelations in the earth and the starry heavens.

I believe that the scientist, with all modern knowledge shining full in his face, is justified in saying with St. Paul: "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth," nor blazing suns and stars, nor astronomic heavens, nor telescope, nor evolution, nor any other created thing "shall ever be able to separate me from the love and care of the Eternal God."

THE FRAME OF REFERENCE

By Prof. Pramathanath Mukhopadhyaya

[Prof. Pramathanath Mukhopadhyaya is well known as a great scholar and original thinker. In this article he points out that all types of civilization and cultures, all tentative half-truth measures like Nazism, Communism and Fascism with which human society is today experimenting should now be referred to an absolute frame of values and notations and rated and relegated accordingly. For the solution of the modern problems, humanity must turn, he says, to the Divine life of Sri Ramakrishna, for it is the life of the Highest Vision which composes and harmonizes all partial views of the Supreme Truth.]

Freedom Movement in India

The Freedom Movement in India is not an isolated event. The present age is said to have annihilated both Time and Space. Any movement of a vital and dynamic character which has its origin in any part of our globe is not confined to that part, but is, or quickly becomes, an world-wide event. This, however, does not mean that the vital currents which start in a particular country or age merely cross the frontiers of that country or age and simply repeat themselves in other countries or ages. The process is never so simple as that. No movement, however dynamic it may be, can expect to see the whole world or the whole future history made forthwith in its likeness. Its shaping and moulding influence does not find the world material plastic and pliant enough to easily lend itself to the informing process. Possibly it was even so with the pre-existing chaos with its jarring elements "where Primeval Night reigned supreme" out of which the rhythm of creation—the music of the spheres—was churned by that mysterious act which we call creative evolution. The beautiful allegory of the Churning of the "Causal Waters" shows the action of Chhandah or Rhythm upon "Matter" not docile enough to yield itself readily to the process. It presents us, however, with the essentials of a fundamental picture of the process—the Axis (Mandâra) of Harmonic Motion, the Power (the "Serpent Power" or Vâsuki) which works it, and the Polarization (Devs and Asuras) of that Power manifesting itself as Cosmic Work. This is an interesting point which, however, we do not propose to labour.

The Indian "Situation"

The work which the power of a movement does or seeks to do may be described in various ways. If we use the word "strain" to mean "change of form or configuration", and the word "stress" to mean "the tendency of a thing acted upon and strained to regain its original form", then we may, obviously, describe the work of any given movement in respect of a given country or age in terms of the strains and stresses produced in it. The present Freedom Movement in India, for example, as regards some of its elements if not as a whole, may have, as some people think, its centre of origin in regions lying beyond the Indian frontiers. The Women Movement, the Kishan and Mazdoor Movement and some other allied modern currents and tendencies may have derived their inspiration or even borrowed some part of their motive power from dynamic movements of a similar character originating outside India and now seeking to readjust the *ensemble* of human conditions and reshape the morphology of the human complex. But whatever be the origins of movements and the incidents and accidents of their propagation, it is to be observed that they are and must be, accompanied by certain strains and stresses in their places of origin, in the media through and along which they may be propagated, and in the places affected or influenced by them. By "place" here we mean both country and age. When any place or position has been affected by the strains and stresses of a movement it becomes what we may call a "situation". So we speak of an Indian situation. Place or position is something relatively abstract and static—that is, considered apart from the action of strains and stresses. But situation is something concrete and dynamic. The situation of a country is not thus its mere topography; and the situation of an age is not its mere position in the passage of time. Under certain conditions, the former may become catastrophic and the latter critical. Thus a given country may be in the throes of a revolution, and a given age may mark an epoch.

Indian "History"

Since a situation is essentially dynamic, its power-picture or diagram ("Yantra") cannot be truly represented by a statical, completed figure. Unlike a mummy or a dead rock-crystal it possesses not merely a morphology but also a physiology. It has not to be dissected and described but lived and appreciated. It possesses therefore a curve of living duration or History in the truly vital sense of the term. It has been complained for example that like ancient Egypt or Babylonia or China India possesses no "history". Of course she does not—that is, in the sense of dissective and descriptive morphology. Such morphology is written in terms of dead inscriptions and obsolete coins. But such morphology is not History in the living, dynamic sense. Live and true History can be written only in terms of life—living ideas and institutions. Now, India *par excellence* is the land which possesses such History and of which such History can be written. Because no other country has during a long span of at least five thousand years essentially continued to live according to a system of fundamental ideas and by experiments in conformity with those ideas. The "ideology" of India has been the quest of her Philosophy since the dawn of civilisation; it has been sought to be established as the fact of her Spiritual Science; and it has continued to be the

norm of her Art of life through the ages. The strains and stresses in the Indian situation have of course varied, sometimes even varied catastrophically, during these long ages. It has been marked by many a revolution and many an epoch. Some of these have been "spontaneous" in the sense in which the changes in a radio-active substance are believed to be so. Others have been induced by outside contacts or impacts. What Oriental scholarship generally regards as the impact of pre-Aryan and Aryan cultures must, undoubtedly, have been, in so far it was a fact, a potent factor producing new strains and stresses in the Indian situation which are reflected in the earliest literature possessed by the Indian race-complex. Those who subscribe to the mid-Asiatic, Arcatic or such other theories of Aryan "nativity" would readily recognise many such turnings of the Aryan curve before the background of the curve-tracing was laid in the Punjab. The bifurcation of the curve into a Vedic branch and into an Avesta branch might, for instance, have been due to a powerful eruption from what one might call an intensely "radio-active" Aryan substance. As regards India itself, one has to recognize, we dare say, the incidence of not one but several streams of Aryan immigration coming one after another, each later one producing new strains and stresses in the situation pre-existing. Be it noted that we are here using the word "Aryan" neither in a philological sense nor in an anthropological one, but in the sense of what for lack of a better term we may call the Aryan Soul-Power and Culture-Essence. We shall see what this means. Coming down to "historical" times we find likewise the Indian curve making several important turns and returns, some of which, like the Era of Buddhism, were due more to the internal working of the radio-active Aryan substance spoken of above than to historical contacts and impacts with outside, alien substances. Some other situations were brought about, presumably, by external contacts such as those with the Greeks, Mongols and Semitic races in historical times. The strains and stresses induced by these contacts and impacts in the entire Indian situation (under which we include all aspects of life and thought) have, of course, varied qualitatively and quantitatively. The latest impact has been with the dominant Western civilization, and this has been effected through a very powerful live wire connection—the political, economic and cultural conquest by the British people.

The "Curve" or History

These historical "epochs" help us to understand what the curve of situations with reference to India may mean. It is a living curve—therefore, moving and growing. The actual contour of the curve at any moment is represented by the strains in effectual existence, and the equation determining the curve is in terms of the stresses operative at the moment. This is the dynamics of race economy which we do not here work out. But certain basic principles of this dynamics will require a fuller statement. And also the essentials of analysis.

The "Frame" or Pattern

Any analysis of the curve of situations must have to be made with reference to a selected "frame" or pattern. In modern mathematical analysis a frame is commonly represented by a system of "co-ordinates". We have all heard of the Space-Time co-ordinates of the modern Theory of Relativity. Now, in having to study the life-curve of any civilization, we must set up and define

a rational frame of reference. No study can be rational and scientific without this. It is the acme of historic wisdom to be able to assign an appropriate and adequate frame of reference in the study of a given civilization.

Quantitative Analysis

In the first place, there may be a quantitative as well as a qualitative mode of treatment. In the former we concern ourselves with the extent or the magnitude of the operative field of a given Idea or Urge (e.g. Buddhism) in respect of the area over which it spread; its expansions and contractions and their stages and conditions; in respect of the periods or ages over which it was able to spread its influence; the accompanying curve and the conditions pertaining thereto; and lastly, in respect of the facts and factors of life over which, in a varying degree, it was, or has been, able to exert its influence. This method is mainly historical in the narrower morphological sense of the word, and brings out chiefly facts and factors which have to be analyzed, described, and, as far as possible, understood. The latter—that is, the qualitative method—concerns itself with values and ends, which have to be appraised and appreciated. Any great Urge—e.g. the Buddhistic Idea in ancient times or the Communist Idea in modern—should, obviously, be studied from these standpoints. Of these two, the latter addressing itself to the work of evaluation is the more vital, though the former also is important.

Qualitative Analysis: Ends and Values

In the second place, therefore, we have to study a civilization, an idea or an institution with reference to a defined system of ends and values—which can be defined in three ways. First of all, we can determine values in an hypothetical, tentative way. *If* a certain end be accepted as good, then certain means and methods will be of value; if not, not. If war be good, militarism is not an evil. If the ideology of Karl Marx and the corresponding economic interpretation of history be right, then the communist programme is not wrong. If atheism or agnosticism be the true philosophy, then the religion of faith is not true. If there be no life beyond death, then all ideas and practices which have pinned themselves to a belief in a life beyond the grave must be turned down. Communism in the Soviet Union, Fascism in Italy, Nazism in Germany, and many other modern political and socio-economic movements are today passing muster under an hypothetical, tentative scheme of values. Things or tendencies are accepted or rejected, encouraged or discouraged in those countries, and, as far as possible, in other countries too, according as they do or do not fit in with the framework of accepted values. The accepted frameworks clash and, therefore, movements collide with one another in Soviet Russia, Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. Like mutual contradictions they cannot all be true and work. Though in a rational synthesis they may be partials, components of a Whole Truth. But what is that Whole Truth? That is the question. Not only in polities and socio-economic readjustments have such tentative and partial values been set up in some of the "leading" countries, and conformity—even at the point of the bayonet—with the accepted ideology demanded of all movements and tendencies, but art, literature, even philosophy and science, have been sought to be fashioned rigidly after the accepted ideology pattern. Even philosophy and science

must slave in the service of those special values. Anything which cannot fall in is taboo. Yet everywhere it is Freedom or Emancipation which is proclaimed as the new Jehovah enthroned!

Revaluation of Values

A revaluation of values, especially of such hypothetical, tentative values, has long been overdue. Secondly, therefore, we are called upon not to accept the Soviet frame of reference or the Fascist in the determining and assessing of the values of a given fact or factor in any country, but to submit that frame of reference itself—hypothetical and tentative as it is—to an analysis and examination with reference to a more generalized scheme of values. The question should no longer be formulated thus—supposing that the Soviet or the Fascist plan is right, what situations, and, therefore, what strains and stresses (in the senses above explained), should be helped and what others hindered in any country with a view to materialising that plan. The question should be formulated thus—what situations are worth being encouraged or helped into existence in view of the more general values and interests of human civilization. Of course Hitler, Mussolini or Stalin will claim that *his* plan and not any other is best conducive to the realization of those general values and interests; that the Fascist plan or the Communist plan is not good for a particular situation in a particular country but that it is the best plan for securing the progress and happiness of entire human corporate existence. But as we have pointed out, that claim is put forward from opposite camps whose programmes antagonize one another. Not only so. Other countries, particularly some ancient civilizations of the East, have other schemes, traditional or otherwise. Their accepted patterns have been different, and they have not, at any rate, not as yet, persuaded themselves that their patterns are obsolete and must be scrapped. It is not that they are blind to the many elements of truth in the Fascist or in the Communist programmes. But they may also recognize that elements or components, unless they are properly co-ordinated and subordinated to the rule of the Whole, may jar and end in producing not harmony but a chaos of confusion and discord. Dictatorship of the proletariat or Nazi or Fascist dictatorship may hope, and try by using violence if and to the extent it is necessary, to mould the entire human corporate existence after its own pattern. But unless that pattern be the absolutely right one and others can be convinced that it is so, the advocates of that pattern have no moral right to seek to impose it upon others. Imposition, particularly that through violence, is an original sin of moral and social injustice for the undoing of which no penance of standardized justice can be devised; and no real crop of freedom, either for the masses or for the dictators themselves, can be grown in a soil burnt to ashes by the aerial bombing of forced levelling and coerced conformity.

The Scheme of Vedanta

Hence, thirdly, we must examine a plan or pattern not merely with reference to the conventions and notations that may hold the field or look like holding the field in a given country or throughout the civilized world for the matter of that, but with reference to what for lack of a better term we call an absolute scheme and notation of values. In other words, we must probe down to the deeper tissues and reach the more vital and solid framework which should support, in just and harmonious and helpful relations, not

only the entire human corporation but the entire cosmos of experience. This is, manifestly, a vast order, but we must face it and essay to carry it out or else be prepared to find ourselves, sooner or later, floundering in a morass. If industrialism of the capitalist pattern have brought the present-day world to a Serbonian bog, industrialism of the communist brand by itself is or cannot be expected to usher the millennium or inaugurate the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. If so-called democracies have not made masses of men free, dictatorships, even of the proletariat, will not make them other than well-fed and well-kept cattle driven by nooses round their patented bodies and standardized souls. As in the one case we must clarify our ideas and purify our methods as regards the true nature and real conditions of social justice, so in the other we must gain a practically helpful vision of true freedom, individual or collective. True Equality, Fraternity or Liberty, for example, cannot be made to order in any factory, Soviet or Fascist, which chiefly relies upon methods of mechanical uniformity, just as untouchability in India cannot be successfully removed and real brotherhood of the caste-Hindus and depressed classes established by chiefly stressing upon the accidents of body-touch and overlooking the ways and means of soul-touch. Soul-touch, which like the touch of truth is the touch of life, is not possible without love and service; and no stable and rational basis for love and service—universal service, service even of the meanest worm that crawls—can be provided except by a clear, unsophisticated vision of the Truth of the Vedânta. That Truth in one word is—Atman in all things. Where this vision is there, the essence of fellowship and brotherhood is there. Where it is not there, no amount of body-touch will engender amity. Indian Seers down to the Yugâvatâra Ramakrishna have lived universal love and preached it, but they have laid no insistence upon our eating and drinking in common restaurant cars.

The Crux of the Matter

The crux of the matter is this: Human civilization can no longer put up, in safety, in a *jatugriha*—in a house made of gun-cotton. It cannot even put up in what proves to be halfway or quarterway houses—Fascism, Communism, and so forth. Possibly, some of these houses have been built upon quicksands, and there seem to be no possible approaches to them save through quicksands. Such tentative patterns of corporate living lack the sanity and breadth and spaciousness of the vision of the Whole Truth—the Truth of Vedânta. Lacking the vision, inspiration and "information" of this Truth which is also the Good and the Beautiful, not only present-day politics and economics, but also modern art and literature have been, in some of their latest tendencies, showing a descent and decline of the human species. Yet these should be the means of its ascent. Even Science has been in a large measure—larger than ever before—slaving to Mammon and Moloch. Philosophy, turning aside from the light of spiritual intuition, and raising itself to the cloudland of mere vaporous theorising and nebulous speculation, seems to have lost all contact with reality and also the way to re-establishing it. Mysticism is "mediæval" and "exploded". In the Realm of Mâyâ thus self-created, the Human Spirit has shut itself up in a prison of perplexity and pessimism, and its groping in the coils of its labyrinth of blindness is euphemistically called progress and its insane dashing against its granite walls

is believed to be its bid for freedom. Yet there is no denying that the Spirit is sick and is pining for health; is in bondage and is yearning for freedom. This shows indeed that the Human Spirit is today very much alive and even "kicking". This bodes good. It is not a dead or dying world situation that we have to deal with. But its ends have to be revised and its values revaluated. It will not do to simply stand still (if that be possible) or go back or drift. It will not do simply to be "moving with the times". No, if need be we have to move or refuse to move in spite of them. Disarmament conferences and peace parleys and what not have repeatedly failed because humanity has lacked the strength to keep its feet in the insane currents and maddening eddies of "driving" world affairs.

Sanatana Dharma

Hence the time has now come when we should create, develop and direct situations in our own country and elsewhere with reference to a system of co-ordinates which can be stated in terms of the supreme, absolute values. There can be no fighting shy or stopping short of an absolute frame of reference which in India we have called (in the best sense of the term)—Sanâtana Dharma. It is no peculiarity of India, though in the Indian Vedânta and in the ideology and institutions logically deduced from it, it appears to have found some of its finest and fullest expressions. It is universal and can be universalized.

Can It Be Universalized?

Nay, it should now be universalized. All types of civilizations and cultures, all tentative half-truth measures with which human society is today experimenting, should now be referred to an absolute frame of values and notations, and rated and relegated accordingly. The Mâyik notations of present-day political and other computations should give way to the truly *realistic* notations of Vedânta. These notations are those of vision and realization. The method is—experimenting and finding through and for oneself. It includes science and philosophy, but these are sublimated into a more perfected and powerful instrument of the Whole Truth—the True, Good and the Beautiful.

Whereto to Turn?

The Seed Power of the Aryan Indian Culture has been to so function as to perfect this instrument of vision and realization, universal love and service. The Yugâvatâras and Seers of India have shown the way how to perfect the instrument and how to use it with the greatest all-round and lasting profit. Each age presents new problems to those who are thus entrusted with the supreme task. The modern age also has presented its peculiar problems. For their solution the soul and the intelligence of humanity should now turn to—what?—Ramakrishna and His Life Divine.

Highest Life and Experience

And why? Because the Life of Ramakrishna is the life of the Highest Vision which composes and harmonizes all partial views of the Supreme Truth, and the broadest Love that nourishes and fulfils all half-way ends and divergent values. Because His Experience is the experience of all that is best and truest in all religions and cultures—of the truth that all Paths shall, if only followed with pure earnestness, lead to the same Goal, even as rivers, some flowing straight, some apparently meandering, all run into and mingle

their waters in the same ocean. Only such Life and Experience can set for a distracted world a reliable and helpful frame of reference.

ETHICS IN BRAHMANICAL LITERATURE

By Prof. M. Winternitz, Ph.D.

[As an Indologist Prof. Dr. Winternitz enjoys a high reputation. While it would be wrong to think that moral teaching is entirely absent in the Veda yet, he says, for ethical ideas of the Brahmins one has to refer not to the *Srutis*, for they contain very little ethical ideas as they mainly deal with metaphysics, but to the *Smritis* or codes of conduct which prescribe the three aims of life and which insist on the life of the householder with its duties of active morality.]

It has often been pointed out, lately again by *Dr. Albert Schweitzer* in his work on the World-View of the Indian Thinkers,[1] that there is very little of moral teaching to be found in the earliest Brahmanical literature, including Samhitâs, Brâhmanas, and Upanishads More especially in the Brâhmanas there is hardly any mention of morality at all. They teach an enormous amount of religious acts, sacrifices and ceremonies, but hardly anything of moral duties. Nay, they not only teach sacrificial acts to be performed in order that the gods may fulfil the very materialistic wishes of the sacrificer, but frequently also rites for the purpose of injuring an enemy or a niggardly employer of priests. In the Upanishads again, *knowledge*, that is, the understanding of the highest principle of the Universe, the Brahman, and of the Self, the Âtman, is so much valued as the one and only object of endeavour, that all action, the good as well as the evil, is considered as of little avail. We also find many passages in which the superman who is in possession of the highest truth, is said to be above good and evil. "As a water adheres not to the leaf of a lotus-flower, so evil action adheres not to him who knows this", says the Chândogya-Upanishad (4, 14, 3). And the Brihadâranyaka (4, 4, 23) says: "By knowing It (the Brahman) one is not stained by evil action. He who has attained the knowledge of the Âtman, the Highest Self, is not injured by any wicked deed, not by stealing, not by killing an embryo, not by the murder of his mother, not by the murder of his father" (Kausitaki-Up. 3, 1). Of course, this does not mean that the knower of the Âtman may commit any of these crimes, but only that by knowledge of the Âtman the individual becomes one with the Highest Self, and is therefore no longer touched by any work, because he has ceased to exist as an individual. But even so it is a dangerous doctrine that could be misunderstood only too easily.

However, it would be wrong to think that moral teaching is entirely absent in the Veda. To begin with the Samhitâs, we find in the Rigveda the profound idea of the *Rita*. The *Rita* corresponds to the Awestic *Asha*, and thus reaches far back into the Indo-Iranian period. *Rita* means "order", and includes order in the universe, in the ritual, and in the conduct of man.

[1] Die Weltanschauung der indischen Denker, München 1935. An English translation of the book will soon be published.

Rita is the moral law, and especially truth. *Anrita* ("what is not *rita*") is untruth. The guardians of the *Rita* are the goddess *Aditi* and the *Adityas*, above all the god *Varuna*. He is the god who finds out the sinner and punishes him, and he is invoked to forgive the evil one has committed. We meet in the Rigveda with the terms *âgas*, that is "guilt", and *enas*, which is not very different from our idea of "sin". To Varuna the worshipper prays: "If we have done any wrong to a play-fellow or brother, or friend, or comrade, to the neighbour or a stranger, O Varuna, remove from us the guilt." (Rigveda 5, 85, 7).

Occasionally other gods also are concerned with the moral conduct of men. In one hymn to Mitra and Varuna it is said that *Surya*, the Sun, watches what is right and wrong (literally: straight and crooked) among mortals; in another that *Surya* graciously looks upon all beings, and knoweth the mind of the mortals. (Rigveda 7, 60, 2; 61, 1).

Of the god *Soma* it is said: "He does not help the false one, nor the sovereign who rules improperly, he slays the evil demon, he slays him who speaks untruth" (Rigveda 7, 104, 18).

Even of *Indra* who generally is only described as great, strong, and powerful, and who himself not always behaves quite properly, it is said, that he slays those who have ever committed great sin (Rigveda 2, 12, 10).

In expiatory rites *Agni* is also invoked to protect the sinner from Varuna. Agni, Vâyu, and Surya are invoked in a prayer on the occasion of a purificatory bath in the Vâjasaneyi-Samhitâ (20, 14-17): "When we, O gods, have committed any offence against the gods, then Agni may release us from this sin, from the pain of guilt. When we have committed sins by day or by night, then Vâyu may release us, etc. When we have committed sins waking, or in sleep, then Surya may release us, etc. What sin we have committed in the village, in the wood, in the assembly, in the exhibition of power, *what against a Sudra or an Aryan or with regard to a duty towards any one*, of that thou art the expiation" (the water of the expiatory bath is addressed).

It is true that the *Dânastutis* in the Rigveda are as a rule hymns of praise for generous gifts of princes and patrons of the sacrifice to the priests. But there is at least one "hymn in praise of generosity (Rv. 10, 117), in which the duty of the rich towards the poor is most emphatically insisted upon, and where it is said of the man who does not give from his wealth to the poor: "He eats alone, and he alone is guilty." Thus the Rigveda already proves what the poet Rabindranath Tagore has once said: "We in India have never been ashamed of eating with our fingers, but we have always thought it a shame to eat alone."

Though the Brâhmanas are far more concerned with the ritual than with the moral conduct of men, they also contain some important passages bearing on Brâhmanical ethics. One of the so-called "five great sacrifices", which every Brahmin householder is obliged to offer, is the daily gift to men, that is, the feeding of guests. It is referred to already in the Satapatha-Brâhmana (1, 7, 2 and 11, 5, 6), where it is said that man is born as owing four debts, viz. to the gods, to the Rishis, to the ancestors and to men. His debt to the gods he discharges by sacrifices, that to the Rishis by Veda study, that to the ancestors by begetting a son; his debt to men he discharges by harbouring and feeding guests. These "five great sacrifices" are inculcated in all

Brahmanical law-books. Âpastamba (Dharmasûtra 2, 8, 7) says: "The honouring of guests is an everlasting sacrifice offered by the householder to Prajâpati (the Lord of Creatures)."

Brahmanism has never given its whole-hearted consent to the ascetic ideal of world-contempt and of renouncing all worldly desires and actions. Already in the Aitareya-Brâhmana (7, 18) we read: "What avails the dirt and what the goat-skin, what the long beard, and what austerity? Brâhmanas, desire a son for yourselves! In him you have the blameless world of heaven."

In the *Âsrama* theory the Brahmins have found a kind of compromise between the ascetic morality and the morality of action. According to this theory the ideal life of an "Aryan", that is of a man belonging to the three highest castes, should consist of four stages (âsramas): he should first live as a student (brahmacârin) with a teacher and learn the Veda, then found a household, beget children, and live an active life, on approaching old age he should live as an hermit in the forest, but only when he feels his end approaching, he should renounce all works and live as an ascetic (Sannyâsin). Traces of this theory are found already in the Upanishads, where we also find the first traces of world-contempt and of the ideal of ascetic life.

It has been said above that in the Upanishads little room was left for ethics, because knowledge was valued so much higher than action, also good action, as leading to salvation. But this view has not remained unopposed. For we read in the Katha-Upanishad (2, 24): "Not he who has not ceased from bad conduct, not he who is not tranquil, not he who is not concentrated, not he whose mind is not at peace, can obtain Him (the Self) even by knowledge."

In the very first chapter the author of the Taittirîya-Upanishad says: "I will speak of the right (rita), I will speak of the true." And the same Upanishad gives (1, 9) a list of the duties, which are to be observed besides learning and teaching of the Veda, viz. right, truth, austerity, self-control, tranquillity, fire-worship, honouring of guests, man's duty (mânusha),[2] begetting offspring, and propagation of his family (by children and children's children). Well known is the instruction given by the teacher to the pupil, after he has studied the Veda, in the same Upanishad (1, 11): "Speak the truth! Do what is right (dharma)! Do not neglect the study of the Veda! After having brought to the teacher a gift of love, do not cut off the line of progeny! . . . . Do not neglect thy health! Do not neglect prosperity! . . . Be one to whom thy mother is as a god! Be one to whom thy father is as a god! Be one to whom thy teacher is as a god! Be one to whom a guest is as a god!" etc. Again in the same Upanishad (3, 10, 1) we read: "Let him never turn away (a stranger from his house, that is the rule. Therefore a man should by all means acquire much food, and people say: 'Food has succeeded for him.'"

That compassion, which has become so prominent in Buddhist ethics, was already a highly appreciated virtue in Vedic times is shown by a beautiful legend in the Brihadâranyaka-Upanishad (5, 2):

[2] It is tempting to translate this word by "humanity", as *R. E. Hume* does, but I do not think, it is right. Nor is *Deussen*'s translation "Leutseligkeit" (affability) acceptable. Sankarânanda's commentary refers it to the marriage rites and other Samskâras. I think it means the ordinary worldly duties of man in his daily life, as opposed to his duties towards the gods.

"Three kinds of sons of Prajâpati, the gods, the human beings, and the demons, sojourned with their father Prajâpati as pupils. After the gods had sojourned there as pupils, they said: 'Tell us something, O master!' And he uttered the syllable '*da*' and said: 'Did you understand that?' 'We understood it', they said: 'thou didst say to us *damyata* (restrain yourselves)'. 'Yes', said he, 'you understood it.' Then the human beings said to him: 'Tell us something, O master!' And he uttered the same syllable '*da*' and said: 'Did you understand that?' 'We understood it', they said, 'thou didst say to us: *datta* (give)'. 'Yes', said he, 'you understood it'. Then the demons said to him: 'Tell us something, O master!' And he uttered to them the same syllable '*da*' and said: 'Did you understand that?' 'We understood it', they said, 'thou didst say to us: *dayadhvam* (have pity)'. 'Yes', said he, 'you understood it'. And it is just this which yonder divine voice, the thunder, proclaims: *da-da-da*, that means *damyata, datta, dayadhvam*. Therefore shall he learn these three things: self-restraint, generosity, and pity."

Though the rule of *Ahimsâ*, avoidance of violence, was originally enjoined on the saintly man, the ascetic, who had to practise it, in order that his soul might be purified and prepared for final emancipation, it has become an axiom of general Indian ethics at a very early time. For already in the Chândogya-Upanishad (3, 17, 4) where a kind of "sacrifice" without any sacrificial rites is described, the gifts for the priests (dakshinâ) are said to consist of: "austerity, alms-giving, uprightness, *ahimsâ*, and truthfulness." In the last chapter of the same Upanishad, however, it is said that "he who avoids violence towards all beings except at holy places" (i.e. at animal sacrifices), reaches the Brahman-world.

In the Chândogya-Upanishad (7, 2, 1; 7, 1) it is also said that Speech and Understanding make us understand what is right and wrong, what is true and what is false, what is good and what is bad.

The *Karman*, so prominent as a moral force in all Indian religions occurs first in the Brihadâranyaka-Upanishad (3, 2, 13; 4, 4, 5), where we already meet with the theory that it is our own deeds which shape our fate in future existences.

Nor should we ignore the fact that the essential doctrine of the Upanishads, the metaphysical doctrine of the unity of our own self with the Higher Self, involves an ethical idea, even though the Atman himself is said to be beyond good and evil. When Yâjñavalkya instructs his wife Maitreyi (Brihadâr.-Up 2, 4): "Verily, my dear, a husband is not dear for the love of the husband, but for the love of the Self (Âtman) is a husband dear" (and the same is repeated for the wife, for sons, for wealth, for Brahmins and Kshatriyas, for the worlds, the gods, and all beings), he does not mean to say that all love is in reality self-love, but that it is in reality the Universal Soul, the Higher Self, the Divine, which we love in each individual being.

That this doctrine of the Self which should be desired and searched out, might easily be misunderstood, is hinted in the Chândogya-Upanishad (8, 7-8), where the Asura Virocana, after having learnt this doctrine from Prajâpati, goes to the Asuras saying: "One's own (bodily) self is to be worshipped, one's self is to be served here on earth." And the Upanishad adds that even now people say of one who does not give alms, does not believe and does not sacrifice, that he is "asurical," i.e.

devilish, "for such is the doctrine of the Asuras" (the devils).

However, it has to be admitted that the Upanishads are far more concerned with metaphysical doctrines than with ethics. For the ethics of Brahmanism we should turn to the *Smriti*, the Great Epic and the law-books, rather than to the *Śruti* (Samhitâs, Brâhmanas and Upanishads).

Numerous legends and moral maxims in the Epic are witness of a high standard of Brahmanical ethics. Perhaps the highest level is reached in the wonderful poem of Sâvitri, most of all in the sentences, by which Sâvitri gladdens the heart of the god of Death when she says: "Not injuring any beings in deed, thought and word, kindness and alms-giving is the eternal law of the good." "Such is the nature of men in this world, that they are tender-hearted in answer to devotion, but the good show compassion even to their enemies when they approach them."

Characteristic of Brahmanical ethics, as taught in the Bhagavadgîtâ and in the law-books, is the *svadharma*, that is the rule that everybody should do *his* duty, as prescribed for *his* caste. We may call this an imperfect morality, and consider it inferior to the Western idea of equal law and morals for all human beings, though in the West also moral practice is by no means always in agreement with this moral teaching, but is more often than not class morality and class justice, which is nothing else than *svadharma*.

At any rate, the Indian law-books, when stating the laws for the different castes, generally add also a list of moral duties which are incumbent on all castes. Thus we read: "Not injuring living beings (ahimsâ), truthfulness, not stealing, purity, and control of the sense-organs, Manu has declared to be the summary of the law for all castes." (Manu 10, 63).

The idea of "conscience", on which all morality is based, is often met with in the Mahâbhârata. And when Manu (2, 6) mentions among the sources of the law (dharma) besides the Veda, the tradition and the virtuous conduct of holy men, also "one's own satisfaction", the latter means as much as one's own conscience. The word *hridayakrosa*, used by Kumârila, has been happily translated by "qualm of conscience".

It has often been said, and not without justice, that the world-contempt and the pessimistic outlook on life, more or less common to all systems of Indian thought, are not a fit basis for ethics. If this world is worthless and in fact unreal, what is man to do in it, but to resign it, to retire from it by leading a life of asceticism with a view to gaining that mystic wisdom, by which the self is merged in the one Divine Essence of Being that is alone worthy and real? A life of asceticism, it is true, includes certain general principles of moral conduct, such as control of the senses, supression of all passions, doing no injury to any living creature, and checking all desire for earthly pleasures. But of what avail can any active morality of helping our neighbour, of making life worthier and the world better, be in a world that is at bottom worthless and unreal?

In the Upanishads, however, this pessimistic outlook is only to be found in the beginning. It is strongest in Sâmkhya and Yoga, in Jainism and Buddhism. But it cannot be said to be the world-view of Brahmanism and Hinduism. For in the authoritative works of Brahmanism, by which the

[1] See the interesting paper by Professor Paul Tuxen, "Die Grundlegung der Moral nach indischer Auffassung" in Acta Orientalia, Vol. 14, pp. 4 and 8.

practical life of the Hindus is regulated, in the Smritis, we find not only, as stated above, the doctrine of the four stages of life, through which every Aryan has to pass, but the law-books generally insist on the life of the householder with its duties of active morality being the most important. Besides we also find in these works the doctrine of the *three aims of life*, viz *dharma*, law, religion, and morality, *artha*, worldly goods, wealth and power, and *kâma*, satisfaction of sensual, especially sexual desire, to which only sometimes *moksha*, salvation, is added as a fourth. *Dharma*, however, which always stands first in the list, includes active morality. Therefore, though the pessimistic outlook and the ascetic ideal are by no means foreign to Brahmanism, yet a distinction should be made between ascetic morality and Brahmanical ethics. Just as at the time of the Buddha and probably earlier still in the days of the Upanishads, Sramanas, and Brâhmanas (ascetics and Brahmins) were distinguished as two classes of religious men, so we can also distinguish between ascetic and Brahmanic literature, representing two different aspects of intellectual and spiritual life in ancient India.[1] Attempts at a synthesis between the two different views of life have been made in Brâhmanism and Hinduism ever since the period of the Upanishads and the Bhagavadgîtâ down to the great religious leaders of our days from Raja Rammohan Roy to Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

[1] See my lecture on "Ascetic Literature in Ancient India" in the book *Some Problems of Indian Literature*, Calcutta University Press, 1925, p. 21 ff.

YOGA AND THE WEST*

By Dr. C. G. Jung

[Dr. C. G. Jung of Zurich is well known as a psychiatrist and leader of one school of psychoanalysis. His conception of "the Unconscious" includes "the personal or individual Unconscious" and what he calls the "Archetypes" which are racial dispositions to particular modes of thinking which therefore are different in different races according to their historical evolution and psychological environments. On account of the difference in these "Archetypes" between races he thinks that the Yoga though one of the grandest system of spiritual achievements is not suited for the West and that it will have to develop its own Yoga. We, however, believe that the ideas on which Yoga is based are universally true for mankind. The higher form of Yoga is purely mental in which concentration is a most important thing. The powers of the mind are concentrated and turned back on itself which then penetrates into its own innermost recesses leading it finally to realise the Self—the inner core of our being, leaving behind all the outer skins—the sphere of consciousness and the unconscious in both its personal and collective aspects. It is a process for transcending these outer coverings of the soul.]

Less than a century has passed since Yoga became known to the West. Although it is true that at least two thousand years ago, all sorts of miraculous tales had come to Europe from the then fabulous India, with its wise men

* Translated from the German by Cary F. Baynes.

and its omphalo-psychites,[1] still, no real knowledge of Indian philosophy and philosophical practices can be said to have existed until, thanks to the efforts of the Frenchman, Anquetil du Perron, the *Upanishads* were made known in the West. A general and more profound knowledge was first made possible by the work of F. Max Müller, of Oxford, and by the *Sacred Books of the East* edited by him. It is to be remarked that at first, this real knowledge remained reserved to the Sanscritists and philosophers. However, it was not so very long before the Theosophical Movement initiated by Mme. Blavatsky, possessed itself of the Eastern tradition and promulgated it amongst the general public. Henceforth, through several generations, knowledge of Yoga in the West continued along two separate lines. On the one hand, it was taken as the object of a strictly academic science, and on the other, it became something which must indeed be described as a religion, although it did not develop into an organized church—despite the efforts of an Annie Besant and of a Rudolf Steiner. Though founder of the anthroposophical secession, Steiner was originally a follower of Mme. Blavatsky.

The peculiar product resulting from this Western development is scarcely to be compared with what Yoga means in India. That is to say, in the West, Eastern teaching encountered a special condition of mind which earlier India at least, never knew; I refer to the strict line of division between science and religion. The split had already existed, to a greater or lesser degree, for three hundred years before Yoga teaching began to be known in the West. The beginning of this split, which is a specifically Western phenomenon, really took place in the Renaissance in the fifteenth century. At that time, there awoke a wide-spread and passionate interest in antiquity, furthered by the collapse of the Byzantine Empire under the onslaught of Islam. Then for the first time, the knowledge of the Greek language and literature became wide-spread, and as a direct result of this invasion of so-called heathen philosophy, there arose the great schism in the Roman Church—Protestantism, which soon embraced the whole of northern Europe. However, not even this renewal of Christianity sufficed to hold the liberated minds in thrall.

The period of world-discovery in the geographical and scientific sense had set in, and thought was emancipated to an ever increasing degree from the restricting bonds of religious tradition. It is true that the churches continued to exist because they were maintained by the imperative religious needs of the public, but they lost their leadership where cultural matters were concerned. While the Church of Rome, thanks to its unsurpassed organization, remained a unity, Protestantism split into nearly four hundred denominations. This is a proof on the one side, of its incompetence, and on the other side, it shows a religious vitality which would not be stifled. Gradually, in the course of the nineteenth century, this movement lead to syncretistic growths, and here and there, to the importation on a mass scale, of exotic religious systems, as exemplified for instance, by the religion of Abdul Baha, the Sufi sects, the Ramakrishna Mission, Buddhism etc. Many of these systems, as for instance, Anthroposophy, were combined with Christian elements. The resulting picture corresponds approximately to the Hellenistic syncretism of the third

[1] Persons who induce self-hypnotism by gazing at the navel. (Trans.).

and fourth centuries which likewise showed traces of Indian thought.[2]

However, all of these systems occupied themselves in the direction of religion and recruited the great majority of their followers from Protestantism. Fundamentally then, they are Protestant sects. Inasmuch as Protestantism lead its main attack against the authority of the Church, it largely destroyed the belief in the Church as the indispensable agent of divine salvation. Thus the burden of authority naturally fell upon the individual, and with it a religious responsibility hitherto non-existent. The collapse of confession and absolution heightened the moral conflicts of the individual and burdened him with a set of problems which had previously been settled for him by the Church. For the sacraments of the Church, especially that of the sacrifice in the celebration of the mass, insured the redemption of the individual by the priestly enactment of the sacred rite. The only obligation imposed upon the individual in all of this, was confession, repentance and atonement. Owing to the lapse of a divine rite which produced a certain effect, there was now lacking the answer of God to the aspiration of the individual. This lack serves to explain the wish for systems which promise that answer, namely, a visible or noticeable co-operation on the part of another power, something higher, spiritual or divine.

European science paid no attention to these hopes and expectations. It lived its intellectual life unconcerned with religious convictions and needs. This split in the Western mind, which, if looked at historically, is seen to have been unavoidable, also made itself felt in the Yoga teaching in so far as this had gained entrance to the West, and it lead to Yoga being made an object of science on the one hand, and on the other hand, to its being welcomed as a way of salvation. Within the religious movement indeed, there are a series of attempts to combine science with religious conviction and practice, for example, Christian Science, Theosophy and Anthroposophy. The last mentioned particularly, likes to give itself a scientific appearance and has, therefore, like Christian Science, penetrated into cultured circles.

Since the way of the Protestant is not laid down for him in advance, he gives welcome, one might say, to every system which promises a successful course of development. He must now do for himself the thing which had always been done by the Church as intermediary, and he does not know *how* to do it. If he is a man who has taken his religious needs seriously, he has also made untold efforts toward faith, because his doctrine is, so to speak, entirely dependent on faith. However, faith is a *Charisma*, a gift of grace and not a method. The Protestant is so entirely without a method, that not a few Protestants have been seriously interested in the strictly Catholic exercises of Ignatius of Loyola. Yet do what he will, the thing that most disturbs the Protestant is naturally the contradiction between religious and scientific truth, the conflict between faith and knowledge, which, in fact, reaches far beyond Protestantism into Catholicism itself. This conflict exists because of one thing and one thing only, namely, the split which has become manifest in the European mind during the course of history. If there did not exist on the one hand, a natural psychological urge toward faith, and on the other, an equally unnatural faith in science, this conflict would have no reason whatsoever to exist. One might

[2] Compare Apollonius of Tyana, the Orphic-Pythagorean secret doctrine, the Gnosis, etc.

easily imagine a condition in which one possesses knowledge, and yet at the same time believes the thing which seems probable to one for this or that good reason. There is no necessary cause for conflict between these two things. At all events, both together are necessary, because knowledge alone, like faith alone, is always insufficient.

When, therefore, a religious method recommends itself as "scientific", it can be certain of its public in the West. Yoga fulfils this expectation. Quite apart from the charm of the new, and the fascination of the half-understood, there is good cause for Yoga to have many adherents. It offers not only the much-sought Way, but also a philosophy of unrivalled profundity. It offers the possibility of controllable experience, and thus satisfies the scientific need of "facts", and besides this, by reason of its breadth and depth, its venerable age, its doctrine and method, which include every phase of life, it promises undreamed of possibilities which missionaries of the teaching seldom fail to emphasize.

I will remain silent on the subject of the meaning of Yoga for India, because I cannot presume to judge of something which I do not know from personal experience. However, I can say something about what it means to the West. The absence of any direction in our religious life borders on anarchy, therefore, every religious or philosophical practice means a psychological discipline, that is, a method of mental hygiene. The manifold, purely bodily procedures of Yoga, also mean a physiological hygiene which is superior to ordinary gymnastics and breathing exercises, inasmuch as it is not merely mechanistic and scientific, but also philosophical; in its training of the parts of the body, it unites them with the whole of the spirit, as is quite clear for instance, in the Prāṇāyāma exercises where Prāna is both the breath and the universal dynamics of the cosmos. When the thing which the individual is doing is also a cosmic event, the affect experienced in the body (the innervation), unites with the emotion of the spirit (the universal idea), and out of this there develops a living unity which no technique, however scientific, can produce. Yoga practice is unthinkable, and would also be ineffectual, without the concepts on which Yoga is based. It combines the bodily and the spiritual with one another in an extraordinarily complete way.

In the East, where these ideas and practices have developed, and where for several thousand years, an unbroken tradition has created the necessary spiritual foundations, Yoga is, as I can readily believe, the perfect and appropriate method of fusing body and mind together so that they form a unity which is scarcely to be questioned. This unity creates a psychological disposition which makes possible intuitions that transcend consciousness. The mentality developed in India contains no element which makes it difficult for Indians to master the concept of Prāna in an intelligent way. The West on the contrary, with its bad habit of wanting to have faith on the one hand, and with its highly developed scientific and philosophical critique on the other, finds itself in a real dilemma. Either it falls into the trap of faith, and swallows down concepts like those of Prāna, Cakra, Samādhi etc. without giving them a thought, or its scientific critique repudiates them one and all as "pure mysticism." Therefore, from the very beginning, the split in the mentality of the West makes it impossible for the intentions of Yoga to be made real in any sort of adequate way. It becomes either exclusively a matter of religion, or a kind of training such as a memory

technique, breathing gymnastics etc., and not a trace is to be found of the unity and wholeness of character peculiar to Yoga. The Hindu can forget neither the body nor the mind, while the European is always forgetting either the one or the other. With this ability to forget the one or the other pole, the European has gone forth and conquered the world—the Hindu has not. The latter not only knows his nature, but he also knows to what degree he himself is nature. The European on the other hand, has a science about nature and knows astonishingly little about his own nature, nature in himself. To the Hindu, it comes as a blessing to find out a method which helps him to master the supreme power of nature in the inner and outer world. For the European, it is poison when he suppresses altogether the nature within himself already crippled as this is, and when he makes out of his nature a willing robot.

It is said, indeed, of the Yogin, that he can move mountains, yet it would be difficult to furnish any real proof of this. The power of the Yogin operates within limits admissible in his environment. The European on the other hand, can blow up mountains, and the World War has given us a bitter foretaste of what else he is capable of doing when free rein is given an intellect that has become estranged from human nature. As a European, I cannot wish the European to have more control, more power over the nature within us and around us. Indeed, I must confess to my shame, that I owe my best insights (there seem to be some very good ones among them), to the circumstance that I have always done the opposite of what the rules of Yoga prescribe. Through his historical development, the European has become so far removed from his roots, that his mind has finally become divided between faith and knowledge in the same way that every psychological exaggeration is ultimately resolved into its pairs of opposites. He has need of a return, not to nature, after the fashion of Rousseau, but to his own nature. It is his task to find the natural man again. However, instead of this, there is nothing he likes better than systems and methods by which he can repress the natural man who is everywhere at cross-purposes with him. He will inevitably make a wrong use of Yoga because his psychic disposition is quite different from that of the Eastern man. I say to whomsoever I can: "Study Yoga—you will learn an infinite amount from it—but do not try to apply it, because we Europeans are not so constituted that we can apply these methods correctly. A Hindu Guru can explain everything to you and you can imitate everything, yet do you know who is applying the Yoga? In other words, do you know who you are and how you are made?

The power of science and technique in Europe is so great and indisputable, that there is no point in reckoning up all that can be done and all that has been invented by it. One shudders at the stupendous possibilities. Quite another question looms up here: *Who* applies this ability? In whose hands does this power lie? For the present, the state is a provisional means of protection, because, apparently, it safeguards the citizen from the enormous quantities of poison and other infernal means of destruction which can be manufactured by the thousands of tons at a moment's notice. Power of accomplishment has grown to be so dangerous, that the imperative question of today is not what more can be done, but rather, how to procure the man to whom this ability can be entrusted, or, how to alter the mind of Western man

so that he would renounce his terrible ability. It would be infinitely more important to strip him of his illusions about his power than to strengthen him still further in the mistaken idea that he can do everything he wills. The slogan heard so often in Germany during the last war, "Where there is a will, there is a way," has cost the lives of millions of men.

The Western man does not need superiority over nature in the outer and inner world. He has developed both to an almost devilish degree. What he lacks is the conscious recognition of his subordination to the nature around, and within him. What he should learn is that he may not do exactly what he wills to do. If he does not learn this, his own nature will destroy him. He does not know his own soul which is now rebelling against him in a suicidal way.

Since the Western man can turn everything into a technique, it is true in principle that everything which looks like a method is dangerous for him, or condemned to be ineffectual. In so far as Yoga is a form of hygiene, it is as useful to us as any other system. Still, in the deepest sense, Yoga does not mean this, but, if I understand it correctly, a great deal more, namely, the complete release and detachment of consciousness from all bondage to the object and subject. However, since one cannot be freed of something of which one is unconscious, the European must first learn to know his subject. In the West, this is what one calls the unconscious. Now the technique of Yoga applies exclusively to the conscious, and to the conscious will. An undertaking of this sort is only productive when the unconscious carries little or no potential, that is, when it does not contain extensive portions of the personality. If these are contained in the unconscious, all conscious effort is useless and whatever comes out of this cramped condition of mind, is a caricature, or even the exact opposite of the intended result.

The highly developed metaphysics and wealth of symbolism in the East serve to express the larger and more important part of the unconscious, and thus its potential is reduced. When the Yogin says Prâna, he means by it considerably more than mere breath. To him, the word Prâna brings with it the whole metaphysical connotation, and it is as if he really knew what Prâna meant in this respect. He does not know it with his understanding, but with his heart, with his belly and with his blood. The European on the other hand, imitates and learns ideas by heart, and therefore is not in a position to express his subjective facts through the Indian concepts. I am more than doubtful whether the European, if able to have the experience corresponding to the Yogin's would choose to represent it with a formula such as Prâna embodies.

Yoga was originally a natural process of introversion which was carried on with every conceivable individual variation. Such introversions lead to peculiar inner processes which change the personality. In the course of many thousands of years, these introversions have been organized as methods, and along widely differing lines. Indian Yoga itself recognizes numerous very different forms. The reason for this is to be found in the original differences between the individual experiences. It cannot be taken for granted that any of these methods is suitable to the peculiar historical structure of the European mentality. It is much more probable that the Yoga natural to the European proceeds from historical antecedents which are unknown to the East. It is a fact that in the West, the two

branches of culture which, more than any others, have had to concern themselves with the psyche in a practical way, that is, medicine and the ministry of the Catholic Church, have produced methods which are to be compared to Yoga. I have already referred to the rites of the Church. With respect to medicine, there are to be mentioned the psycho-therapeutic methods, some of which come close to Yoga. Psychoanalysis as developed by Freud, leads the consciousness of the patient back to the inner world of childhood-memories on the one hand, and on the other, to wishes and drives which have been repressed from consciousness. The latter technique is a consistent and further development of the practice of confession. The thing striven for is an artificial introversion for the purpose of making conscious the unconscious components of the subject.

A somewhat different method is the so-called "autogenous training" of Professor Schultz which is characterized by a conscious effort to connect with Yoga. Its chief aim is the removal of the conscious cramp and the repression of the unconscious which this has caused.

My method, like that of Freud's, is built up on the practice of confession. I too, pay close attention to dreams, but when it comes to the question of the unconscious, Freud's concept and mine differ widely. To Freud, the unconscious is essentially a mere appendage of the conscious mind in which all of the incompatibilities of the individual are heaped up. To me, the unconscious is a collective psychological disposition, creative in character. Our two concepts, which differ in principle, obviously produce an entirely different evaluation of symbolism and the method of interpreting it. Freud's procedure is chiefly analytical and deductive. To his method, I add a synthesis which emphasizes the purposefulness of the unconscious tendencies in connection with the development of the personality. In this branch of investigation, important parallels with Yoga have come to light, especially with the Kundalini Yoga and the symbolism of the Tântric Yoga of Lamaism and the Taoistic Yoga in China. These Yoga forms with their rich symbolism, afford me most valuable comparative material for the interpretation of the collective unconscious. However, I do not apply the methods of Yoga, because, in principle, I believe that in the West, nothing ought to be forced upon the unconscious. For the most part, the conscious is characterized by an intensity and narrowness that has a cramping effect on the mind, and nothing must be done which would lend greater emphasis to it. On the contrary, the unconscious must be helped as much as possible in order to enable it to reach the conscious and to free the latter from its rigidity. I employ for this purpose a method of active fantasy which consists in a special training designed to free the mind to a relative degree from the control exercised by the conscious. Then the unconscious contents have a chance to unfold.

If I maintain so critical an attitude toward Yoga, it does not mean that I do not consider this spiritual achievement of the East as one of the greatest things the human mind has ever produced. I hope that my exposition makes it sufficiently clear that my criticism is directed solely against the application of Yoga to the peoples of the West. Mental development in the West has been along lines that are entirely different from those of the East. This has lead to conditions which mean the least favourable soil that one could think of, for the appli-

cation of Yoga. Western civilization is scarcely a thousand years old and must first free itself of its barbaric one-sidedness. In order for this to be accomplished, it is first necessary to have a deeper insight into the nature of man. No insight can be gained by repression and control of the unconscious. Least of all can deeper insight be gained by the imitation of methods which have originated under quite different psychological conditions. In the course of the centuries, the West will produce its own Yoga, and it will be on the basis laid down by Christianity.

INDIAN VIEWS ON PSYCHOTHERAPY

By Prof. Heinrich Zimmer

[Prof. Heinrich Zimmer is a great Indologist and Professor of Sanskrit in the University of Heidelberg. In this article he deals with the Indian system of the guiding of the soul—the various rites and ceremonies prescribed for the masses and the metaphysical concepts involved in them, with which the average Indian expresses the life of his unconscious and with which he finds a sacred balance to the everyday horrors of his natural being. He also points out how the Indian sages have prescribed in the dietetics of the psyche the Yoga system, that forms a compensation to the strict adherence to the community and represents a complete detachment from it,—to those extraordinary individuals who want to live their own life and reach the central transcendent core of their own being.]

The study of peoples and of the history of religions and more especially the ancient Chinese and Indian wisdom of the soul have during the last years been acknowledged as essential aids to the more recent knowledge of the psyche.

The relation between Indian teachings of the conduct of the soul, which are comprehended under the term of Yoga, and Psychotherapy are evident. Buddhism itself lays emphasis on this fact when it takes as its basis the classical teachings of Indian medicine for diagnosis as well as therapy, and calls Buddha himself the supreme teacher of all medicine. Perhaps one should not talk of Indian psychotherapy but rather of psychodietetics. Indian medical science, which is built up on humoral pathology, is a science of living and dietetics, which in the first instance does not cure those who are ill, but accompanies and tempers those who are healthy and guides mankind throughout their lives.

This is particularly the case of the Indian study of soul discipline which is of the greatest interest to Western psychotherapists. Hence it is that the permanent bond that exists between him who is guided and the guide, between the student and his teacher, the 'Guru', is the rule in India; while the similar state between the patient and the doctor that takes place in the West is often regarded as problematical.

The 'Guru', or spiritual guide of souls, is freely chosen because one has met him and cannot avoid him. In other words he is a necessity. Most of all, however, because he fulfils the function of father and grand-father in the family, and in his capacity as high priest, is present at all feasts and ceremonies that take place throughout the year, and helps one with his magic and

advice at all sacraments and turns of fate during one's life.

One is, of course, absolutely faithful to the 'Guru'. He is the incarnation of collective wisdom handed down from the forefathers, the incarnation of a higher sphere which can lead us through the maze of life, since we belong to both spheres, the other one being that of the body into which we have been born, and we thus have to make our way as an individual in a concrete living world of individuals.

The 'Guru' leads his pupil during this pilgrimage through life; he is believed to convey to him a new knowledge of his own self and to show him his own real nature. He thus accomplishes a rebirth in his pupil comparable to the ancient rites of many peoples. The relationship with the master of the transformation has as one of its main characteristics the fact that it is indissoluble and lasts as long as they both live.

Indian psychotherapy in its form of psychical teaching is lifelong in that a succession of sacraments, rites, initiations, steps, or however, one may choose to call the multiple practices and customs, takes hold of the human being from the beginning and carries him throughout life. To be exact it begins even before birth, nay, even before conception. Thus is the human being given a new aim and direction at each of the natural and fateful turnings of his life, and thus is he led through the varying climates of its phases.

Besides this vertical tree of many branches of customs that grows parallel with the individual's line of life from childhood to old age, we can see a horizontal net of similar practices which regulates the attitude towards a group as, for instance, the family, the village, the guild and the caste. The Dravidic Santals, for instance, celebrate a periodical family reunion. Buschan in his book *'Customs of the Peoples'* tells us that it consists in the entire family locking itself into its own house and each member rendering himself, or herself, deaf with the aid of cotton wool in their ears, and upon a certain sign having been given they begin to bombard each other with the worst kind of invectives that they are able to think of. Nobody, of course, can hear what the other one is saying, and this occupation goes on until one has to stop from exhaustion. Mr. Buschan closes his report with the learned remark that the Santals are unable to give any explanation of the origin of this strange custom which is said to be extremely old. Apparently this custom is a well-established remedy of Dravidian Indian psychodietetics for the sphere of conflicts which Jung has once termed the "Family Drama." Such small therapeutic manipulations have to be repeated from time to time; they are useful throughout the course of life and represent a preventive, cathartic diet of the soul which restores its balance and thus prevents, according to Indian concepts, a premature death of the soul bird within the cage of the body. This ritualistic attitude of India is, or rather used to be, a world-wide one. All higher cultures, apart from the protestant-puritan, possess such comprehensive networks of soul-guiding sacraments, which constantly restore the balance needed in the ups and downs of human life and thus prevent suffering and disease in the soul.

But the psychotherapist in his practice is very often confronted with cases in which these venerable systems no longer fulfil their aims: it is very often futile to attempt to send a patient back to the guiding wisdom of the Catholic sacraments, because his massive resistance has arisen out of the very centre

of these sacraments. The Western world has given birth to this leaven which is modern man, who is beginning to destroy the realms of all the sacraments in their old-established forms and makes them lose their footing slowly but surely. But just as the Western world has brought forth this destructive element, it will also give birth to the healing powers which will work as an antidote to this destruction. From this point we get a vaster view of the future and the possibilities of psychotherapy, because here lie the present and futre possibilities of contact with the wisdom of Asia and of all peoples and all times, and this is where I shall attempt to briefly sketch my subject.

Since India possesses a lifelong prescription for the conduct of the soul which is as rigorous as the daily routine of the body, there is hardly a sphere which escapes its close weave. There is, for instance, the *kâmasutra*, which in the light of these reflections can easily be freed from the doubtful reputation that the prejudice of bourgeois Victorianism has seen fit to endow it with. This teaching of divine revelation is meant to prevent particular difficulties and distresses of Indian married life, of which most Westerners who read it are completely unaware. Its wisdom is meant to enable even those spouses to give each other complete mutual happiness and satisfaction whose respective natures in their discrepancies seem to exclude any harmony. It also represents a diet of the senses and of the soul against disappointments, wounds and estrangements in an indissoluble bond; and thus a prevention of catastrophes, the victims of which in our own world consult the psychotherapist, though even they may be unaware of their origins. We could call it dietetics of the psyche in the erotic sphere, in the place of therapy where harm has already been done.

Prevention instead of healing is the essence of many rites for the performance of which the 'Guru' visits the family. Motherhood is the aim and fulfilment of the Indian woman and the bearing of sons is her sacred goal and the justification of her existence. Without a son the uninterrupted line of the sacrifices that feed the dead members of the family in the other world is broken. A barren woman is abhorred by her relatives and a shame to herself. A woman without a son has to bear without complaint the fact that a rival gives to her husband what she herself has been unable to give him. Since living sons are the fulfilment of the woman's existence, it is easy to understand that she experiences particular difficulties in detaching herself from them at a time when they begin to outgrow her motherly cares. The tie between mother and son can become so close and strained as to tear both mother and son. The woman has to learn at an early stage how to part with and give away the fruit of her life and her body. The 'Guru' therefore leads her through a ritual which begins at about the fifth year of the child's life and ends when the son enters the circle of adult life. The ritual of 'the giving away of the fruit' is a weaning of the child from the mother and the 'Guru' represents in it the higher instance, the unrelenting demand made by life and the outer world which can only be satisfied through sacrifices. The woman must therefore symbolically sacrifice to him the things that she most cares for, not only once but repeatedly through the years. She begins by bringing him real fruit, the fruit that she likes most, while at the same time she herself must fast. From fruit the sacrifice goes on to metals, beginning with the lowest

ones and ending with gold. These are part of her possessions in jewels which, together with her clothes, form her only personal possessions. The series of sacrifices reaches its climax in a celebration which is witnessed by the male relatives and representatives of the various castes who symbolize the world which accepts the sacrifice of the son from the mother. The mother offers a feast to the company whilst she herself must fast and throughout this whole day is not allowed to drink even one drop of water, a hard task in the Indian climate.

In Western analytical practice the mother is often presented as a spider, meaning that the adult child resents too close a tie to the parent as an obstacle in his development: the Indian rite is a piece of guiding psychology which aims at preventing such a state of affairs.

An important requisite of these as well as of many other rites in Indian practice is formed by the mythical stories that the 'Guru' tells the mother in each of the above-mentioned instances. They are concerned with a woman who was told to sacrifice that which she loved most and even herself, and through this she was capable of performing wonders. Stories of this kind are one of the classical means of Indian psychodietetics. They not only fulfil the wish for amusement and knowledge within this venerable old culture amongst the illiterate masses, which would be comparable in our own sphere with the serials in our newspapers on the one hand and popular science on the other. They represent more than that; since they have been formed by the more-than-personal innermost collective spirit of the people and have been distilled through generations, they speak directly to the unconscious whose logic and shapes they follow, as in many instances they seem to have been borrowed from dreams. "The Sea from the Streams of Stories", as one of the later collections of such symbolical sagas has been called, represents in its never-ending continuity a preventive spiritual guidance of the masses who listen to it, and in receiving it make their own contribution towards it, which is handed on from one village to another during the long moonlit nights, and sometimes becomes centred and crystallized around sacred ponds and temples in the lore of that particular place of worship. In India this oral tradition fulfils the aim of all real collective theatres, as did the Attic Tragedy and the Javanese Shadow Plays, which enact during entire nights well-known scenes from the religious sagas of Râmâyana. It is a collective catharsis and psychological teaching made visible in the deeds and sufferings of the symbolical heroes, in which the collective unconscious of the spectators recognizes its own archetypes.

We have an excellent example of this kind of individual psychotherapy handed down to us from India in the shape of the tale without end of the Scheherazade, who cured the poor Sultan from his terrible hatred of women through the therapeutic effect of her thousand and one nightly tales, and thus removed his apparently well deserved sexual inferiority complex that had become manifest at the moment when he found his favourite wife in the arms of a huge Moor. The wisdom of the ancestors inspires the courageous Scheherazade and whispers those tales and fables into her ear, which released the Sultan from his unhappy self-centred state, through showing him the richness of life and its wondrous interplay of happiness and strength, the magical power of pure intentions and the strange meanderings of fate, where one must retain one's

faith even in the middle of the desert.

In our world too, it is sometimes sufficient to transmit some Indian or other myth in order to get the unconscious of the listener started on a productive activity. This kind of thing might teach us a lesson in psychotherapy. Not the least important point in Indian psychology rests on the fact that the unconscious processes that one wants to lead and control are being fed in the form of myths or symbolic images and are not being left to the chaotic powers that are being thrown up from the unconscious if left entirely to itself. Therein lies a certain similarity with Catholic practices and more especially with the Jesuit ones; each of them contains canonic themes which are meant to be lived through emotionally and to be visualised in order to impregnate the soul of the adept in its very depths.

Psycho-analysis has made the unconscious the main pivot of psychotherapeutic methods. Science thus took for one of its objects this entity that had already been given a visible place in the psychological play of forces when Goethe and the romanticists wrote their works as a powerful counterbalance to the enlightenment of the preceding period. In Freud's teachings the unconscious processes appear as diabolical forces, whereas in analytical psychology they have taken on a far more extensive character in the direction in which the romanticists had already hinted: they have become what might be called the great demonic powers, which threaten and bless, which are dark and light at the same time. It now depends on our own attitude which side of the unconscious shall become visible to us. This long alienated and excluded part of our being has thus been re-accepted and reinstated after a long period of time that began with the Renaissance and during which modern man devoted himself exclusively to the cult of rational thinking and conscious discipline of will-power, and on this basis wanted to build up a harmonious personality. Having freed himself from the fetters of the Middle Ages, he needed a moral support and stronghold in order to strengthen himself for the responsibilities of his new attitude. The official psychology of that epoch, therefore, had to lay stress on the conscious part of one's being over and against the unconscious, since the latter in its irrational functioning cannot be made responsible, and had, therefore, to be ignored and degraded and its sphere of influence made as small and insignificant as possible.

In India this freedom of the modern individual is unknown. The Indian is himself responsible since the God of the Vedas, who punishes the sins of lying and of breaking one's faith, avenges himself even for sins committed in one's dreams. The unconscious takes up a vast territory in the realm of the Indian soul, but its rediscovery in the West is still so new and uncanny that we have not yet quite recovered from it as compared with the Indian attitude—and in so far of course as we have been at all aware of this subject. This accounts for the diabolical characteristics with which the bourgeois mind of the 19th century has endowed the unconscious through its psycho-analytical methods. It also accounts for the diplomatic, careful attitude almost mingled with awe, which analytical psychology recommends towards the unconscious processes. It is as though we felt that we might be drawn down into a gulf if we began to look into their depth. At least we get this impression from a great many dreams and drawings produced by patients in analysis, and we

must conclude that this feeling therefore corresponds to the actual situation in the western man's psychology, that he is frightened, nervous and shy in the face of these powers whose existence he has so long attempted to deny.

To the Indian this world is thoroughly well known. He does not get drowned in it but rather lives in it like a fish in water, because he has not lifted out of its realm the dry and rationally scientific technical methods and achievements that deprive our world of its Gods, and that form the daily background and content of our existence to such an extent that to disclaim their importance is equivalent to our appearing insane or entirely stupid. The things that our analytical patients show us in their drawings or visions, namely, those dangers, snakes, rapacious tigers, flooding waves, poisonous spiders, etc., are to the Indian well known—they form part of his religious world. In order to ascertain this we have only to look at the rich variety of symbols and images of Hindooism. Quite opposite to us, the Hindoo will meet with a vast variety of unknown things in the realm of our science and technique, but not in the depth of his own unconscious nature. The forces and images that dwell there are endlessly repeated on the altars of his home, on the walls and interiors of his temples. They are shown to him sometimes in an awe-inspiring form and sometimes in a distorted, caricatured shape at the annual processions, when the huge, vividly painted images are drawn through the streets by devoted followers. These celebrations are not merely a ridiculous joke like our carnivals at Nice and Cologne; they represent much more than that. They fulfil the longing of religious man to behold at last in front of himself those things with which he has long been familiar from teachings and images, and are shown to him as an immediate reality in whose face the disciples meet in a common emotion. It no longer matters in this moment whether this reality is revealed to him from outside and above or from the depths of his own soul. To the Indian the unconscious in all its manifestations is a natural accepted reality, as a demonic deity it resides in the very centre of his being, whilst his outer personality, his ever-changing ego, are merely the outer case and outward emanation from this very core.

Likewise these demonic-divine powers, the products and children of the unconscious, reside within all created things and are made visible and tangible through them, therefore the division between the subject and the object with which our entire philosophies from Descartes to Kant are concerned is unknown to the Indian. His world is not torn asunder into the fundamental opposites of an inner and outer realm. That region of signs and forms that analytical psychology has placed under the heading of the collective unconscious is to the Indian not only a familiar and well-known inner reality but also has its corresponding manifestations in the surrounding world, in the macrocosm as well as in the microcosm.

In our Western dreams a great many of us enter a room of seclusion, a mysterious cell, a place where rites and initiations are enacted or a feast is being held. This is the same kind of place as that which forms the basis of countless Indian images that the student of Yoga is being made to visualise in order to behold the deity in its setting and in order to become one with it. This outline from the fantasy of the unconscious is in reality the basis of innumerable temples. The religious architecture of India represents a constantly renewed

vision of an inner reality which is being projected into the outer world. Not only the religious sculptures, even the temples themselves are part of the unconscious which have taken shape through the medium of stone or other materials; and the world of his dreams and longings and visions thus approaches the religious believer from without and speaks not to his conscious eye and intelligence, but to his innermost soul. In this India, the outer atmosphere of which is filled to bursting with the replicas of the inner visions and dream figures, the magic and the divine have not yet been ejected from any of its regions. It is, therefore, both easy and customary to conjure and evoke the divine spark in the soul of another human being, and to calm the demonic powers, or else to let them both come to life within one's self in order to experience their existence. We ourselves are inclined to regard such a direct communication with the deity as a psychological inflation or else an overbearing manner of speech, an archaic stammering or a theological phrase without meaning: it seems to us overbearing to invoke the deity as it were personally for our private little experiences, since it has been excluded from the sphere of our so-called reality through the very different viewpoint of the scientific attitude.

But the relationship between the 'Guru' and his pupil is a priestly one, full of magic and sacraments, witchcraft and transformation. If we can call it psychology when one person magically achieves in another one a greater understanding of himself, in which the conscious personality receives a new light from unconscious sources, and a new balance takes the place of a hitherto cramped and distorted attitude, then the possession of witchcraft would appear very desirable. But the Western psychotherapist must let the patient's unconscious itself effect the transformation, it is his function to tap its sources and to supervise the process. At least he keeps his magic well hidden, it is concealed and is said to be modest; and likewise the patient's desire for his doctor to perform wonders upon him is hardly admitted and equally modest. The doctor must almost deny his own powers and instead he advises the patient to work by himself. "Patient, help yourself" is the motto.

In India witchcraft is an everyday occurrence, it is practised in the home and abroad, the pupil expects it and the 'Guru' performs it. It is hardly necessary to point out the tremendous zone of danger that surrounds this attitude. It is, of course, very easy to produce magic under such circumstances. If looked at from the Indian viewpoint the Western psychotherapist is handicapped by the fact that he is not allowed to use more witchcraft, for if he were allowed or even forced to do so because it was expected of him, then he would be capable of doing it. Perhaps then many obstacles in therapy could be more easily surmounted, more than that: he who uses witchcraft experiences other kinds of correlations and different weaves and patterns in the woof and warp of the tissues of the psyche. His approach might be compared with the logarithmic method in the realm of mathematics instead of ordinary division and square roots. The non-Euclidean psychology, as it were, might arise out of it and it would, of course, in its beginnings appear as superfluous and embarrassing, as ridiculous and doubtful as the non-Euclidean geometry in its beginnings—which, nevertheless, became an extremely useful, efficient and indispensable method.

C. G. Jung in his study on Sigmund

Freud has shown us the conditions from which arose the Freudian doctrine: he has found them to be connected with, and a re-action to the style of thinking and living of the European 19th century. He therefore says that not only Freud, but also Nietzsche, and the world war, and even Freud's corresponding equal in the realm of literature, James Joyce, are the answer to and the outcome of the 19th century. Thus the Victorian style of living with its exaggerated primness and treacherous smoothness, as well as the shadowy darkness of Freud's doctrines, can be regarded as the two faces of the same coin and have their origin in the same sphere which is that of the disease of the 19th century. One might almost say that various epochs and psychological attitudes have each their own corresponding diseases that are somehow connected with the reverse of their consciously exhibited virtues. Yet again, each epoch is given its particular impulse to action from just those regions that we have named its diseases: the puritanical mission resulting in the civilisation of vast territories of the earth, the powerful greatness of colonial imperialism, the feeling of responsibility for the whole earth evinced by the white man, as also the ascetic self-criticism of pure science would not have been possible without these dark backgrounds. The so-called disease is therefore at the same time the source of strength which causes the spirit of the peoples to raise itself above the difficulties and distresses of its historical changes and transformations imposed by fate, in the same way as in each individual case the neurosis can become the impulse towards particular efforts and achievements either in the inner or in the outer world.

Independently and by different methods Malinowski, a former pupil of Freud, and professor of anthropology at London University, reached the same conclusions as Jung with regard to the limitations of the validity of Freudian doctrines, particularly with regard to various epochs and cultures. He found that a certain tribe, the Trob lands in the South Sea Islands, could not possibly possess a father-, mother-, or castration-complex in the Freudian sense, since the structure of their family and their relations between the sexes are totally different, and the connection between sexual intercourse and parenthood are not known to them. On the other hand, the incest-complex plays a great role because the relationship between brother and sister from earliest childhood is hemmed in by extensive and strict taboos. Of course, these taboos, which form a striking contrast to the freedom between the sexes before marriage, greatly influence the unconscious and keep it constantly occupied. It is, therefore, not surprising that the myth of obtaining fire is in the case of this tribe attached to brother and sister. It is the myth that in many cultures is of the highest symbolic significance for their social structure and the attitude of the sexes towards each other. In this particular case it is through the sinful courage of a mythological pair of brother and sister that the supernatural wonder of obtaining fire is achieved.

Indian mythology is again and again concerned with the fact of the bisexuality of life, and so in this case mankind has obtained the life-giving fire from the supernatural union of a mortal man with an immortal Goddess. The myth says that in order to calm his longing for her he gets given him the fire which in the form of his funeral pyre should bring him to her into the region of the skies.

One might allude at this point to

the fact that the Greek myth has turned this matter of obtaining fire into something with which men only are concerned. The Greeks, in their confederation of Spartan men as well as in their platonic groups of Athenians, have caused the myth to be transformed into a contest between a God and a titan, between Zeus and Prometheus. In this criminal theft from the treasures of the supreme power there is no "Cherchez la femme". The figure of a woman appears only very much later, her name is Pandora, the all-giving one, but the gifts that her vessel contains spell only disaster in the Greek viewpoint.

In order to understand the Indian dietetics of the psyche, we must first of all ask ourselves which are the specific possibilities for conflicts and difficulties, for which the Indian practices and teachings for the conduct of the soul must be regarded as the adequate therapy. This question has hitherto hardly been raised at all. I am, of course, aware of the dangers and possibility of errors this question brings with it; and of what mistakes in both theory and method it can be suspected. Nevertheless we must attempt to give an answer.

The conflict between father and son does not need to play an important role in the Indian family, which is as a rule a very large one. The adult male members of the family usually live in community with one another and share both their possessions and their income; the father, instead of being the all-powerful head of the family, is merely one of the members in the circle of brothers and elders. The younger generation, brothers and sisters and cousins, form an active little realm which is attached to the house of the women, which includes the mothers, aunts and the rest of the women folk, and where the grandmother is the first in command. The father does not, therefore, represent the arm of justice the distant severe power, nor is he regarded as a spiritual leader since this task lies with the 'Guru' or the Brahmanic priest, who is the spiritual guide with magic powers. No Oedipus-relationship is possible with him. He enters the house greeted with an attitude of respectful distance, performs his clearly-defined sacred rites and lets himself be richly remunerated for his services. He is the incarnation of sacred wisdom, a 'Siva' descended into the human form, and a conflict with his indispensable magical authority seems impossible.

When Oedipus kills his father he not only gains the hand of his mother, the Queen of Thebes, but also the sceptre of the kingdom. There is no room for this struggle for supremacy between father and son in an order of life in which each individual member must obey the sacred duty to observe four strictly defined phases in the course of his life, in accordance with the different ages. Each of these phases demands a clearly-outlined attitude, and the possibility of the older member not wishing to give up his place to the younger one at the right moment does not, therefore, arise. Chastity and submission are demanded of the young boy and youth during the first stage of learning and initiation. The adult is at once and without transition transferred into the position of head of a family since he is married by decree from his parents to a wife who has long been dedicated to him as a partner. The second half of life brings with it renouncement and abnegation in two phases which have for centuries been called that of the hermit and that of the homeless wandering ascetic. It is difficult to say in what particular form the individuals fulfil these demands of abnegation, and

how they divest themselves of their right, and duties towards their family, their occupation, their positions and possessions. But it is essential that these things are entirely taken for granted and are being taught as the fundamental ethical basis.

These four stages in the journey of life must be as strictly observed as the hierarchy of the castes created by the Gods, which practically settles the major part of the individual's fate at the moment of birth. It is the supreme duty of the king in his role as the guardian of the divine order to insist on the general observance of those two systems governing life: the caste on the one hand and the stages of life on the other hand. The inborn inequality of talents and chances that is an attribute of nature's hieratic principle forms the example on which the moral and social structure of the country is built up. Feelings of inferiority may arise from it and power-complexes may be prevented from taking shape. There is no open road for the fittest, no popular race towards social importance, and prosperity alone does not endow its owner with a higher rank. On the other hand, station of birth and a strict observance of the rituals of religious and ascetic life and initiations bestow a higher dignity. No one can choose his own career, since one's occupation is as obvious a part of one's personal inheritance and is as unescapable a fate as the sex with which one is born. Virtue, therefore, consists in fulfilling completely the role into which one was born. The supreme task consists in attempting to remain entirely true to the role and the part that have been set to one at and from the moment of birth. It is the virtue of the actor which results in an ideal harmony of play, since he keeps strictly to his role without trying to enact somebody else's, and the world, therefore, represents to the Indian a play with countless acts and with a cast, the persons or masks of which begin with the splendour of the Gods and end with the lowest insects.

If we contemplate the vastness of these metaphysical concepts with which the Indian expresses the life of his unconscious and with which he finds a sacred balance to the everyday horrors of his natural being, then we find that the themes of Freud and Adler seem a little insignificant. Seen from this angle the latter appear to us like the dwarf plants of an unfertilized soil, in which a metaphysical aspect of life is no longer possible because the unconscious is seen under a negative sign. In India, the dietetics of the psyche begin with an age-old tradition which forms the sacred though unwritten laws, and the strict wisdom of which is observed without question. This kind of guiding of the soul is in this case merely one side of the vast structure and tissue of a religious attitude towards life which pervades its every branch.

So far then everything seems to be in the best of order in this old India, and there appears to be no reason for that deep underlying sadness, that 'negation of the will to live', or whatever else one may choose to call that peculiar Indian atmosphere, everything seems to be in the best of order and that is exactly why things go wrong. Just because everything is pre-arranged and every detail foreseen, because there is no escape out of the network of minutely accurate ritual and magic forces, because there is no free space in which to give play to unforeseen and individual reactions, the Indian is faced with the question where his own individuality really begins. He is completely tied like a plant to the spot where his birth happens to have cast

him, and he is bound by the fetters of the social standing of his caste and the mask of his own sex; in short, by everything that constitutes his 'persona'. The network of duties and prescriptions follows him even into the deepest recesses of his being, where the spontaneity of feelings ought to have at least some free play, as for instance in the manner in which a human being reacts to the loss of a beloved one. But from the voluntary heroic death of Queens and warriors' wives, who wished to share the fate of their fallen husbands in the flames of their burning castles, and to escape slavery and dishonour, arose the compulsory mechanism of the burning of the widows.

When man's entire personality no longer belongs to himself, but has become a maze of duties and demands to be fulfilled, then he must seek his detachment and his innermost self in those depths which we, in Western psychology, perceive in the collective unconscious, or in even deeper layers. When the Westerner thinks of the unconscious, he is inclined to feel as though he were contemplating an abyss. To the Indian, on the other hand, his own psychology appears rather as having the structure of an onion, skin after skin: there is the rind belonging to the senses, the next one belonging to the intellect, the one of the consciousness of his own being, then his own unconscious,—all these are layers, but when is he going to reach the kernel of life? In all Indian psychology and metaphysics the word 'Self' takes on an incredible emphasis, the 'Atman' does not correspond to the Latin 'ipse' which flavours of a pompous inflated personality, rather does it correspond to the word 'Self', to the reflective pronoun in its connotation of 'reaching one's self', 'to return to one's self'. The very essence of the ascetic therapy of Yoga, therefore, could be expressed in the idea of returning into the very heart of the onion, and leaving behind all the outer skins thus to achieve salvation and unity. The need for a counterbalance again becomes all the more urgent, the more implacably and completely the communal system demands the services of each individual. Since his time is taken up with the fulfilling of his role and his duties, the Indian has no time to give to his own needs. For the average person inhabiting this psychological region this is surely quite adequate, because they have not got very much in themselves and there is, therefore, no need for further development. It is for the masses that this chain of rituals has been created. But there are others who become ill through never being allowed to live their own lives, they are the ones who are in their own nature destined to live as individuals apart, and who can only fulfil themselves through living according to their own nature. The Indian collectivity is not interested in their fate,—yet it is just those individuals who can provide the community with that which it is incapable of achieving for itself, that is leadership into the changes of the future.

The question often remains unasked as to how the community could exist without the individual, since the submission of the individual to collectivity is regarded as all-important; and yet it is a necessary contrast that allows the individual to act as the leaven in the body of the community. Only thus can the all-enfolding ritual become possible, which does not allow the individual to find himself.

The physician must side with his patient, otherwise he is not really a physician, though he may have a great many other qualities. The patient

under the Indian system is the single individual who, owing to his nature, must needs seek his own individual development. For him has been created within the system of Indian dietetics of the psyche that system of Yoga that forms a compensation to the strict adherence to the community and represents a complete detachment from it. This system fulfils its aim of detachment from all human bonds by teaching the pupil to detach first of all from that person with whom he is in constant touch and through whom he is connected with the rest of the world, namely, his own personality in all its conscious and unconscious ramifications and backgrounds from which it is made up. This very strict archaic regime of a monastic kind is meant for those particular adepts who are capable of such detachment because it answers one of their innermost needs. It enables him to fulfil completely that circle of life that is his unescapable fate, and he thus reaches the central transcendent core of his being, he is at home there, no longer in one of his outer rinds.

We are here concerned with a process of which Western psychology up to the present moment knows next to nothing, but it is unmistakably designated in the various Yoga teachings. According to them, the sphere of consciousness is recognised as being an outer skin and is discarded, but not only that, the same thing happens with regard to even the unconscious in both its personal and collective aspects. We could say that one of the aims is the vanquishing of the sphere of the archetypes in order to be no longer subject to it. This is expressed in the image that the Yogin rises above the Gods, and that the Buddha hands over his teachings to the Gods whilst he himself becomes free of their divine existence. The final aim of the Yoga as a guiding of the soul is the mastering of the unconscious, which is itself represented on the one hand in the blessed and venerable forms of the Gods and on the other hand in the shape of threatening and dangerously entangling demons.

The adept who does not seek to completely vanquish these deepest layers remains in constant intercourse with these divine-demonic regions of his own being through daily devotional exercises, during which he visualizes the divine manifestations, or, on a lower plane, gives service to their outer images. All those unfulfilled forces and wishes, that *libido* that the everyday life of man cannot receive within its natural narrow boundaries, are here given an opportunity to unfold themselves in an imaginary sphere of greatness and beauty, and to project themselves on to the images of the divinity. They themselves become endowed with all possible dignity and splendour, and bestow on the faithful adept again and again the certain knowledge that all these divine forces reside not only outside himself, but also form the true mystery of his own being: that they are his own hidden nature which reveals itself to him. It looks as though this were a preventative teaching against the formation of autonomous-complexes, in other words against an inner division which is always linked up with a congestion of the energies.

Apparently the Hindoo who lives nearer to the unconscious regions than we do is more in danger of the risks with which they threaten his ego through the eruptions from its demonic powers, therefore his Yoga devotions protect him from its floods, and not only help him to make his peace with those dangerous regions but even to

transform their destructive forces into helpful spirits.

Compared with this extensively consolidated Indian system of the guiding of the soul, analytical psychology in all its ramifications still looks like an infant beside a man who has already achieved the greater part of his life. A great many problems in modern psychotherapy are already receiving new light from the study of the Indian teachings, and are becoming more real through the contemplation of this other world which in so many points still appears incomprehensible, yet in others seems very closely related to our own. Through the Indian knowledge of the psyche we are beginning to become aware of a very different relationship toward man and his unconscious from that which we believe to exist in ourselves. We are thus given a new outlook over our own present-day psychological situation, and we begin to see a great many possibilities and tasks in which Western psychotherapy will engage itself in the future and which may have a very far-reaching effect. Perhaps one of these paths into the future will lead to the development of Western psychotherapy into a conscious guiding of the soul; and from the analysis and observation and collection of psychological facts we may evolve a method somewhat similar to the Indian one, which would grow up from our own Western soil and material into a kind of synthetic dietetics of the psyche.

YOGA AS A MEANS TO SELF-REALIZATION

By Dr. Mahendranath Sircar

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The quest of the East has been the quest after the Eternal. Philosophy in the East is not only a science of Truth. It has a more comprehensive connotation. It is also the method of realising Truth immediately and directly. Yoga represents this aspect of philosophy. It is in short, the art and the discipline by which we can produce in us perfect harmony and equilibrium of being which rears up the finest intuitive insight into Truth. Indian thinkers have never lost sight of this fundamental connotation of Yoga. If philosophy clears up rational understanding, Yoga systematizes all the forces of our being in such a way as can make it possible for us to transcend the subject and the object relation in knowledge which would reveal the inscrutable mystery of silence. It is the finest art to unravel all the sheaths of our existence, all the parts of our psychic make up and gives us the knowledge of the sub-conscious, the conscious, and the super-conscious. But the end is not reached until the transcendental Self is realized—the Self which is beyond all dynamism and all psychic creations and formations. Yoga really gives us the unique realization

of Consciousness and Being undifferentiated into the form of the subject and the object. It is that which makes philosophic knowledge live in us in its highest sense. It is, therefore, the art which can modulate our psychic being in such a way that nothing can stand against the great consummation. The subjectivity of the subject is a concentration, which is to be dislodged before the Self can be enjoyed as *freedom*. The basic being of existence is free and this is not the creative freedom but the freedom of percipience. There is a wide difference between the Self as subject and the Self as freedom. The Self as subject is necessarily related to the object and so long as the subjectivity functions it is difficult to draw the clear line between the Self as the basic reality transcending all formations and the self as creative. The former oversteps the dynamism of the subject, for to be a subject is to operate a function and therefore imposes a limitation upon the Self. The Self is pure Sentience, Conscience, which does not function in any way. To be subject requires a locus and a concentration. The subjectivity is impressed upon the Self. To realize this is to realize the Self as freedom. Subjectivity is its bondage and creates for it an eccentric reference. Yoga in the highest sense is the detachment from all functioning of the subject and is the clear discrimination of the Self from the subject. The Self as subject can be compared to Kant's synthetic unity of apperception, which harmonizes all the parts of our experience. Unlike Kant, it has a creative function in addition to its epistemological function. But the true Self is one that transcends both. It is, therefore, beyond all epistemological knowledge. Its knowledge can be obtained by establishing the sense of clear discrimination between transcendent percipience and the creative ego. Yoga gives us this discrimination and finally the transcendent illumination.

Yoga in its very low sense gives us control over our nature. It gives us a kind of psycho-therapy, self-hypnosis, psychic-healing, etc. But these are offshoots of it. Through it a superior control is attained over the vital subconscious part of our nature. The method of psycho-analysis traces psychical aberrations to suppressed or repressed desires and the cure is found in the method of confession which manages to expel them from our mind. But psycho-analysis does not go very deep. It traces the cause of any aberration in the psychological incompatabilities of the underlying forces. True. But the question is to be thrashed out further by tracing out the cause of this incompatabilities of human nature or more accurately vital mental nature. Indian psychology traces them to the fundamental elements (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) which constitute the psychic being of man and the fundamental change in our constitution can take place when an equilibrium has been established in our nature by regulation of the composing forces and not by temporary removal of the incompatabilities. Herein lies the great difference between the Christian doctrine of confession and the Hindu doctrine of Yama, Niyama, etc. The latter doctrine possesses a greater potent force of uprooting the cause of the disease not by removing only the secondary causes but by getting rid of the primary cause.

The West has laid much emphasis upon faith, and faith is often supposed to be the exclusive method of realizing spiritual secrets. But the divergence between knowledge and faith is not so wide as ultimately faith is based upon experience giving clue to our finer nature

and higher wisdom. Faith is an attitude not of unconscious impelling, rather it is an attitude which invites the finer inspiration and greater aspiration and eventually illumines understanding. It is the great law of our dynamical being and Yoga has in it the proper place for faith; for it is that that ultimately carries conviction and endows the adept with light. It is the momentum of the soul towards the realisation of Truth, and not necessarily a belief in a God of redemption. Faith is not necessarily an unconscious guiding force of our nature. Sometimes it gives true guidance, not because it is instinctive or unconscious, but because it is associated with the higher knowledge, which fact, however, is not revealed to the mind till it be watchful of its operation through the soul. Faith redeems by the knowledge it conveys and the light it sheds. It is true of our finer psychic being which often inspires us unawares, but its true nature is revealed in the higher knowledge of the soul. Yoga accepts its guidance, for ultimately it has to do with the opening of our psychic being. The subconscious has its indications, so has the super-conscious. The dynamical faith of religion emerges from the superconscious deep of our being. The superconscious is not the transcendent, but has a direct touch with the cosmic consciousness.

Much is being made of the unconscious in the West. The Western psychologists trace all the lost clues to our conscious life in the unconscious. But the Indian psychology in Yoga has made the division of the conscious life into the conscious, the sub-conscious and the superconscious with the final purpose of reflecting the light of the superconscious upon the inconscient part of our nature. The forces change their character with the higher light reflected upon them. Indian psychology analyzes the forces into their constituent elements and opines that with the increase of the Sattva element the forces change their nature from grossness to fineness. Sometimes their qualities change. The entire lower being is thus sought to be transformed, for there is psychological relativism in our nature which allows the possibility of constant transformations of the character of forces. Spiritual life essentially lies in the transfiguration of the impulses. Without this psychological relativism, spiritualization of our nature would be impossible. There is nothing constant or fixed in our psychological dynamism and with the inrush of fine psychical energy our inner nature becomes radically changed. In fact Yoga is the art by which we can bring out divine possibilities in man by thoroughly changing and transforming his nature. The psychic life in man has various grades of fineness according to the degree of assimilation of the finer forces of nature.

This transfiguration is a natural possibility which lies in every man; and although the racial tendencies go to make up an important factor in our personality, it should not be forgotten that the real objective of Yoga is to eleminate both the racial and individual idiosyncracies and to find out the element which can transform and transfigure our impulses and thus establish an equilibrium and poise in our being. Yoga is really intended to bring in the higher evolution of the super-man by rejection, assimilation, and inspiration. It is a common law of evolution that some original tendencies are rejected or modified before a finer course of growth is firmly established. In the Indian system of Yoga attempts have seriously been made to enter into the depths of our being and heights of our consciousness by rejecting some obstructive

forces and by moving helpful ones which are generally dormant in common man. Yoga therefore has in it the efficient means of transforming man and helping his finer evolution by seizing on finer psychic forces. It is the surest art of freeing man from the tendencies to which he is subjected by the mere fact of birth, environmental or congenital. It is in this sense the secret method which gives the highest transcendental freedom—freedom of the personality from the forces to which it is *naturally* subjected to.

This brings us to the question of predestination (Karma) and Yoga. Hindus have accepted the law of Karma as determining evolution. The forces of heredity and environments, no doubt, to a certain extent shape our conduct but the main force of the evolution lies in our own power to create and evolve. It is true in normal sense, because a man's personality is his own making and in this sense his personality is more an important factor than the tendencies acquired from environments or heredity. The modern psychology tries to determine the whole personality of man by the sum total of sub-conscient tendencies and thus favours the determinist psychology. The Hindu psychology differs here. It has never ignored the creative power of the spirit and the sub-conscient forces. It interprets us as the resultants of our own Karma left in us in the form of Samskâras. It is no doubt true that these resultants leave upon us a habit of thought and action but the Hindu never denies the possibility of their modification from within. Yoga enhances the power of personality and the efficiency of will in such a way that it can modify our Samskâras effectively. It unearths nature and is a perfect means through which man can successfully escape the control of nature and become its master. It can make our psychic and vital being a fit receptacle and medium of expression of the finer spirit. Yoga as an art of finer evolution gives us complete mastery over our mental vital being and gradually ushers in free unrestricted movement of the spirit through them.

This brings in the question of Vibhutis, psychical powers of Yoga. They are a natural consequence of a finer and transparent psychic being. With the removal of Tamas, inertia, and the control of the Râjasic vibration, the spirit can have its finer expression through a finer instrument and evolution means the reassertion of the spirit over matter. And this implies evolution of powers, knowledge, subtle feeling and wider control. With finer harmony established, nature gives greater power. Harmony is the secret of knowledge and power. Nature yields her secrets before harmony. Yoga introduces the law of harmony in our being. It reveals a correspondence between the psychic and the cosmic being; and the more this correspondence becomes a fact of our direct knowledge, the greater power we achieve. The Hindu theory of Yoga maintains a correspondence between macrocosm and microcosm. The law which governs the one is exactly the law which governs the other and the psychic unfolding of our being reveals the truth of this law. The law of correspondence becomes the source of power. It opens up the cosmic consciousness. But the adept cannot use any of his powers to his own selfish advantage, for the unwritten law of Yoga clearly forbids it as the universal forces can never be made to work for the sake of selfish interest without sufficient retribution. The over-soul behind the manifold existence keeps up the everlasting harmony in the causal

universe and when we can catch the rythmic vibrations of this harmony we feel our being widened and our soul enjoying the serene equilibrium of the cosmic life. The question of power cannot arise, for true power lies not in the individual or racial assertion but in finding out and establishing that opening in us which can make us responsive to the waves of cosmic life. Egoism and Yoga go ill together. We should rather not touch it than use it for selfish purposes. Kundalini can never be opened and be active in us for any selfish purpose without a complete crush. The movement of life should never be downward. In Yoga the true secret of power lies in using it unselfishly for the cosmic good. Cosmic powers should be always utilized for realizing divine purpose on earth, for ushering in of new expressions of spirit. The power which Yoga gives is divine power. Nobody can subordinate it to undivine purposes without its dire consequence. And to the selfish man such powers can never descend. The psychic law asserts too truly and effectively.

The acquiring of Powers, therefore, is not the essential usefulness of Yoga. It is a movement in divided consciousness and as such the man of power is always looked upon as a man inferior to the man of knowledge, for the latter has been freed from the touch of ignorance. Power goes with knowledge and with the purification of the inner being, but the seeking of powers has always been denounced. It is not fruitful for the final realization of the Self which is consequent upon clear discrimination between the creative principle (Prakriti) and the transcendental existence (Purusha). Patanjali, therefore, recommends the practice of concentration with a view to attain the knowledge of the different elements constituting our body and the different principles constituting our psychic being. When this knowledge has been obtained, the seeker can see the nature of formations, physiological, vital, and psychological, and trace them to certain combinations of fundamental elements. This reduces our feelings and moods, our vital energy, our thought forms, and ideas to the creative principle (Prakriti) and the different kinds of its vibrations. Even it reduces our self-consciousness to an empirical self, the reflection of the transcendental Purusha upon psychic complex. Yoga, therefore, in the final sense in the East, has the connotation of a clear discrimination between the transcendental consciousness (Purusha) and the creative principle (Prakriti) with all its formations, psychic, mental, and vital. It promises transcendental freedom, by giving the knowledge of the transcendental Self.

CURRENT TRENDS IN INDIAN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

By Rao Bahadur Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar, M.A., Ph.D. (Hony.)

[Dr. S. Krishnaswami Iyengar is famous for his researches into Indian History. From his knowledge of Indian civilisation through ages, he thinks that no society, especially India, can do without religion. Religion has to play an important part in any scheme for re-organization of society, to remove the evils that afflict it today. He appeals for the acceptance of the one fundamental principle in Indian civilisation, viz. certain conformity as regards only conduct in society, but not in religious conviction and in the modes of carrying out those convictions in practice—a principle which has recently been again demonstrated by the Divine life of Sri Ramakrishna.]

European civilization which, during the last two centuries more or less, has been essaying successfully to dominate the world seems at last to have come up against obstructions insurmountable to further progress—obstructions which, in the last analysis, seem to be its own creation. The Industrial Revolution which began in England has gradually transformed an essentially agricultural world into a world almost completely industrial. The industries as they till then were having been merely handmaids to the main industry of agriculture have had a very rapid development in what is called capitalistic industrialism—a transformation the result of which has been the introduction of poverty and suffering in a very large measure, notwithstanding the great output of consumable commodities. Suffering and starvation there always were among the people, but that was only, in the old world, in periods when production was low, and commodities produced could not meet the demands of consumption. We have now reached a stage when production is abundant and poverty and suffering unprecedented, two things on the face of it incompatible. This incompatibility is perhaps very largely, if not solely, due to recent developments in capitalistic organisation. These developments have come to this, that the whole benefit of increased, and even the much cheaper production, goes in a very large measure into the pockets of absentee capitalists by way of interests on investments and profits, particularly the latter, and the actual producer not only seems hardly benefited, but actually does suffer as a direct consequence of this seeming increase of prosperity. This general suffering is a factor which is at the root of the evil that afflicts present-day society. Expansion of industry and the excessive production of industrial commodities have thrown out of occupation a large body of people who might otherwise find engagement in one form or other of sustaining labour, and have reached a stage where agricultural produce hardly provides the means in excess which would normally go to the purchase of these industrial commodities. The result is unemployment and consequent suffering and starvation which brings in its train, as a natural consequence, moral depravity of various kinds and various kinds of nescience in respect of religion. The very same industrial development has, on the other side, been responsible for the vaster development in the physical sciences, and man's conquest of nature, as it is sometimes picturesquely described, with no definite direction to

life itself. One general result of this advancement of science is the unification of the world which has made it impossible for communities to live apart and pursue their lives in their own way. It is no more possible for East or West to go on without being vitally affected by changes that may be taking place in the one or the other. Social evils therefore have ceased to be generally evils that afflict a particular society—of these of course there are a certain number in each society—but have become so general that the remedies which could be thought of ought to be such as could apply to the whole world. There are specific evils that may be affecting individual groups, and remedies therefor may be sought by individual communities that suffer from them. Perhaps that is a comparatively small part, and, even where it is not small, it is so interwoven with the general prevalence of evil all over that it naturally gets involved in the larger question. This has to be determined in discussing current tendencies in India as much of it may be not peculiar to India alone. Still a consideration of these tendencies general or special as they affect India in particular may have its value.

In all the stir that one notices round about, the crying need seems to be social reform, and, in Indian society particularly, religious reconstruction, which in a society like that of India goes hand in hand with social reform. The evils that afflict a society are oftentimes ascribed to a particular form of social organization, and the remedy is sought in a re-organization of that society. The general complaint has come to be that there is something wrong with Hindu society as a whole, and it is in everybody's mouth that this social organization must go and something else must take its place, which is only the Western cry of socialism, which general term is made to convey social reorganization extending all along from downright communism to anything like a very moderate socialisation of some of the larger means of production. What the next step is to be has to be determined of course not on experience but on a simple consideration of what might end the evils which seem to afflict the present world. It is because of them that the remedies suggested are so many, and, whenever circumstances permit, it does not stop at the suggestion of remedies, but proceeds much farther forward to put the ideas, however imperfectly formed, into practice. This resulted naturally in a certain number of social experiments the results of which cannot as yet be assessed accurately nor even the general tendencies forecasted with any certainty.

There is a corresponding stir in India showing itself in a variety of ways. There are those who expect a way out of the present difficulties by remedies nothing short of heroic in character. Socialism of some kind is coming to be a recognised factor, the communistic element not being inconspicuous. There are other remedies suggested milder in appearance and seeming to be only communal movements towards social reform, all by ordinary methods of legislation and by the usual fiat of a majority. There are leaders who seek it through a thorough industrialization of India along the lines of Western industrialism notwithstanding the industrial impasse to which European civilization has brought itself. There are others who would look for salvation in the revival of rural life and the attainment of a pristine rural simplicity. To some extent it may look like an attempt to set back the hands of the clock. Those who advocate this

remedy do not seem to be any more clear as to what exactly they wish to attain, although one could see a certain blind groping towards an economically self-contained India. There are others still who consider India's salvation in the simple abolition of the caste system. There are others still who would go farther and abolish religion altogether. In this multiplicity of wise counsels it is really puzzling to the average man who wishes to take an intelligent interest in these—let us say the voting individual—to know what exactly had best be done in the circumstances.

From the very nature of the case the question could hardly admit of a simple answer. Apart from the mere complexity of the problem itself, there is the complexity due to the peculiar character of India itself, its vast extent, its variety of geographical features, the varied peoples that occupy the land of India and even the varying degrees of culture in which the distinct communities happen to be in spite of a certain amount of unity of cultural feeling that one might see in the whole of the Indian population. A thoughtful reformer with a panacea for all the evils that afflict society would stand aghast the moment he comes down to the practical level of everyday life apart from any ideal that he might cherish. We are looking out for the building up of an Indian nation, while nationalism has come to be in deserved discredit in Europe; a considerable body of thinking people are out to cultivate an international feeling, while clearly the trend seems to be internationalism in respect of economics and everything else to bring about the much-needed peace in the world. A considerable amount of internationalism could be seen in the whole course of Indian civilisation. Whether it is now worthwhile giving up this with a view to developing that pronounced nationalism which has attained to an amount of discredit in Europe may be one practical question for consideration. In the various efforts at reform religion seems to be almost brushed aside as an influence in shaping social life, while some of the new societies are frankly out to build on the complete destruction of religion. Others are no less iconoclastic in their tendencies in giving the shape to religion which their own particular notions of social renovation seem at the moment to demand. Between the one and the other religion has come to be a factor, only suffered if even suffered at all, to exist. Could India do without religion?

While it is true in general that "among the various peoples the manifold functions of spiritual life, social or individual, only gradually broke away from religion, it is particularly true of the civilization of India. Religion is, as it were, the common denominator, or the fundamental basis of all the factors which made up Indian life". This is the sober verdict of a serious-minded historian of India. India is a land of vast population, the population being estimated at a fifth of that of the world, composed of a very large number of elements constituting almost all grades of civilized life from the primitive nomad stage to that of the highly specialized, while from the purely geographical influences the whole of this vast region and the whole vast mass of the population together has had a certain degree of unity, the variety is still bafflingly great. Naturally in a population like that and so composed, religious conceptions vary from primitive animism and *the worship of stocks and stones*, and the offering of bloody sacrifices, gradually mounting up to the sublimest height of philosophical speculation which would abrogate everything

else in the search for the Truth, the only truth, in the universal spirit as the sole existing entity and nothing else. The outstanding feature of this variety of religion was the fundamental freedom given to individuals, groups and communities to pursue their notions of God and His connection with the world in the manner that appealed to each, so long as that difference of conception in matters of religion was not allowed to interfere with the similar freedom of other peoples and communities amidst whom the particular groups' life's lot was cast. Not only was it that there was no effort at introducing any uniformity of belief, but there was the positive recognition of individual and group freedom to pursue their salvation altogether according to their lights. This is one fundamental fact of Indian civilization.

The next important factor that gave shape to the civilization of India, and gave it its unity, is the effort—a positive effort—at bringing about a certain conformity in respect of social life, not by imposing an external uniformity in point of convictions, but in the exhibition of a certain standard of fair dealing in respect of matters, even including religion, between the individuals composing communities and the communities composing society. Where an anxious effort was made, as in the case of Asoka, and that was not peculiar to Asoka alone, although we notice it in him simply because of the character of the sources of information that we have got for him, we find the existence of a certain, it may be minimum, common basis which would permit, if not of a strict uniformity, at least of a tolerably similar condition of life among a variety of people holding different beliefs in respect of their actual religion and actual norms of worship. The adoption of such a course as the common policy for all gave a certain uniformity of possible conduct, and possibly even in ideals admitted of an even course of life towards the attainment of the general ideal of normal well-being here, and salvation in the hereafter. While society therefore attained to an orientation towards a religious ideal, conduct was actually regulated by the needs of civic life strictly, and that accounts for the fact why, while the various religions lived and flourished together, even a certain amount of want of it was also tolerated so long as there was the guarantee that there would be no objectionable conduct. This exactly is just what seems to provide the justification for the atheistical tendencies in modern life both in Europe and here, where a certain number of highly esteemed persons could live retaining their esteem and pass away, still esteemed because either by force of habit, or by the civic need of a certain amount of tolerance leading to a kind of conformity, they were able to show that they could discharge the duties of their membership to society very well, whatever their own individual conceptions of religion and religious beliefs may be.

A readily noticeable tendency among modern reformers and in their actual proposals for reform is the neglect of religion, if not a recommendation for positive abolition. There are schemes that actually would abolish religion, particularly among the communist kind. It certainly is a novel experiment and perhaps it would be interesting to watch the actual developments under this dispensation as we have no experience perhaps of such in any large community. The question that has to be faced directly is whether it would be possible to reorganize society on the basis of complete neglect of religion or leaving it out of calculation. Religion could be

abolished by fiat of authority if that was all that was needed, whatever may be the actual form of government, and even social organization. But the question really to be answered is not whether it is possible to bring about such an organization, but much rather whether such an organization would be conducive to the maintenance of society without its lapsing into an immoral anarchical condition, or being subjected entirely to the autocratic authority of an unified kind, whether it be in an individual or in a small compact body of individuals. Either of these courses would lead to, if it will not actually amount to, the killing of individuality and individual liberty all over. Whether it will not mean too much of a sacrifice is a question the answers to which may possibly differ. But as a practical problem it looks as though it would be impossible for maintaining social discipline if religion should be abolished from life, having regard to the fact that in any large society, it would be well-nigh impossible to expect the large bulk of the people to be educated to the degree that exceptional men were educated up to, so that people may be left entirely free to be not too self-regarding, and therefore neglectful of the regard which is rightly due to others and their interests. Of course, religion has been described as something deleterious, almost as deleterious as the opium habit. Perhaps it is only a very striking way of putting it. The real question to consider is whether any large society would last without lapsing very soon into what Indian writers graphically describe as *Matsya-nyāya*, the greater or the stronger eating the smaller, that is, society being thrown into an anarchy, unless of course a discipline is maintained by an autocratic power, whether directly personal or through methods of legislation, legislation which if special would only be some kind of a substitute for religion. The problem applied to India would complicate it still further, having regard to the large variety of the population and the various stages of development of the large number of communities of people who have to live together and forge their way along. Is anything else possible? That is the problem that we have to consider. As a matter of fact, we have had a pretty large number of experiments in this very country two or three generations since, and these experiments are perhaps still working themselves out as it were. The various reformers of the 19th century who wished to set religious India right under the inspiration of Western education seemed to have achieved a certain amount of success at the commencement, but, as time advanced, the success achieved shows itself largely ephemeral, and therefore there is something wanting in the effort to give it the vitality for the necessary permanence. The movement towards Brāhmo Samāj, and movements similar, perhaps provide the actual examples. Therefore, then, can we say that reformation or modification would be impossible, and perhaps abolition would be the easier course? Whether abolition would be easier or more difficult, the real question will have to be whether it is desirable in the interests of India and Indian society as a whole. There seems to be still room for hope. It seems to us that the actual efforts at the abolition of religion would be a folly. What is really wrong is that the original ideal has been forgotten, and other ideals have crept in through external influences, and that change of ideal is what seems actually to be at the bottom of the tendency towards the abolition of religion altogether. Through the influence of Islam and Christianity neo-Hinduism seems to have acquired to

some extent an aggressive spirit, as it manifests itself more prominently in some of the reforming creeds, and the efforts at proselytism and reconversion. This is the direct result, a spirit of communalism within the fold of Hinduism and without, which has been introduced and prompted not perhaps altogether always with the noblest of motives. What is actually required is not a mere spirit of compromise, but one of positive sympathy and an active, deliberate effort at bettering each one of the various separate modes of religious belief and worship to wean itself of all that is crude and undesirable, and so gradually elevate each particular form of it in such a fashion as to bring about ultimately the best that is in each; and, if this is done carefully, the really desirable amount of uniformity and commonness of belief and following would come automatically, and would have the vitality to continue permanently, so that, society as a whole might be guided by a sort of common "Arya Dharma" with considerable latitude for individual convictions and forms of private contemplation and worship, as in the best of days, typified by the example of Asoka and long before him perhaps of Janaka. Within recent times, such seems to have been the actual religion *practised* by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, and, if his actual practices could be adopted all round, as perhaps easily it could in this country, it would hardly be necessary to despair of the future in this connection. Such a course would be practicable if an earnest constructive effort be made all round, and what is really wanted immediately is to bring about this conviction in the leaders and reformers who would bring about a change one way or another, and make it a part of the regular teaching and preaching among the people as part of an educational programme. Non-interference in individual religion ought to be the ideal policy, and whatever has to be done in other spheres of life which may even touch upon religion may be done with due regard to the maintenance of this attitude. It will then be perhaps not without hope that such a deliberate course of action adopted, will bear fruit in the happy tolerance and co-existence of groups without the need of perpetually watchful policing.

Notwithstanding recent developments in certain countries, such as in Soviet Russia, where there is a plainly recognized movement for the abolition of religion, the best thought of Europe seems regretful, though not of its abolition, at least of the cessation of religion as an influence in society as a whole, and there was a suggestion made by a German scholar that what was really wanted was a religion such as would appeal to men possessed of a certain amount of knowledge, practical or theoretical, of the physical sciences which on a mere superficial glance seems to promote a negation of religion and religious sentiment. He set about seriously to enquire which of the more important religions of the world would meet the case and tried to expound the Buddhism as taught by the Buddha as meeting the case admirably. Leaving that specific case apart for the moment, the need for religion in social life seems admitted generally among those really thoughtful people who enjoy the facility for a detached view of the position. Taking almost the same view of Indian society, it may be regarded that it would be well-nigh impossible to go on in India without a substantial religious influence guiding people's conduct generally. Admitting that, the question would be how far a general tendency towards a liberalism in religion which

would tolerate variations in principles, doctrines, and the practical norms of worship would be possible. So far as India is concerned that seems more or less to have been the normal tendency of its history through all its vicissitudes, and there is no reason why such a thing should not succeed equally now when it had served so well through various periods of the past history of India. While the tendencies against this principle of tolerance were acknowledgedly great at the very beginning with the formulation of doctrinal religion on the basis of Aryan Vedic literature and forms of religion based on it, we could trace this toleration throughout history, although occasional outbursts of fanaticism among particular communities have not always been absent. As a matter of fact as far as could be traced, there is no evidence of any such attempt brought to light at any time, even among the Protestant religions, of which Jainism and Buddhism are yet living religions. There was no effort at introducing uniformity, while the principles of persuasion and conversion were recognized in them. The acerbity, and even occasional fanaticism of statement of the teachings of these religions notwithstanding, we find the development more or less has been towards individual conviction in respect of these matters, and such conformity as was demanded, as a necessity of social life, has always been a certain conformity—conformity of conduct—not necessarily in convictions in religion, and in the modes of carrying out those convictions in practice. People enjoyed freedom in point of religious beliefs and worship while they had to conform to conduct, the general moral conduct in social life. At a particular period of Indian history, for which there is a considerable amount of contemporary inscriptional literature to support, this freedom went the length of members of the same family holding different convictions and belonging to different religious groups, this difference being tolerated even as between husband and wife, brother and brother, and even as between father and son. The advent of Islam into India perhaps changed the attitude of Islam and not of Hinduism, and Islam learnt to tolerate no less than the various Indian religions before. While perhaps from the nature of the case and the character of the religion of Islam, the degree of freedom that obtained before may not appear to have prevailed, although even that perhaps might prove to be too much of a statement to make absolutely, the attitude of the average Muhammadan seems to have been to live and let live in point of religion. The general attitude has been till about a generation ago not merely a question of tolerance or sufferance, but what was really more even of passive participation, and the showing of regard and respect for differences in point of religion. The spirit of intolerance and the recent communal virus that one notices in the present-day Indian society is not at bottom a religious movement, and the causes of this change are not very far to seek. It seems therefore, if only a genuine effort be made, the attainment of the degree of tolerance and even active assistance from various communities could be easily secured if only religion be detached from politics altogether. The tendency however seems to be to emphasize this by the creation of communal interests while there really is no such generally, and that has introduced, if not altogether a new canker, at least a new attitude in regard to the whole outlook, the result of which can only be pernicious in the extreme. It becomes therefore the fundamental duty of all those actively interested in Indian

life whether they be statesmen, politicians, social reformers, religious teachers, whatever may be the class or section or the group into which they may fall, to cultivate in themselves this breadth of feeling which would not merely suffer their fellow-countrymen, but actively use their influence within the sphere of each to promote the noblest life whatever be the forms of religion or conviction of each individual group to which one may belong. If the effort be made with sufficient earnestness by the educated part of India as a whole and followed solemnly in every item of conduct, the result would surely be a far happier state of affairs, even if it fails to bring heaven on earth. The achievement of the complete happiness of the people is dependent upon so many influences, of which the religious influence is but one factor, though perhaps a great one. Much else that is really for the social good has to be done, along with this, for assuring ourselves of the happiness of Indian society as a whole.

THE VAISHNAVA SONGS AND A REVIVAL OF KIRTAN IN HIGH SOCIETY

By Rai Bahadur Dinesh Chandra Sen, D.Litt. (Hon.)

[Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen has made a special study of Vaishnavism in Bengal and is therefore pre-eminently fitted to write on this subject. He traces the historical background of the Vaishnava songs to life actually lived in the society of the day. The poets drew their religious inspiration from the lives of their countrymen who were not afraid to lose their all for love. The Vaishnava songs used this secular as a garb, an allegory to represent the passion of the soul for the Divine.]

The Vaishnava songs should not be confounded with or mistaken for what the Europeans call "lyrics". The expression "mystic songs" makes a near approach to the sense implied by "Mahâjan Padâvali" but this expression also does not denote all that should be said to define Vaishnava songs.

These songs have a historical background with which many of our readers are not familiar. Chandi Dâs says, "The talk of Sahajiyâ-love is in every one's mouth but how many know its real import? He who has crossed the dark region of animal passion is alone privileged to know what it is."

From the 10th or the 11th century, as a reaction against Buddhist asceticism condemning all touch with womankind, there sprang up a desire of union—a natural longing in both sexes amongst the monks and nuns of the Mahâjan-order, who had hitherto professed and tried to practise strict abstinence in their circle. This longing was defended by the Sahajiyâ-tântriks and expounded by a subtle code of spiritual philosophy which has often been misrepresented.

The Sahajiyâs aim at a very steep ascent in their conception of spiritual love. It is an almost inaccessible height which they aspire to scale. In the 18th century there was a regular craze amongst the Bengali young men to reach this high ideal. But Chandi Das strongly condemns all such attempts. He says, "This course is not open for all, one in a million may arrive at the goal, the rest will surely

court their own ruin in the attempt." He further says, "One who may hang a mountain in the air by means of cobweb, should come to this path; one who can send a frog into the mouth of a poisonous snake for a dance and then bring it back unhurt, should come to this path." He again says, "Just as the goblins or ghosts try to imitate the dance of the great God Siva and excite thereby the laughter of the gods, so do young men of our age attempt to follow in the footsteps of the great Sahajiyâ saints and become subject to ridicule."

What sort of love these Sahajiyâs expound will be found in their subtle spiritual books, which are mostly unintelligible to lay readers, being written in the "Sandhyâ Bhâsâ" or "the language of twilight" as some have named it. But if one wants to see its practical illustration, let him read the little book "Life of the Saint Durga Das Kar" by Achyut Charan Choudhury of Maina, Kanai Bazar, Sylhet. A man should be like gold purged of all dross—of all sensuality, before he can be fit for entering this temple of pure Platonic love. The poet Ramani Raman (17th century) has explained this love in his account of Chandi Das, recently published by the Sâhitya Parishat of Calcutta. The code of this love lays down very severe canons as test. For instance in the initial stage, after selection of each other before the Guru, the man should leave the company of the woman of his choice and mix freely with other young and beautiful women, and this he should do for six months. If his mind is not in the least disturbed by the thought of any other damsel and he remains steady, firm, and faithful to his original selection, the first test would then be declared to have been passed through. In the second stage the man and the woman should live together firstly in two separate rooms of the same house and secondly in the same room for a number of months, till at the end their bed would be the same. And this course should be pursued for a few months. If during all this period of trial he perceives that he is absolutely free from all sexual cravings, not only in body but also in mind, then will he arrive at that immaculate and pure state which is fit for this romantic Sahajiyâ love. All this time the lovers should consider each other as perfectly divine and carry out each other's least wishes with perfect submission and pleasure, however hostile they may be to their respective personal sentiments from a worldly point of view.

The religion of the Hindus in the 12th and 13th centuries was permeated by this austerely romantic sexual ideal. But as may be easily conceived, men and women were in most cases unfit for this fire-ordeal. Like the demons of Hebrew Scriptures they fell and fell from their fancied paradise till they reached the bottom of perdition. The country presented a scene of abnormal sexual failings of a very gross nature. In art, literature, and history, this degraded taste has left its stamp. Joydeva's celestial songs, though occasionally full of a mystic and devotional import, often contain most objectionable passages not less gross than Bhârata Chandra's poems. The temples of Kanârak and Puri and of hundreds of them in this Gangetic valley of ours are polluted by vulgar scenes of sensuality, painted or illustrated on terracotta over their door-ways, which, whatever interpretations and edifying meanings may be given them, are abominable and scarcely fit to be whitewashed or defended by ingenious theological commentaries. When religion based on Tântrikism grew vitiated in this way, and the Tântrik Gurus enunciated theological principles setting

at naught all that is sacred in society, at that very time in the lower order of society amongst the masses, real life, real love, and martyrdom, and real heroic sacrifice in the cause of love were not found wanting in the country. One reading the four volumes of Eastern Bengal Ballads published by the Calcutta University will rise with a sense of admiration verging on worship discovering the fact that in no age were the women of this country found wanting in calm fortitude, total indifference to physical suffering, adherence to love, purity bright as flame which once characterized Sitâ, Sâvitri and Damayanti of old. Mr. Rothenstein, the celebrated art critic and himself one of the foremost artists of the day, has said that on reading the Bengali Ballads he found the female figures of Ajantâ and Amarâvati's caves restored to life. He was overwhelmed with a sense of admiration for these heroines of Bengal. Dr. Sylvain Levi said that living in a cold country of the North he felt all the freshness, vigour, and beauty of tropical life in the sketches given in these Ballads. Mrs. Andree Hogman's admiration has surpassed that of all other critics. She says that the works of Maeterlinck and Madame de Lafayette are faulty in places but the sketches of the Ballads are faultless. "They should be studied in every house of European countries like the works of Shakespeare and Racine." Our late Director of Public Instruction, Mr. Outen, detailed the beauties of these Ballads in the columns of the *Englishman*, and remarked that just as a man, freeing himself from the sooty atmosphere of smoke and dust of Calcutta, suddenly comes in contact with the free and grand atmosphere of the region through which the Padma flows, so the readers of our present-day artificial literature would feel when reading these noble ballads of Bengal.

But I do not lay much stress on foreign appreciation. The heroines and sometimes also the heroes of these songs show the great love, which the Sahajiyâs have tried to explain, and yet the lines followed by the two are totally different. The ballads have no religious pretension, they are purely secular. Yet when one would read the self-abnegation of the *Andhâ Bandhu*, the pathos created by the flute of a shepherd in *Mahishâl Bandhu*, the charming situations of the lovers in *Dhopar Path*, he will be reminded off and on of similar things in Vaishnava Padâvali. Often some passages in both of them are exactly parallel. Yet it should be borne in mind that neither the Vaishnavas nor the ballad-makers have exerted their influence on one another. Both of these schools of literature show that they abundantly drew from the resources of the soil, from contemporary life, but their tone, though often common and in agreement had only a superficial affinity. The ballad-makers have drawn men and women as they saw them. Yet how grand they are, how beautiful! I should not call these works pure fiction. No one can draw these from fancy unless such characters were actually in villages and the rural surroundings of the poets. The Vaishnava poetry began where the village bards closed their descriptions. The ballad-makers were satisfied by giving and depicting the glories of worldly life. Men and women are shown in a brilliant panorama in the midst of wild country scenery inspired with lofty ideas which though earthly had, like flowers, their mission direct from heaven.

The Vaishnava Padâvali used the secular, only as a garb, as an allegory, and a symbol to denote the relation of the human soul to the divine. But the

Padas unmistakably show that the Mahājanas had obtained their religious inspiration from the lives of their countrymen who were not afraid to lose their all for love, from those men and women who had nothing to do with scriptures or rules laid down by religious propagandists, and had nothing to do with Sanskrit poetics or scholarly canons. The lovers had one scripture open before them—that was their own mind, which when, unaffected by artificial life, like a mirror, reflects the light of the highest orb of the solar region—unapproachable by learning alone.

The country was full of these loving souls, and Vaishnavism took its birth in this soil, enriched and purified by a thousand sacrifices of men and women in the pursuit of the shrine of romantic love. Hence the Vaishnava Padas are not purely personal lyrics or outbursts of poetical ideas of individual poets. They have a historical background, and Chaitanya, the God-man of Nadia, sprang from this sacred soil of ours which to use the biblical expression was the "chosen seed" and which from age to age had passed through a Tapasyā of love and sacrifice. His life and the Vaishnava songs are inseparable from Bengal and its society—of all classes, high and low,—the Tree of Plenty, which produced flowers of incomparable beauty and scent—nourished by the renunciation of a hundred martyrs.

It is a happy sign of the times that a strong appeal is being made to revive an appreciation of the Vaishnava Kirtan amongst the educated community of the day. Our educated women hitherto sang songs which were not purely of an indigenous character, though some of them are characterized by genuine and essential elements of poetry. They had lost all touch with the devotional songs of Rāmprasād and the unparalleled Kirtan songs. The culture of the country should of course be progressive, but at the same time it must be based on the ancient wisdom, philosophy, traditions and poetry of the soil in which we are born. To discard them is foolish. Fleeting ideas, caught from foreign lands, however alluring for the time being, cannot be the basis of a true and growing civilization. We are very glad to see that Kirtan songs hitherto confined to the lower order of our countrymen have risen above that stratum and are being backed by influential and educated people.

For the sake of truth we must, however, admit that the Kirtaniyās of Bengal in the past pioneered by such men as Rasik Das, Gour Das and Shiba Shaha, had achieved a success in their trade the extent and excellence of which cannot be conceived by those who have not heard them. The Vaishnava Padāvali with all its subtle and mystic philosophy was on the tips of their fingers. They sang in a rapt condition and transported their audience to a region of bliss—the like of which falls to the lot of few men to experience in life. When Gour Das commenced his Ghostha songs, within an hour, we forgot that we were creatures of this mundane world. We felt the divinity, the all-pervading love, the power of the flute of Sri Krishna to attract and enchant in such an overwhelming way that for a time we seemed to live in his paradise, forgetful of everything of this world. I have spent about half a century in studying the Vaishnava songs, but when Gour Das used to give his poetic interpretation full of spiritual meaning, in course of his songs, I found every time I heard him new light thrown on the abstruse passages of *Chaitanya Charitāmrita*.[1] Such a man

[1] Life of Sri Chaitanya, the prophet of Nadea, in Bengali.—Ed.

left us only three years ago, and not a line appeared in any paper in regard to this remarkable singer. Pity that we have such a contempt for our ancient lore as not to take any notice of such giants. It is a pity that our love for country is often only lip-patriotism. It is the people of the lowest stratum of our society that have often preserved the old culture of the country of which no notice is taken by us, while we run after every trinket of little or no value that comes from Japan or Germany.

But India, as preserved in her huts and mud-hovels, must re-assert herself, if India is to live. The other day Mr. Havell, supported by Dr. Lefroy, pointed out to us in an unmistakable manner in one of his well-known works that the lower class of people of this country can discourse on philosophy and spiritual truths in a more clear and intelligent way than even a highly cultured European can do. Mr. Havell speaking of the Bengali artizan class said that these people though foolishly called illiterate, because they sometimes do not know the alphabet, know the technique and subtleties of Art, the charming situations of men and women for the purpose of sculpturing or painting far better than the ordinary well-known artists of Europe. Dr. Haughton, the well-known lexicographer tells us in his glossary that the temples built by Indian sculptors are characterised by a sense of proportion and a highly elegant and magnificent idea of ornamentation which would startle a European observer. If one of such temples which are often found in dilapidated condition in the jungles of Bengal, were discovered in any part of Europe, how many voluminous works, what encomiums in the highest laudatory language would have poured forth from the press describing it; but alas! no one knows even the name of such remarkable sculptors in India! The highest are sometimes little regarded. But a flower is always a flower even if no one notices it. These are gifts of heaven, and essentially do not, while serving their mission, covet or wait for any trumpeting. It may be known to some of our readers that the Kirtan songs are divided into four classes or modes of singing. Firstly, the Manahar Shahi, which is the school improved by Srinivas in the Pargana Manahar Shahi. Secondly, the Garenhata School founded by Narottam Das in the District of Rajshahi. Its centre was Kheturi, the capital of Raja Krishnananda Datta. Thirdly, the Reniti School of Syamananda which flourished in Midnapur. And lastly, the Mandarani School which had its rise in Gada Mandaran and its neighbouring locality. By far the most popular of these modes is the Manahar Shahi and the most solemn and scientific is the Garenhata. One of the great centres of Kirtan-singing up to now is Mayna Dala. The teachers are Mitra-Thakurs of the place. The depth, the profundity of spiritual thought and the subtle culture of Vaishnava philosophy, and above all, the fervent devotional appeal which characterized the old order of Kirtan singers are not to be expected amongst the modern exponents of Kirtan songs. There is of course a positive decline in the quality at present, but the educated singers have dispensed with the boisterousness of the music and shortened the wearisome length of discourses. The old crudeness is no more. The songs though taken from the famous Mahâjan Padas of old have been revised and portions curtailed from original poems in order to economize time and save weariness.

It is indeed a happy sign that Bengal has at last known her own points of strength; the best weapon of our

people to conquer the world is this Kirtan. The other day we heard from Dr. Surendra Nath Das Gupta, Principal of the Sanskrit College, Calcutta, in one of his public lectures, that when at the close of his lecture in one of the cities of Italy he recited a Bengali Kirtan song, men and women of that place rose up and began to sing the lines, though they did not understand a word of it, and Dr. Das Gupta said, that he and his audience felt a thrill and inspiring effect as if all of them formed one group, one people. Such is the weapon which Gaurānga (Chaitanya) has given us to win and conquer the human heart. For these five hundred years, this weapon has not lost its sharpness or power to subdue the human heart. It is by far stronger than steel and gunpowder, Gladstone's speech or the forty-pounders of a modern army. It can, if properly adapted to modern conditions, still be used to conquer and enchant the human mind and confound all hostile logic of the opponents.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

By Dr. M. H. Syed, M.A., Ph.D., D.Litt.

[Dr. M. H. Syed belongs to the Oriental Department in the University of Allahabad. He shows how in the light of the true spirit of Indian Thought, the dogma of finality or the so-called last word is the root cause of the mental slavery, intolerance and lack of charity in our daily life. Every garment of our thought and life is only a means to an end and not an end in itself, and when they have served their purpose they are no longer required. Hinduism and Buddhism placed no fetters on the intellect. No man was deprived of his birthright, his freedom of thought, by any school of Indian thought.]

Freedom: Spiritual, political, personal. Freedom in any sphere of life is the legitimate desire of man because he is essentially and inherently free in his potential nature struggling to realize freedom which is his birthright, in actual life also. If there is any thing that a man resents and is anxious to get rid of it is bondage, restriction and limitation, and quite naturally so.

So long as a person, in whatever position of life he may be, is free to do what he chooses he is happy; but the moment he is bound down in any way he begins to fret and worry, having been deprived of his natural freedom.

The same simple but significant principle holds good in all types of cases, high or low, human or divine.

In the Realm of Higher Life the highest goal of man is considered to be liberation from the round of birth and death and the galling limitations of physical senses and physical vehicles.

Personal and national freedom is based on the same principle.

Freedom of thought and action also derives its sanction from the same source; with certain limits and with accompanying responsibility, it is the genuine right of man. In the light of the true spirit of Indian Thought, the dogma of finality or the so-called last word is the root cause of mental slavery, intolerance, and lack of charity in our daily life; unless human beings try to get over this chasm they cannot attain complete freedom of thought which is the secret of our onward pro-

gress. Unless we learn to think for ourselves and form our own judgment we cannot possibly unfold our mental and moral faculties. Therefore, one should understand the reason as to why we are enjoined to get rid of the "fetiche" of finality and learn to be tolerant and open-minded :—

Human nature does remain for a long time the same but it is not completely wooden and stationary. It is subject to the law of growth and development. Mentally, morally, and spiritually humanity is not where it was a thousand or a million years ago. The world was not created only a few thousand years from now. It has been in existence for millions of years, of course, according to Indian Philosophy, and will continue to exist for an unknown number of years hence.

Thus in this changing, growing and evolving world everything has to be and is as a matter of fact, adjusted and readjusted from time to time to suit the exigency of the age. An adult cannot be fed on baby's food.

Unless we become "perfect as our Heavenly Father is", reach the Absolute and become one with It, every aspect of our life, from cradle to the grave, from one life to many lives yet to come, will continue to be relative; mental, moral, and spiritual ideals meant to evolve, guide and inspire us, must necessarily be relative and therefore free from the devitalizing force of finality.

To believe in finality is to come to the end of our evolution. In this universe which manifests only a tiny fraction of His infinite, limitless, inexhaustible, fathomless and truly unimaginable glory and magnificence, every thing and every being without an exception, must be relative and must need fresher and newer ideals of life and truth to suit his growing moral and spiritual stature. We have to go forward and not backward. The spirit, the self, the Supreme Being, has yet higher and ever loftier glory and more fascinating beauty to reveal to us. He is so illimitable that no religion, however perfect, (only relatively) can express His infinite perfection. Thus every religion, truly speaking, speaks only one letter of the word of God the Almighty. Divine knowledge and wisdom is so deep and fathomless that it cannot be confined to one set of revealed books alone. Not only through the religious scriptures of the world but through science, philosophy, art, and literature also the beauty and sublimity of a portion of the same Reality, are being revealed to us day after day in ever newer and finer expressions and forms. Bacon says, "Knowledge is not a coach for the curious spirit, nor a terrace for the wandering, nor a tower of state for the proud mind, nor a vantage ground for the haughty, nor a shop for profit and sale, but a store house for the glory of God and the endowment of mankind."

When once we grasp the idea of the growth and mutability of worldly institutions, human thoughts and feelings we cease to fret over their change or decline, as everything that has a form is bound to change and disappear in the course of time. This is the basic principle of the freedom of thought. Thoughtful people do not insist that the same thoughts and views and human institutions however dear or sacred should remain unaltered. In Indian Philosophy all such things are called outer form and may be compared to our habiliment. There is a close analogy between human institutions and ideas and the clothes we wear. That is why Carlyle calls it the Philosophy of Clothes.

Why has he used the words Philosophy of Clothes instead of form or appearance or the changing world? and what relation has it with the freedom of thought? Because some of the characteristics of clothes we wear are: (1) that we change our clothes as we grow from infancy to childhood, from boyhood to youth, from youth to manhood or as the clothes are worn out from time to time; (2) seasonableness:—We vary our clothes according to the changing weather and periodical season; (3) our clothes have variety: they are not of one colour, size, shape, and fashion; (4) no clothes are put on for ever. They are changed from time to time; (5) every article of habiliment is not as a rule made by us but by a tailor who is an expert in dress-making; (6) our garments are of our own creation and not made by God. All that applies to clothes in their variety, seasonableness, changeability etc. holds good in the case of our thoughts and views, customs and creeds, social and political opinions of every kind and every age. If our views and institutions lack adaptability and flexibility they are sure to become out of date and effete.

Everything that has a beginning must have an end, is a fundamental thought of Indian Philosophy. The unborn, perpetual, eternal, and ancient is the only reality that is free from change. All human institutions, human knowledge, human society, political and religious organizations have their age. They come and go with the changing world. None can retard the slowly moving march of the divine plan of evolution. Whether we like it or not in exact accordance with the Divine Will, we grow, blossom, wither, and die. Those who work in harmony with the Divine plan succeed in their efforts, prosper and shine, whereas those that oppose it are wrecked and ruined. Not only human institutions and man-made customs and creeds but also the world systems, planets, and mighty civilizations have their "little day" and pass away, yielding place to new ones. Every outer garment of our thought and life is only a means to an end and not an end in itself. When they have served their purpose they are no longer required.

In view of the various characteristics of clothes just stated, our thoughts and views, customs and conventions, should be modified and altered to suit the exigency of time. Differences of caste, creed and colour, minor and unessential as they are, should be tolerated and not made much of. Rigidity in thought and custom and dogmatism should be depreciated in the light of these considerations. Open-mindedness and unbiassed attitude of mind will alone help us to view things rightly.

People have been accustomed for a long time to look upon the phenomenal universe as the only reality and therefore they attach great importance to the passing and fleeting things of this world. If they had right discrimination and knew how to differentiate between the real and the unreal, the essential and the unessential side of every object, they would never waste their precious breath and energy in wrangling over so many shifting problems of life. History bears no little witness to the heart-rending conflicts and feuds, crusades, industrial exploitations, and political aggrandizements that have been existing in almost all countries of the world. What an incalculable amount of human life and property has been recklessly destroyed for the mere gratification of national greed, vanity, and false idea of prestige. If the leading men in all nations had correct perspective and right discri-

minative vision, they would have made up their differences, put an end to war and thus minimized human suffering. Human beings generally forget the ephemeral nature of our existence in this world.

Man's clothes are changed as he grows in stature and in size. Why should we, then, feel sorry and blame anybody if we have to part with any of our out-of-date views and customs that are no longer useful? We cannot help adoring what we burnt and burning what we adored. "Thou grievest for those that should not be grieved for, ... the wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead." (*Bhagavad-Gitá*, ii-II).

Robert Briffault in his book "The Making of Humanity" says, "Our age which is witnessing the dissolution of all the traditional sanctions of ethics, which tears without awe or scruple the veil from every sentiment and convention, which questions with unprecedented temerity the very principle of good and evil, this sceptical iconoclastic age, has not only given more practical effect, more current realization to those ideals of temperance and compassions which previous ages dreamed of and preached; this emancipated sacrilegious age is doing more, it is carrying those ideals higher, it is creating new ones, it is witnessing the development of a higher and truer conception of ethics, evolving a loftier morality." The foremost factor in that development is precisely the perception of that human evolution which seems to have close relation with the philosophy of clothes or forms. It is interesting to note that only human beings stand in need of clothes, because they alone are endowed with creative thoughts. Thus it is obvious that men cannot do without clothes or forms which have their temporary value. They are not to be despised and set aside. They should be taken at their right value. Similarly we should treat all human institutions, thoughts and views, customs and creeds. It is futile to grieve over the inevitable.

Freedom of thought (and action) is our birthright. The human soul is essentially free in its nature. No creed, no dogma, no theory of things, no conception of life, no assumption, no prejudice, must be allowed to dominate the soul. That is the Hindu ideal.

Regarding the wide outlook of Hinduism Sir Charles Elliot, author of *Hinduism and Buddhism* says in the introduction of his book:—

"If Hinduism were really bad, so many great thoughts, so many good lives could not have grown up in its atmosphere. More than any other religion it is a quest of truth and not a creed, which must necessarily become antiquated: it admits the possibility of new scriptures, new incarnations, new institutions. It has no quarrel with knowledge or speculation: perhaps it excludes materialists, because they have no common ground with religion, but it tolerates even the Sánkhya philosophy which has nothing to say about God or worship. It is truly dynamic and in the past whenever it has seemed in danger of withering, it has never failed to bud with new life and put forth new bud." There is no such thing as heresy among the Hindus; for no man is another man's judge and master in any sphere of thought, whether in the sphere of religion, in the sphere of politics, in the sphere of morals, in the sphere of philosophy. Thought must be free and unfettered, otherwise we will have stagnation and death. But because that is true, we should not make the illogical deduction: "It does not matter what we think." It matters enormously what we think. If we think falsely, we will act mistaken-

ly; if we think basely, our conduct will suit our thinking. So we must think our noblest, and highest. "Man is the creature of thought, whatever he thinks that he becomes" says the *Chhândogyopanishad*.

In Hinduism there has been in the past absolute liberty of thought and speech; where we are wrong, time will correct us; where we are mistaken, truth will gradually burn up our errors. But if one silences another, then one letter of the complete truth may slip out of sight, and be lost from the life of the world, a letter which should have had its place in the whole.

"Hence it is that dogmas have to be broken into pieces, because they are obstacles in the ever immortal search for truth. They must be broken when they are outgrown, and they are outgrown when the unfolding Spirit of man begins to know for himself, and no longer needs testimony from outside. And the end of religious instruction ought to be to transfer the authority from outside to inside, from the book or the church or the teacher to the inner awakened Spirit of the man, to that inner Ruler Immortal who is the only true King, the human Spirit himself. For religion should be self-determined and not determined by others; religion must be self-builded, after the conditions of building have been mastered; and one religious truth realised by our own Spirit is worth a thousand testimonies from others, for it is our own for ever and none can take it from us."[1] "This Truth—Brahman is All—is the Magna Charta of intellectual freedom. Let a man think; let a man speak. Never mind if he makes errors; further knowledge will lead him right. He cannot wander outside the Self, for the Self is everywhere. He cannot lose the Self, for the Self is within him. Let the intellect soar as it will, upwards and upwards as far as its wings can beat; still far beyond its powers North and South and East and West, Brahman stretches everywhere, the illimitable Self. Intellect cannot go outside the Self, of which it is a manifestation; it cannot therefore shake the eternal certainty of Self-existence."[2] Some men are afraid of the advance of knowledge in one direction or another. Criticism, the Higher Criticism, so feared by many religious men, what does it matter? From the point of view of the Indian Philosophy what can criticism do? It can only destroy books; it cannot destroy the Self. The Higher Criticism, of which Europe talks so much, can tear books to pieces. But it cannot tear the Self to pieces. The proof of the Self is within us, not without us, not in books, however holy. The books have grown out of the Self,[3] it can produce other books; the books are only the fruitage of the Self, unfolding its Divinity in Man; and whatever the books may be, they are not the groundwork of our faith. Criticism cannot touch the Self, of whom the proof is within us.

Let science pierce to the further star; Brahman is beyond that which is beyond. Let science analyse the minutest atom; Brahman is minuter than the atom. What then can science do? It can only find out some new beauties of Brahman in a world which is nothing but the Supreme.

At the time of the Buddha there existed in India the greatest toleration in regard to the propagation of religious and philosophical opinions. This toleration Buddhism has maintained to the present day. During the 2500 years since that time not a single person has

[1] *Mysticism* by Dr. Annie Besant pp. 21-22.

[2] *Kamala Lectures* by Dr. Annie Besant. Chap. II, p. 21.

[3] Cf. Jalaluddin Rūmi "Verily thou art the mother of all Books."

been converted by force, nor has there been spilt a single drop of blood for the propagation of the doctrine. And yet Buddhism is a missionary religion; it spread rapidly over all Central and Eastern Asia, and modified the customs of wild peoples like the Mongols and Tartars. When Buddhism was adopted by the powerful Emperor Asoka about 250 B.C., and became as it were the religion of the State, the principles of toleration were applied if possible in still greater measure, so that it seems almost fabulous to us with our so-called culture. Of this we have the surest proofs in the inscriptions which Asoka had engraved on rocks and stone pillars over the whole extent of his immense empire. "For His Majesty desires that all animate beings should have security, self-control, peace of mind, and joyousness. And this is the chiefest conquest in the opinion of His Majesty, the conquest by the Law of Piety. And a conquest won thereby is everywhere a conquest full of delight." (H. G. Wells says that Asoka is the only monarch on record who abandoned warfare after victory). "All men are my children and just as I desire for my children that they may enjoy every kind of prosperity and happiness in both this world and the next, so also I desire the same for all men." Though many more such edicts of similar character could be cited, these would suffice to show the spirit of Buddhism and the results it produces. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

It is remarkable to what degree Buddhism abhors all coercion and values liberty; even in the Brotherhood founded by the Buddha there is no vow of obedience. Buddhism aims at liberating man from all chains and ties, bodily, spiritually, religiously, and socially. Buddhists, moreover, never try to influence the political or religious views of their neighbours. Edwin Arnold, the author of the beautiful poem on the life and doctrine of the Buddha, "The Light of Asia", calls Buddhism "the grandest manifestation of human freedom ever proclaimed."[1]

Hinduism and Buddhism place no fetters on the intellect; man may think as long as he can. There is no penalty on thought; there is no blasphemy in investigation. There is nothing too sacred to be challenged. "Brahman is fearless", we are Brahman; how then should we fear? That is why no one has ever been condemned for, and deprived of, the joy and privilege of intellectual liberty which is every man's birthright by any school of Indian Thought.

[1] *The Buddha and His Doctrine* pp. 108-114.

India has always had this magnificent idea of religious freedom, and you must remember that freedom is the first condition of growth. What you do not make free cannot grow. . . . Let men have the light of liberty. That is the only condition of growth.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

THE PLURALISTIC UNIVERSE IN HINDU SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

By Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar

[Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar is connected with the Economics Department of the Calcutta University. It would be misleading, he says, to attempt interpreting Indian social philosophy or general culture in terms of Buddha and Buddhism alone for a certain period from the 6th century B.C., for it was an age of giants and there were men, institutions and movements in India such as may have cared to ignore altogether the entire Sâkyan or Buddhistic encyclopædia.]

Non-Sakyan and Anti-Sakyan Forces

Very often Sâkya the Buddha and Pali literature are erroneously taken to be something with which to cover the entire canvas of India for a certain period from the sixth century B.C. It should be worth while, therefore, to get ourselves oriented to the proper perspectives. Sâkyasimha is surely a giant, but his peers are as great giants as himself.[1] It was an age of giants to be compared with any Augustan era in the world's culture-history. The compatriots and immediate precursors as well as juniors of Sâkyasimha counted among them the Protagorases, the Anaxagorases, the Socrateses, the Platos and the Aristotles of Hindustan, —that band of Vyâsas, sophists, and encyclopædists to whom we owe in a systematic form the earliest specimens of Indo-Aryan medicine, chemistry, botany, zoology, philology, logic, metaphysics and sociology. It was an age of Parishats or academies, permanent forest-universities, periodical forest-conferences of the master-minds, itinerant preachers, Socratic questioners, closet recluses, as well as researchers and investigators into every thing from sexual science to salvation. Sâkyasimha was only one of the numberless stormers and streasers or "world-disturbers" in that epoch of "*Sturm und Drang*". It would be misleading to attempt interpreting Indian social philosophy or general culture in terms of Sâkya and Buddhism, alone.

It is in a richly diversified "pluralistic universe" of culture that the teachings of Sâkya and the Sâkyan stalwarts, the stories of the *Jâtakas* and the messages of the Pali texts are to be read. India was larger than all these combined. In other words, there were men, institutions and movements in India such as may have cared to ignore altogether the entire Sâkyan or Buddhist encyclopædia.

According to the Sâkyan or Buddhist scheme of life and thought indeed certain "well known" "heads of orders" and "teachers of schools" were described as heretical. They are enumerated as follows in the *Samaññaphala Sutta* of the *Dîgha Nikâya*.[2]

1. Purâna Kassap
2. Makkhali Gosala
3. Ajita Kesakambali
4. Pakudha Kachchayana
5. Sanjaya Belatthiputta
6. Nigantha Nâthaputta

At least two of the above six are to-day well established in Indian

[1] R. K. Sarkar: *Chinese Religion through Hindu Eyes* (Shanghai 1916), p. 50.

[2] B. C. Law: "Six Heretical Teachers" in *Buddhistic Studies* (Calcutta 1931), p. 73.

thought as having had a powerful influence in shaping the culture of the so-called Buddhist India. One is *Nâthaputta* and the other Gosala.

Jaina Teachings

Mahâvira is known as *Nâthaputta* (the son of the Nâthas or Jnâtris of Kundanagara near Vaisali) in the *Buddhist Majjhima Nikâya*.

The Jaina tradition represents Gosala as a disciple of Mahâvira. But a modern view[1] seeks to show that Gosala was one of the teachers of Mahâvira. It is also believed that among the precursors or contemporaries of Mahâvira and Sâkya the Buddha some of the formative forces of Jainism and Buddhism are to be found. Special value is attached in this regard to the philosophy of Gosala as well as to the scepticism of Sanjaya.

Non-Sâkyan thought was then a powerful factor of the times. Sâkya the Buddha is even alleged to have lived the life of a Jaina Muni (ascetic) at a preparatory stage of his spiritual career. Nay, there is a tradition that Sâkya was actually ordained as Muni Buddhakirti by the Jaina saint Pihitâshrawa.

The relations between the two, although separate from and independent of each other, were very close.[2] The title Tathâgata was accorded to Buddha as well as Mahâvira.

The coincidences and affinities are so great that Weber used to consider the Jainas to be merely one of the oldest sects of Buddhism. In *Indische Alterthumskunde* Lassen observed that the Jainas had but branched off from the Buddhists.

The similarity between the Jaina and the Brâhmanic disciplines was most profound. And Jaina tradition was not less lengthy than the Buddhist.

The first Chakravarti or world-ruler of mankind according to the Jainas is Bharata and he was the son of Risabha the promulgator or first Tirthankara of Jainism. There were 23 such Tirthankaras previous to Mahâvira, whose immediate predecessor was Parsva, the twenty-third after Risabha.

Parsva is said to have flourished 250 years before Mahâvira, the "reformer" of Jainism, and the last Tirthankara.

Sambhutavijaya, one of the priests of the Jaina organization, is said to have died in the year of Chandragupta Maurya's accession to the throne. And his contemporary was the priest Bhadravahu, the author of the first biography of Mahâvira. Sambhutavijaya and Bhadravahu were thus living in the age which saw the compilation of certain parts of the Sâkyan (Buddhist) *Pitaka*.

It was about the same time that the Svetambaras and Digambaras of the Jaina system may have been separated (300 B.C.).

From the standpoint of Mahâvira also the extent of the "pluralistic universe" around him was quite vast.[3]

[1] B. M. Barua: *History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy* (Calcutta 1921), pp. 381-382, 402; P. Masson-Oursel: *L'Inde Antique et la Civilisation Indienne* (Paris, 1923), pp. 166-168.

[2] P. V. Bapat: "A comparative study of a few Jain Ardha Mâgadhi texts with the texts of the Buddhist Pali Canon" in the *Sir Ashutosh Memorial Volume* (Patna 1926-28). For the diversity of systems with special reference to Gosala see also H. V. Glasenapp: *Brahma und Buddha* (Berlin, 1926), pp. 118-116.

[3] See the discussion of dates in the *Cambridge History of India*, vol. I. (1922) pp. 156, 158, Jacobi: *Kalpasutra* in *Gaina Sutras* Part I, pp. 8-10 (Sacred Books of the East). For the position of Gosala in the intellectual milieu of Sâkya and Mahâvira see the *Sutra-Kritanga* Book I. Lecture 1, ch. 3, and Book II, Lecture 6 in the S.B.E., Vol. XLV (1895). See also Jacobi's introduction p. xxix—xxxii.

In the first place, Mahâvira (*c* B. C. 540-468) had two powerful rivals, Sâkya the Buddha (*c* B. C. 560-480), and the not so well-known Gosala (*c* -484).

Secondly, eight classes of "pure metaphysicians" (*Akriyavâdins* or non-actionists) are mentioned in the *Sthananga* (IV. 4) of Mahâvira, as follows :—

1. Ekkavâdin (monists, theists, monotheists)
2. Anikkavâdins (pluralists)
3. Mitavâdins (extensionists)
4. Nimittavâdins (cosmogonists)
5. Sayavâdins (sensualists)
6. Samuchchhedavâdins (annihilationists)
7. Nityavâdins (eternalists)
8. Na-santiparalokavâdins (materialists)

These were all opposed to Mahâvira's *Kriyavâda* or doctrine of action.

The diverse doctrines of the times constitute, among other things, the topics of the Jaina *Sutra Kritanga* Book I. 1, II. 1.

The oldest parts of the Jaina texts were composed somewhere between the Pali texts (e.g. the *Dhammapada*) and the Sanskrit Buddhist text *Lalitavistâra*. The origin of the Jaina literature may be placed somewhere about 300 B. C.

Some of the more important *Sutras* are mentioned below :—

1. *Akaranga Sutra*
2. *Kalpa Sutra*
3. *Uttaradhyayana*
4. *Sutra Kritanga*

All these were written down in book form under the editorship of Devardhi about 454 A. C.

The systems which are described as heretical in both Buddhist and Jaina texts had considerable influence in shaping the thoughts and activities of Sâkya and Mahâvira. Indeed, the Yogins and sophists, active as they were on the borderlands of Brahmanism, may be credited with having contributed to and hastened the progress of the Jainas and the Buddhists.

While Sanjaya, Gosala, Mahâvira and Sâkya were representing Indian culture from four conflicting and somewhat anti-traditional, say, anti-Vedic or anti-Brahmana standpoints the Vedic or Brahmanic tradition was being maintained as much by the professors of the Upanishads as by the upholders of the Trivarga (three desirables). The Hindu mind or Indian culture could not be monopolized or obsessed by any one system.

As a category, the doctrine of Trivarga or three desirables, i.e., the complex of Dharma (duty), Artha (interest and utility) and Kâma (enjoyment of pleasure) is at least as old as the *Grihya-sutra* (II, 19, 6) of Hiranyakesin and Patanjali's *Mahâbhâsya* (Pânini 2, 2, 34 Vârthika 9) *c* B.C. 200. It is to be found, of course, in the *Mahâbhârata* (I. 2, 88) which describes itself as an *Artha-sâstra*, a *Dharma-sâstra* and a *Kâma-sâstra* in one. The very concept of the "three desirables" renders it impossible that Hindu philosophy should be swayed exclusively by any one of them. Hindu social systems do not create circumstances under which the "body has reason to protest the place assigned to it by dualism", to use Hocking's words in *Types of Philosophy* (New York, 1929, pp. 284-285). The doctrine of Trivarga prevents the body from suffering by contrast with the mind. It is not "a life of the mind in defiance of or apart from the body" that is considered to be a desirable in Hindu estimation. Epoch by epoch we have to encounter systems of pluralistic synthesis in Indian civilization.

The Dharma-sutras[1]

At the outset it is proper to introduce a formal distinction between the *Dharma-sutras* and the *Dharma-sastras* (also called *Smritis*). The *Sutras* are in prose (or in mixed prose and verse), the latter in verse. The topics are not arranged in an orderly manner in the *Sutras* while the *Sastras* (*Smritis*) are particular in observing the threefold grouping of topics, namely, Achâra (customs), Vyavahâra (law), and Prâyaschitta (penance). The *Sutras* are older than the *Sastras*.

The authors of *Dharma-sutra* or *Dharma-sastra* may be named below: Gautama (*c.* 550 B.C.), Harita (*c.* 500 B.C.), Baudhâyana (*c.* 450 B.C.), Apastamba (*c.* 400 B.C.), Hiranyakesi, whose work is almost identical with Apastamba's, Vasistha (*c.* 150 B.C.), Manu (*c.* 150 A.C.).

The chronology is of course open to question.

The treatises associated with the names of all the authorities mentioned above belong to the *Dharma-sutra* class with the exception of the *Manu Samhitâ* which is a *Dharma-sastra* or a *Smriti*. It may be observed that Max Müller and Bühler (*Sacred Books of the East*, vol. XXV) have suspected the existence of a *Sutra* by Manu which may have been later developed into the metrical *Sastra*.

The writers of other *Dharma-sutras* may be enumerated here without reference to the chronological order: Atri, Usanas, Kanva and Kânva, Kasyapa and Khâyapa, Gargya, Cyavana, Jatu-Karnya, Devala, Paithinasi, Buddha, Brihaspati, Bharadvâja and Bhâradvâja, Satatapa, Sumantu.

[1] P. V. Kane: *History of Dharma-sastras*, Vol. I. (Poona 1930).

The Contents of Dharma Literature According to Meyer

The *Smriti* literature does not offer, according to Meyer in *Ueber das Wesen der altindischen Rechtschriften* (Leipzig 1927, pp. vi. 86-88), anything like the development of secular law but rather the progressive incorporation into Brâhmanical *Dharma*-works of this law which originated and was developed in other *Milieus* (*anderwarts entstandenen und ausgebildeten Rechts*). This attitude in regard to the origin of *des weltlichen Rechtes* is perhaps unorthodox from the standpoint of Hindu socio-religious tradition and certainly from that of traditional indology.

But no student of legal institutions bearing on ancient or modern regions or of primitive and well-developed races can oppose the idea that a code in so far as it is a compilation, say, the *Digest of Justinian*, the *Sachsenspiegel* (The Mirror of the Saxons) or the *Code Napoleon*, is bound to be a hotch-potch of materials coming from the most diverse sources. In the evolution of "Hindu" *mores*, customs and usages the most ancient Vedic or even pre-Vedic culture-complex can hardly be understood except as the result of fusion between Aryan and non-Aryan, Brâhmanic and non-Brâhmanic, nay, very often Indian and non-Indian elements. Even the oldest "Hindu" laws relating to the arts and crafts, the farming, cattle-breeding and commercial professions and so forth are the expressions of life lived by the vis, the folk, the Dâsas, the Dasyus, the Vrâtyas, the Nisadas, the "wild tribes" and what not of the times. Sociologically speaking, this is an important thesis such as may be accepted by every student of positivism.

Another proposition of Meyer's runs to the effect that *diese sind ihrem urs-*

prunglichen und ihren eigentlichen Wesen nach Zauberliteratur (the *Smriti* works constitute by their origin and essential nature the literature of magic). Unfortunately the category "magic" carries with it in orthodox Hindu judgment as well as in nineteenth century philosophy something derogatory. But should we once get used to it as just a technical term of modern social science which tries to interpret some of the phenomena of human life bearing on the unseens, the imperceptibles, and their bearings on man's prosperity and conduct, even the Hindu will find very little to fight shy of it.

Recent anthropology is making it more and more clear that the "elementary forms" of life, the origins of morals, the beginnings of gods, the first manifestations of propriety, decency, good conduct etc., are intimately associated with that vague and elastic word "magic"—and this both in the East and the West. "No magic, no ritual" —can be regarded as the *Sutra* of modern sociology for ancient Greeks and Romans as for the ancient Teutons, for the Iroquois and the Hopis of America as for the "Hindus" of all denominations and races in India. "Magic" is just an "x" which, like "totem", is improvised to explain almost anything and everything from animism and ancestor-worship to the Swastika and the crucifixion, Hindu Sraddha and Roman Catholic mass. The place of magic in the beginnings of culture is the theme of Coulange's *La Cité antique*, Frazer's *Psyche's Task* (a Discourse concerning the Influence of Superstition on the Growth of Institutions) and Hauer's *Das religiöse Erlebnis auf den unteren Stufen*. As regards even the Chinese people which is conventionally known to be the least magic-ridden and religious, Legge's *Religions of China*, Hirth's *Ancient History of China* and Groot's *Religion in China* are some of the publications in which a sociologist of Durkheim's school will find plentiful references to the presence of magic, superstitions, "initiation," ritualistic hocuspocus and what not, such as may be said to promote the society-forming forces.[1]

But Meyer's position is eminently questionable when he objects to the usual description of the *Smriti* works as *Gesetzbucher oder Rechtswerke*, i.e., law books (p. 1). He thinks that law has absolutely nothing to do with the essential or only object of these Sutras and Sastras on Dharma. Their chief object rather is, says he, the teaching of Achara. And what is Achara? he asks. "It is the conduct that brings health and welfare (*heilbringende Verhalten*) from the religious and moral standpoint," he answers. Even supposing that the treatises on Dharma deal with nothing but Achara and Sadachara, good conduct, conduct of the good persons, or conduct of the good regions etc. such as can be learnt by a pupil from his Acharya, a preceptor, as Meyer explains (pp. 2-8), there is no need for depriving these treatises of their character as books on law. After all, one must admit as a matter of course that not all law is "positive", such as can be enforced by the sanction of the state, i.e., secular and worldly. But as cementing bonds of a community no rules or regulations are more appropriately to be termed laws than those of Confucian "propriety" or the Hindu Achara and Buddhist Sila. And since Meyer has no difficulty in believing that *die Unliteratur aller Vorher die Zauber-*

[1] E. Durkheim: *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* (Paris 1912); L. Lévy-Bruhl: "Remarques sur l'initiation des medicine-men" in *Die Kulturelle Bedeutung der Komplexen Psychologie* (Berlin 1926).

literatur ist (the original or primitive literature of all peoples is the literature of charms and magic) he has only to go another step and encounter the fundamental reality that primitive law (whether private, i.e., relating to family and property, or public, i.e., relating to the king, or the state) is also intimately mixed up with magic, incantations, charms and allied phenomena. In other words, in so far as Dharma literature is the literature of magic it is at the same time and because of this fact the literature of law.

Whilst these anthropologico-sociological discussions of Meyer may not disturb as a rule the ordinary indologists he has, however, thrown a bombshell into their atmosphere of placid *status quo* by entering the domain of chronology (p. vi). In his analysis (1) the *Vishnu* is not an old *Dharma-sutra*, dependent as it is greatly on Manu and Yâjnavalkya, (2) Yâjnavalkya is a very "unoriginal writer", who borrows from every nook and corner, especially, from Nârada and Kautalya, (3) Gautama does not belong to the head but rather to the tail of the Smriti series, (4) Kautalya does not utilize Manu, Yâjnavalkya, Vishnu etc., and not even Baudhâyana, (5) commencing with Manu at any rate the works are not those of schools but of individuals, compilers who make collections from books, and (6) Nârada is older than Manu.

In order to establish the relative chronology of the Dharma treatises Meyer follows the following method (p. 41). First, he examines the intellectual contents and character of the works. Secondly, he discusses the linguistic and metristic features of each treatise. Thirdly, he pursues the traces of indebtedness of the one to the others. And finally, he analyses those items of law and society about which the dates are known from other sources.

The methodology of Meyer is, on the whole, the same as that by which the relative and absolute chronology of the "law books" has been settled by Bühler and Jolly in the *Sacred Books of the East Series* as well as by the latter in *Recht und Sitte*. That there is nothing unacceptable in this methodology is perfectly clear. But that its application is unsatisfying is apparent to many students of indology who are asked by Bühler and Jolly at every step to accept this hypothesis or that in regard to what is alleged to be plausible and what is not. Meyer's bombshell is therefore to be welcome as an item calculated to reopen the question which was for all practical purposes supposed to be closed on account of sheer inertia or perhaps because indologists wanted to have some sort of a working hypothesis in regard to the chronological scaffolding.

In the application of the methodology Meyer like his predecessors wants us to make certain assumptions. And these are almost of the same character as those of his predecessors. They deserve therefore the same recognition as the former. But the fundamental question remains yet to be solved. Let us go back to the Vedic question. The material contained in the *Rik Samhitâ* must have belonged to the same age and society as that in the *Yajur* and *Atharva*. Then, again, the material of the *Brâhmanas* and that in the *Samhitâ* must have been coeval, sociologically considered. If we go into the problem from the standpoint of substance or social experience and ritualistic facts there are hardly any arguments on the strength of which the alleged oldest Gautama is older than the alleged youngest Nârada. As long as it is a fact that the *Chhândogya Mantras* com-

piled by Gunavishnu in the twelfth century is ruling Hindu life in Bengal and parts of Bihar even today, in other words, the latest compilation of modern times is in point of social data identical with what is to be found in the oldest *Ritualliteratur* such as forms the subject matter of Hillebrandt's study, any dogmatism about relative chronology is eminently out of place. That Gautama and Nârada may, therefore, have come out of the same anvil there is nothing to dispute logically. That the *Manu Samhitâ*, as we have it, is an encyclopedic hotchpotch like the *Sukranîti* is also apparent to every student of these treatises. One, can therefore, find arguments in favour of Meyer's attempt to reopen the question of the chronology of the *Dharma-sâstras*. We should, at any rate, attach some distinct value to Meyer's standpoint, namely, that one treatise does not necessarily imply a later period or stage of development simply because the data furnished by it happen to look like being relatively more developed. The difference between treatise and treatise may just be the one between author and author. One may be a specialist, the other a dilettante and so on (pp. 86-88).

This is an eminently acceptable attitude of Meyer's. The most questionable practice in regard to the Vedic chronology, as to the *Dharma-sâstra* chronology as well as the *Dharma-Artha-Kâmasâstra* complex, consists, as it has appeared to me always, in attaching a time-value to every instance of difference or discrepancy between author and author or rather text and text. Simply because certain social, legal or economic incidents are not mentioned by one authority but happen to be dealt with by another it has become the convention among indologists to believe that there must be an interval of time lying between the two. Humanly speaking, it should be reasonable to believe also that both might have arisen in the same epoch but that not every authority as book-maker, writer or compiler cared to or was capable of giving everything that was prevalent in his days. The diversity of regions or homes and surroundings of the authors also may explain the discrepancy between text and text although composed at the same time and dealing with the same topic.

The Artha-sastras and the Kama-sastras

The topics of *Dharma-sutras* (*Sâstras*) as discussed above enable us to realize that these books are in the main treatises of "private" law (i.e. the law relating to family or marriage, property, contract, and so forth). In contrast with them the *Artha-sastras* may be regarded as treatises on "public law" (*droit public*), the law of constitution, the polity, the Saptânga or seven-limbed organism, the state.

Among the precursors of Kautalya in Artha speculations the following "schools" are noted by himself: (1) The Mânavas, (2) The Bârhaspatyas, (3) The Ausanasas, (4) The Pârâsaras, (5) the Ambhiyas.

The Kautalyan text cites the following individuals as professors of *Artha-sâstra* who preceded the author: (1) Kâtyâyana, (2) Kinjalka, (3) Kaunapadanta (Bhisma), (4) Ghotakamukha, (5) Dirghachârâyana, (6) Pârâsara, (7) Pisuna (Nârada), (8) Pisunaputra, (9) Bahudantiputra, (10) Bharadvâja (Dronâchârya), (11) Vatavyâdhi (Uddhava), (12) Visâlâksha (Siva), (13) Kaninko Bharadvâja.

In the speculations on Kâma (pleasure, joy, enjoyment) the precursors of Vâtsyâyana or rather the

founders of this science were as follows: (1) Svetaketu, son of Uddālaka (of the *Chhāndogya Upanishad*, *Bṛihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* and *Jātaka* fame), (2) Babhravya of Panchala, (3) Dattaka, (4) Chārāyaṇa (named in the *Artha-sāstra*, (5) Suvarnanābha, (6) Ghoṭakamukha (perhaps a contemporary of the Sākyan Buddhist Udena) named in the Artha-sāstra (7) Gonardiya (both named in Patanjali's *Mahābhāṣya* as grammarians), and (8) Gonikaputra, (9) Kuṇarāka.

Vātsyāyana[4] has been placed in the early centuries of the Christian era. Social mobility as well as cultural metabolism were assured in that epoch because of the diversities engendered by the study of Artha and Kama as distinguished from Dharma.

The Culture-Complex and "Old Masters"

It is only when the indologist is adequately oriented to the pluralistic culture-complex of India as of other regions that it will be possible to see at once how unhistorical and unfounded is the presentation of Indian thought-data in the works that are generally published about Indian philosophy, viewpoint and outlook on life, etc.

One of the recent publications on India which is as weak in objective sense as in the anthropological basis of comparative culture-history is Betty Heimann's *Studien zur Eigenart indischen Denkens* (Tuebingen, 1930). The "*Eigenart*" (peculiarity) of Indian thought, as discussed by this writer, should really appear to be but common to the most diverse races, regions, religions and climates, should a researcher care to go into the institutions of positive sociology in a scientific manner.

The author makes statements like the following:—

"Not only in economico-religious but also in socio-psychological aspects the sense of the individual disappears among Indians in the community-feeling. Instead of individuals creating the society, in India the individual is merged in a community."

The *Studies* contain such generalizations from beginning to end. That even in 1930 a student of culture can proceed to work in this manner indicates how powerfully the traditional Orientalism has misled the scholarship of Indianists in the direction of subjective, one-sided, and monistic prejudices bearing on the East and the West. Another piece of "conventional" indology, weak as it is in positive historical data and cultural perspectives is Albert Schweitzer's *Die Weltanschauung der indischen Denker* or The World-view of Indian Thinkers (Munich, 1933). He finds in Indian thought nothing but the negation of the world and life. The anthropologico-sociological analysis of domestic and social, as well as civic and political institutions as examined by Hillebrandt in *Ritualliteratur* and *Altindische Politik* is well calculated to cry halt to such "*Eigenart*"-philosophies and *Weltanschauung*-histories. And of course the data of "new indology" as exhibited during the last generation from diverse fields are eminently adapted to counteract these unobjective tendencies. Some of the interpretations of Hindu culture by Heinrich Lueders bear testimony to new orientations.[5]

[4] H. Chakladar: *Vātsyāyana* (Calcutta 1921), and *Social Life in Ancient India: Studies in Vatsyāyana's Kāmasutra* (Calcutta 1929).

[5] Lueders: "Indien" in *Der Orient und Wir* (Berlin, 1925), pp. 71, 74, 87, 90, 91, 92. In H. Von Glasenapp's "Lebensbejahung und Lebensverneinung bei den indischen Denkern" or "Yea and Nay to Life in Indian Thinkers" (*Jahrbuch der Schopenhauer-*

For the period of three hundred years (c. B.C. 600-300) from Bimbisâra to Chandragupta Indian literature possesses hardly any dated texts in Sanskrit, Pali, and Prakrit. One does not know for certain the dates of the texts in the form in which they are available today. It is interesting to observe that almost every one of these texts is known in so many words to be a compilation and has made it a point to mention the "old masters", the Purvâchâryas, previous authors or compilers. Whatever, then, be the dates of the last redaction, compilation or abridgment one can presume quite a high antiquity for the substantial portion of the material contained therein.

That the *milieu* of Sâkya (the Buddha) and the Sâkyans as well as Mahâvira and the Jainas was pluralistic in cultural institutions and movements acquires, therefore, a special significance in the complicated questions of literary chronology. We understand that many of the "old masters" of the professors of Dharma, Artha and Kâma-

Gesellschaft, Vol. xxii, 1868) which critically examines Schweitzer's work and invites attention to the Yes's in Indian thought we have another evidence of the "new lithology". See B. K. Sarkar: *Die Lebensanschauung des Inders* or "The Hindu View of Life" (Leipzig, 1922) and "Sociological Approaches to Vedic Culture" (*Prabuddha Bharata*, September-November 1938).

sâstras were the contemporaries, colleagues, critics and rivals of Sâkya and Mahâvira. The synchronism and parallel growth of the Trivarga literary complex with the earliest Buddhist-Jaina propaganda and Upanishadic (Vedic) atmosphere may be presumed as a matter of course. In so far as the Sâkya-Mahâvira activities are known to belong to the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. the critical student of comparative literary history will not be off the mark, should he attempt to place some of the earlier strands, chapters, and verses of the available texts on *Dharma-sâstra*, *Artha-sâstra* and *Kâma-sâstra* in the sixth century B.C., i.e., the very age when Sâkya and Mahâvira were living. In every instance when it is necessary to indicate a somewhat later date for any such undated texts, whether in Sanskrit, Pali or Prakrit, it will be necessary to adduce incontestable and positive evidences. Each and every text will have to be appraised for chronological purposes on its own merits. Altogether, Indian literary tradition enables us to feel that the Hindu mind was not dominated by any particular "ism". The prevalence of conflicting tendencies served to endow social life and thought with a diversified pluralism as well as freedom of movement.

THE REVELATION OF THE VEDAS

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That the *Vedas* or the collections of hymns under the titles of *Rik*, *Yajus*, *Sāman*, and *Atharva-Angiras* were not created by any human agency is a belief which is shared by hundreds of thousand faithful Indians. There were, however, some specially chosen Rishis to whom and to whose sons and disciples the revelation was made and they are collectively known as schools or families who formed a sort of agency and possessed the monopoly. But these Rishis are technically stated to be the seers (Mantradarsin). This in the restricted sense should imply those persons to whom the hymns 'revealed' themselves presumably as they now exist. Thus the metres, accents, and all other morphological features of language were included in the forms in which the hymns are stated to have been revealed with or without the divine agency, the human agency being altogether absent. These seers, therefore, should be considered different from poets like even Vālmiki or Vyāsa, who are credited with what is known as poetic 'inspiration' rather than the divine 'revelation' which was reserved for the seers only.

So far as the form of the language is concerned there is however hardly any difference between the revealed hymns and the inspired poems. Of the subject matters of the hymns and of the poems the difference is not one of substance or essence but merely of variety. While the hymns are mostly lyrical and do not run to chapters and cantos, the poems may comprise a single stanza or may be an epic like the *Mahābhārata* or the *Rāmāyana*, or may be a huge Mahākāvya. The poetic creations are sometimes qualified as artificial, imaginary or fanciful to distinguish them from those compositions which are natural, historical or truthful. It would be an useless endeavour to pick up particular hymns and poems, to place them side by side, to analyse, compare and contrast them in order to show that both a hymn and a poem may be equally artificial or natural. While some of the poems are unquestionably based upon historical facts, none of the hymns can be stated to have any real historical back-ground in the ordinary sense of the term. Tradition plays a great part almost equally with regard to hymns and poems. Thus the poems cannot be indiscriminately banned as wholly imaginary or fanciful; nor the hymns can be indiscriminately stated to be truthful, if by the term 'truth' one is to understand a correspondence between one's thought and deed, that is, the correspondence of what we think and what we see, hear, smell, taste, or feel by touch. Indeed the conception of God Himself appears to have been a matter of some sort of sense-perception for those who claim a direct communion with what is beyond the scope of mind and word. Lastly, the motive or the spirit of all hymns do not appear to be spiritual or even

religious, because they do not always deal with extra-mundane things, ritualistic observance, or even prayers for earthly good or benefit for the incorporeal soul. Nor do all poems deal with stories like those of the Arabian Nights or of the Ten Princes. There are poems dealing with prayers for the good of the body and the soul, for advantages in this world as well as in the next. There are also poems discussing philosophical problems. In fact all religious practices and functions are laid down in poems or metrical verses by Manu, Yâjnavalkya, and others.

Thus in respect of form, matter and spirit the divine hymns and the human poems can hardly be distinguished. Naturally, therefore, the question arises in what sense the Vedic hymns are to be understood as uncreated or revealed? It would be a useless argument to say that while similar poems have been composed by several inspired poets nobody has endeavoured or succeeded in giving out the so-called revealed hymns. Merely from the point of view of composition, it is, however, neither impossible nor difficult to compose similar hymns with all the features of the Vedic ones by those who are gifted.

The beginning of all original elements are equally unknown and unknowable, be they either the earlier heat, light, air, earth, water etc., or the later atoms and ether, or the modern electron etc. The mere unknown beginning of the hymns need not necessarily make them uncreated or revealed. The Sanskrit term 'Apaurusheya' would in fact be same as 'beginning-less'. But the terms 'revealed' and 'inspired' would equally require someone to reveal or to inspire. And this revealer or inspirer must have been really unknown to those who received the revelation or inspiration for the first time. It is really difficult to analyze properly the process of our own composition. No doubt we gather a stock of words by mere imitation at our infancy and learn lexicon and grammar etc. later on. And this stock of words revealed themselves to the writers of compositions in a mysterious way in almost innumerable manners. Thus it is the first words which need revelation from some unknown source. Hence the identity of word with God the ultimate Creator becomes necessary. In other words when the articulate child utters the first word he really gets the revelation. It would be the result of a mere mechanical investigation to say that those who possess a certain type of organs can utter a sound, and others not so gifted cannot do so. The words must be there to reveal themselves through certain machinery. When these words are revealed they may be composed into hymns or poems. It would be idle to think that while the seers (Rishis) uttered the revealed hymns they fully understood what they said or what the revelation actually meant or was intended for, but the first poet Vâlmiki or an infant child, a bird and an insect had no idea of what they were muttering. In each and every one of these instances the uttering of a word or sound must have been induced by some desire. A sound may be meaningless only objectively, it is never meaningless subjectively. For the inability of the listener to understand, a word should not be considered void or meaningless.

Thus the revealed hymns would merely imply that the seers composed with great facility like first rate poets the originless (Apaurusheya) words into poems under different metres. The only difference between seers and poets appears to be that while the source of words was unknown to the former, the latter partly knew the source of their stock. But so far as the skill of com-

position is concerned it may be equally claimed by the seers and the poets.

The *'Veda'*, however, not in the sense of *Samhitá* or collection of hymns known as *Rik*, *Yajus* and *Sáman*, but in the sense of ultimate 'knowledge' of God may have been revealed to some chosen Rishi like Buddha of later age.

INDIAN CULTS IN INDO-CHINA, JAVA, AND SUMATRA

By Dr. Bijan Raj Chatterjee, D.Litt.

[Dr. Chatterjee noted for his valuable researches about Indian culture in Java and Sumatra, is a distinguished scholar attached to the Government College, Meerut. In this article he deals with the rise and development of Buddhism, Saivism and Vaishnavism in Greater India, which run more or less parallel with a corresponding rise and growth of these cults in India.]

It is difficult to say which of the two great religions of India, Hinduism and Buddhism, first spread in these distant regions of the Far East. Buddhism was certainly a proseletyzing religion from the time of Asoka. According to Burmese and Siamese traditions two monks, Sona and Uttara, were sent by Asoka to preach Buddhism in Suvarnabhumi (Indo-China). The most ancient sculpture hitherto discovered in Cambodia are images of the Buddha found near the sea-coast. These relics of the forgotten past belong to the period of Fu-nan, the Chinese name for the earliest Indian kingdom in this part of Indo-China. Specialists have judged from the style of sculpture that these images belong to the school of Amarávati—a great Buddhist centre in the second century A.D. As the old Buddhist Játaka stories are full of accounts of merchants and their voyages to distant lands overseas, it is not improbable that Buddhist merchants were the first to reach Suvarnabhumi—the El Dorado of Indians. Petty settlements of these traders in Indo-China might have existed in Maurya times. Buddhist missionaries must have followed in the wake of the merchants and then came the turn of adventurers and soldiers of fortune who founded the "Indianized" States which seem to crop up like mushrooms in the second and third centuries A.D. almost everywhere from Annam to Burma, from Siam to the Malay Peninsula and from Sumatra to Borneo.

On the other hand, inspite of the ban on sea-voyages imposed by orthodox Hinduism, Chinese chronicles and Sanskrit inscriptions discovered in Indo-China and in some of the Islands of the Malay Archipelago supply the best possible evidence that Hinduism was firmly established in these regions (Cambodia, Champá, Java, etc.) soon after the commencement of the Christian era. The founder of Fu-nan, a mighty kingdom which included nearly the whole of Western Indo-China in the third century A.D. is stated to be a Brâhmana, Kaundinya by name, who came in a merchant ship armed with the Javelin of Asvatthâman—the son of Drona. A Fu-nan inscription, the earliest of the long series of Sanskrit inscriptions of Cambodia, promises the supreme bliss of Vishnuloka to the Mahâtmâ who would look after the property of the God Chakratirthasvâmin. This inscription belongs to the first half of the fifth century A.D.

In the second half of that century we have a Chinese account of the visit of a Fu-nan monk to the Chinese Emperor. The monk tells the Emperor that the cult of Maheśvara flourished in Fu-nan. "The God has his perpetual abode on Mount Motan where auspicious trees grow in great abundance." From this sacred hill, according to the latest researches, is derived the name of the realm—Fu-nan, which is the Chinese form of the native word 'vnam' meaning a hill.

It is again in the 5th Century A.D. that a king of Champā (Annam) abdicated in order to go on a pilgrimage to the Ganges. Fa-hien, who visited West Java in 418 A.D. on his way from Ceylon to China, states that he found many Brāhmaṇas there but the Buddhists were not of sufficient importance to be worth mentioning. The worship of Śiva was the dominating cult in Further India from the 5th to the 8th century. Vaishnavism can be traced in the Hariḥara cult to which we have references in some of the early Sanskrit inscriptions of Cambodia. Several artistic images of Hariḥara have also been discovered which belong to the earlier stages of Cambodian sculpture. The inscriptions of Pūrṇavarman of West Java, the Prambanan bas-reliefs, the statue of Erlangga deified as Vishnu—all these go to show the importance of Vaishnavism in that Island. But on the whole it was Saivism which was the 'official' religion of most of these distant realms. In Cambodia for centuries the 'Devarāja' (a Śivaliṅga) was the tutelary deity of the kingdom. Buddhism, and it was the Hīnayāna form at this time, was pushed into the background almost everywhere. Students of Indian history would find interesting the synchronism of this Brāhmaṇic predominance in Further India and the Hindu renaissance in India itself in the Gupta period.

In the second half of the 8th century Buddhism rose again into prominence. This time it was the Vajrayāna or Tantrayāna form of Mahāyāna Buddhism radiating from Nālandā and the Pāla kingdom of Bengal. In the Kelurak inscription of Central Java (782 A.D.) we find that the Rājaguru comes from Bengal, "purifies with the holy dust of his feet" the Śailendra ruler, and consecrates an image of Mañjuśrī. Śrīvijaya (in South Sumatra) appears to have been the stronghold of this Buddhist renaissance. Even in Kamboja (Cambodia), the citadel of the Saiva cult, in the reigns of Sūryavarman I (early 11th century) and Jayavarman VII (12th century), Buddhism shared with Saivism the royal favour. Indeed these two great monarchs were Buddhists though they never withdrew 'official' recognition from the worship of Śiva—the guardian divinity of the realm. In Champā too the famous shrine of Lokeśvara (Avalokiteśvara) dates from about the closing years of the 9th century.

This wave of Tantrayāna Buddhism reached its highwater mark in Java and Sumatra in the 13th century. A curious feature of this cult was a strange blending of Buddhist and Saiva doctrines. King Kṛtanagara (13th century) was an adept in practices like the 'Pancha Makāras' and was adored as a Śiva-Buddha. Ādityavarman, a Sumatrian prince of this period, performed mystic rites in cremation grounds and his inscriptions refer to Chakra ceremonies in veiled language. All these characteristics we may trace back to Pāla Bengal.

The close parallelism between the rise and development of cults in India and Further India is indeed striking. We may give as another instance of this —the revival of Vaishnavism in India

with the advent of Râmânuja and its predominant position in Cambodia in the middle of the 12th century when that wonder of the world—the stupendous Vishnu temple Angkor Vat—was built by Suryavarman II.

In the 16th century Hinayâna Buddhism from Siam replaced Hinduism and Mahâyâna Buddhism in Cambodia. In Java and Sumatra the rising tide of Islam swept everything before it.*

* Literature consulted—the writer's books: *Indian Cultural Influence in Cambodia; India and Java*; M. Paul Mees in the *Indo-China*, a French work.

FRANCE AND THE EAST

By Dr. J. E. Eliot

[Dr. J. E. Eliot of Paris shows how a new Revelation has come to the West from the East.]

The French education consists of three groups: primary, secondary, and higher.

The first group (primary) is the only one of the three which is obligatory and it takes a child up to its 12th year. One is supposed to learn how to read and write, to do simple arithmetic, French history, and a little universal geography, very little natural history.

The second group (secondary), which is optional, is granted to all children of well-to-do families or to intelligent and hard-working children of poor families; in the later case, the expenses are borne by the State. The child is educated up to 18 years old, when a final examination is taken; without passing this examination, it is impossible to pass into the third group (higher). For six years, the studies include the French language, literature and history, world's geography, geology, physics, chemistry, zoology, botany, mathematics, some Latin, sometimes a little Greek and one or two foreign languages. Many young people stop studying at that point; a minority pursue their studies in Universities.

The third group (higher) is divided into numberless categories including the Faculties of Literature, Sciences, Law, Medicine, Pharmacy and the "Ecoles Supérieures", such as: "Normale Supérieure" where future professors for the secondary education are trained, "Ecole des Chartes", devoted to history, "Ecole Centrale", for engineers, "Ecole Polytechnique", for officers and engineers, etc.

It is evident, without going into figures, that, compared with the totality of the Nation, the number of those who take advantage of this higher grade of education is very low, a few thousands amongst the millions of French people.

In these different grades of education, what is the part reserved to the East?

In the primary grade, scarcely a few words in connection with India, China, and Japan, when the 5 parts of the world are studied. The teaching is a little more thorough as regards India China and the "French" towns of India are mentioned. The child who leaves school and knows the glory of the century of Louis XIV, the importance of the French Revolution, ignores absolutely that there are several great civilisations in Asia.

In the secondary grade, history only speaks of Asia in connection with colonization, stresses the merits of the

colonizers and the economical wealth of the colonized countries. Same is to be said in connection with geography which only mentions mountains and plains, rivers and seas, numbers the population and the gods. Even in the class called "Philosophy", only casual mention is made of the great religions.

The higher group is the most specialized; thus, only the students interested in the Orient would take up that line either by going to the Institute of Indianism, or to the School of Oriental Languages, or taking History of Religions. What is their number? A few hundreds. These, however, without having left Europe, manage to gain a thorough knowledge of Asia; there have always been in England, in Germany, in France, great orientalists.

This is the present situation: among 40 millions of French people, scarcely a few thousands—one could almost say a few hundreds—have an exact idea of the Orient.

If a Frenchman of the lower or the middle-class has to express an opinion on Asia, he can only repeat the few scraps of knowledge remembered from school and which often have only perverted his judgment as the knowledge imparted was incomplete.

And yet! . . . . . Yet, we are witnesses of strange facts: there existed in France, even before the war, an association of cultured people called "The Friends of Orient" whose object was to obtain more knowledge of the far-distant Asia. *Since 1918, we have seen successively the creation of the Society of Gandhi's Friends, that of the Friends of Buddhism, more recently that of Tagore's Friends.*

These different groups do not total, it is true, a very large number of people, but their creation proves the existence of a movement which is deep, alive, though still slow.

This is not all.

In July 1900, Vivekananda arrived in Paris for the Congress of the History of Religions. He remained there for some time, known only by a few French people, amongst whom were Jules Bois and Father Hyacinthe, now dead, Emma Calvé, Gérard Nobel. Isolated, scattered remembrances, which were about to disappear. When, suddenly, in 1930, a new book by Romain Rolland is announced. Although Romain Rolland's works are not as much read in his own country as they are in foreign ones, he has a faithful and enthusiastic public who, relying on the author's signature, always buy his works.

Romain Rolland had already written about India; in 1922 his great and noble voice was raised in greeting to Gandhi, to relate his life and explain his deeds. But Gandhi's name was already known, it had been popularised by the papers. What are the strange and unknown titles of Romain Rolland's new books? Ramakrishna's Life? Vivekananda's Life? One does not know, one buys all the same; 20,000 copies are sold. People read and some stay bent over the book, immovable in time and space, for a new Revelation has come.

Gandhi—yes—but although *superhuman*, it was still *human*. Ramakrishna: this is something else, coming from another world. As if, on a sudden, one could imagine that Jesus was living at the end of the last century, that St. Paul was among us 80 years ago, that the Holy Women were living at the same time as our mothers.

What a complete upheaval? What ineffable hope!

To have believed that God was far, far from us—in the ages and in our hearts—and to know that he has been here, present, scarcely a few years ago, in all His adorable graciousness, to hear again in the air His voice, "His sweet

Bengali voice," all thrilling with love—for us, miserable creatures, who believed ourselves abandoned in a terrible spiritual desert, forgotten by God.

A few pages of a book may change many lives. We are a few, a very few—but we shall be more—who wish that in the great universal concert, in February 1936, France should sing her song. We want Ramakrishna's word to resound in the country which his beloved disciple called "the hearth of liberty".

With the help of learned orientalists and the Associations interested in Asia, we shall gather around us twice, may be four times, may be six times, one or two hundreds of people. Responsible voices will explain who was Ramakrishna, and what is the meaning of his sojourn on the earth. In our hearts, we wish that from the seeds thus sown a large harvest shall be reaped, and above all we wish that the celebration of this holy anniversary should be the beginning of a permanent organization, that a priest, speaking French, might come to us from India and bring us the pure water drawn from the great source and which will refresh us.

Thus other French people will learn to know the true Orient; they will feel the revivifying breath from the Himalayas passing over their souls and in their prayers, mingled with ours, they will repeat: "We are One, in the name of Ramakrishna."

VEDANTIC THOUGHT IN ENGLISH LITERATURE: SOME ILLUSTRATIONS

By Prof. E. E. Speight

[Prof. E. E. Speight was for some time in the Imperial University of Tokyo and at present he is Professor of English at the Osmania University, Hyderabad. He has written much on Oriental subjects for the leading journals in the East and the West. About the highest Western minds which are involved in spiritual fervour, he finds an aura which associates them with the radiant hearts of the East, however clearly their words and arguments reflect the Greek and Latin medium through which they have passed.]

Within the Supreme Brahma the worlds
are being told like beads:
Look upon that rosary with the eyes of
wisdom.
Between the poles of the conscious and the
unconscious, there has the mind made
a swing;
Thereon hang all beings and all worlds,
and that swing never ceases its
sway. . . . .
And the sight of this has made Kabir a
servant.
I have a letter from my Beloved: in this
letter is an unutterable message, and
now my fear of death is done away with.
Kabir[1]

[1] Version by Dr. Tagore and Evelyn Underhill.

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder to the song of night's sweet
bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and
stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may
move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-wearied
love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it
above.

P. B. Shelley

> Goodness and Kindness are perhaps : beyond wisdom. Is it not possible that the ultimate end is gaiety and music and a dance of joy?
>
> JAMES STEPHENS

In the timeless view of India, a view to which she is equally entitled with that side of Hellenic life we associate with the name of Plato, she may be conceived as standing between two darknesses which conceal the greatest things in the progress of humanity. In the West these two darknesses have long been the objects of our most adventurous and most intense study. In Western thought they have often been imagined, and in Western speech often discussed. A recent writer, Prof. Macneile Dixon, has spoken of the one as follows :—

> 'Events, we are aware, flow out of previous events, out of a great darkness, wherein by innumerable agents human and divine the fabric of the world was made.'

An ancient writer, Dionysius the Areopagite, thus described that other :—

> 'A darkness that shines brighter than light, that invisibly and intangibly illuminates with splendour of inconceivable beauty the soul that sees not.'

It is to the glory of India that she, perhaps more reverently than any other race in the world, has preserved so much from that darkness of the past, and at the same time, perhaps more insistently than any race in the world, has urged the human spirit upward into that and splendid region wherein dwells the secret of the unknown.

The spiritual illumination radiated by India moved slowly but triumphantly eastwards, rescuing race after race from savagery until it broke in faint flashes on the shores beyond the Pacific Ocean.

Its movement westward was impeded by rival ventures of the spirit falling to the lot of tribes following the course of the sun. Two of those main bodies of people, coming south in the course of their wanderings, into the lands we know as Greece and Italy, gave new directions to civilization and the thought behind human advance. Their rise to power and independence fixed the boundaries between Asia and Europe, East and West, and the conflict between Greece and Persia marked the beginning of that strange disdain which the West has so often shown for the East during the past two millennia. Four centuries before Christ, Herodotus gave high praise to the Persians for chivalry and truthfulness, while at the same time decrying their treatment of women and slave-soldiers and their sacking of towns.[1] But the Greeks generally were unconscious of their debt to the East and Indian influence spread largely by underground channels.

The likelihood of Indian influence on Western thought is obscured by the fact that whereas our English vocabulary has very much in common with Sanskrit, most of it has reached us through the filter of Greek and Latin, and so been transformed and acquired new meaning. The Indian word Dharma (which in Japan has become the name of a toy one cannot make to lie down), in English has become *form*, and only in the expressions *good form*, *bad form* has it preserved any trace of its ethical import in Sanskrit. Moreover such words as Atma and Karma, familiar in Western lands in these forms today, are disguised in evolutionary forms such as *atmosphere* and *creation*.

That in matters of racial ancestry and ancestral wanderings the West had very old connections with the East is testified to by those relations of language which still remain, often clearly exposed. This fact alone surely points

[1] Gilbert Murray : *Greek Literature* 147.

back to habits of mind once held in common.

It would seem that the influence of Indian thought on that of the West is largely rooted in mythology, and that many legends, conceptions of superhuman beings and may be lingering remembrances of the prehistoric past have travelled from India independently and through the Odyssey to those farthest islands we call Britain, (as in other ways they have reached those farthest islands we call Japan), there to influence all future literature in ways which are now beyond our entangling. The most astonishing things are revealed by Comparative Mythology. Just as the old Irish Amazon Chieftain Maeve shrank to Queen Mab in *Romeo and Juliet*, so may some manifestation of Rudra have passed into Robin Hood or even Robin Goodfellow; and there are amusing things in modern writers such as Hilaire Belloc, Walter De La Mare and James Stephens which stir very old memories in India.

It is when we come to higher cultural affiliations, in ethical, speculative and religious thought, that we find it more difficult to sift the Oriental prototypes from Western developments.

For they have had to go through the clearing-offices in Miletus, Alexandria and Antioch before reaching Mediterranean culture and mingling with Christian theology and philosophy.

One comes to suspect, after listening awhile to the abler Christian apologists, that had certain Sacred Books of the East been written in Alexandrian Greek they would have become classics of Western theology. As it is, the modern ultra-cautious approach to Oriental thought is largely through the mediation of Plotinus, and even divines long resident in the East show reluctance to give recognition to affinities which should be obvious, the same reluctance as shown by the clerical exponents of Neoplatonism. But we may remember the delightful words in *The Crock of Gold*: 'The pure in heart still fly from the spectre Theology to dance in ecstasy before the starry and eternal goddess.'

The truth seems to be that about the highest Western minds which are involved in spiritual fervour there is an aura which associates them with the radiant heart of the East, however clearly their words and argument reflect the Greek and Latin medium through which they have passed. Is there not something, for example, in the following passage by Dean Inge, which, in spite of its camouflage of psychologism, sets it very close to the Indian doctrine of the Atman?

'The consciousness of eternal values, and love for them, are primary and instinctive affections of the Soul. And since these values are not coincident with individual advantage, this fact is inexplicable unless the ultimate reality is suprapersonal. We do not, in our consciousness, begin with the individual and then pass by abstraction to the general, but the general works in us as such immediately. We see resemblances before we see the objects which resemble each other. The objective interconnexion of life is a fact, and the highest expression of each individual life is not itself but the totality of life. The physiology of birth and infancy indicate how little independent the individual is. We are drawn into suprapersonal life whenever we find it impossible to rest in the present moment, which alone belongs to us; whenever we rise above the mere animal plane, we in truth forget ourselves and enter into a larger life. The fact that our psychophysical ego is for all of us object not subject (this is indisputably true) is

itself a sufficient proof that we, in our deepest ground, are far more than it.'

Again in Matthew Arnold's famous insistence on the pursuit of Culture as an approach to perfection, does it not seem that we have a cooling down of the spiritual ardour of India, by way of the followers of Plato who helped to shape Christian theology, such ardour as in the *Gītā* offers in sacrifice all the rich qualities of the soul?[1]

The salient characteristics of that literature do not include what may with any truth be claimed as the fruit of Indian thought. The great names in English literature so frequently illustrate manifestations of the very things against which Vedāntic thought in its particular phases is arrayed. And at first sight it is not clear that the more precise presentations that thought of its logical triumphs, are likely to be reflected in English in any form but those of philosophical disquisition. That is why our interest is aroused when we hear the story of evolution enclosed both in a line of Blake:

> To create a little flower is the labour of ages,—

and in a verse of Rabindranath:

> Thy centuries follow each other perfecting a small wild flower.

Then there is the question of external influences. These influences in literature are often so subtle in operation that the tracing of them is as difficult as that of folk-lore. We are all of us much more than individuals, and our sincerest moments are revelations of ancestry. In our weaker moments we are liable to give way to the conclusions or the phrasing encountered in our reading.

For me this whole problem centres in one of the greater poems of English literature, a lyric utterance of a shy girl written in a lonely moorland region nearly a century ago, as remote as possible, one would think, from Oriental influences. And yet these last lines of Emily Brontë have long been for me the quintessence of what I take Vedānta to mean,—all that is noblest in Indian thought and aspiration.

> No coward soul is mine,
> No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
> I see Heaven's glories shine,
> And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.
>
> O God within my breast,
> Almighty, ever-present deity!
> Life, that in me has rest,
> As I, undying life—have power in Thee!
>
> Vain are the thousand creeds
> That move man's hearts: unutterably vain
> Worthless as withered weeds,
> Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,
>
> To waken doubt in one
> Holding so fast by Thine infinity;
> So surely anchored on
> The steadfast rock of immortality.
>
> With wide-embracing love
> Thy spirit animates eternal years,
> Pervades and broods above,
> Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.
>
> Though earth and man were gone,
> And suns and universes cease to be,
> And Thou wert left alone,
> Every existence would exist in Thee.
>
> There is not room for Death,
> Nor atom that his might could render void:
> Thou—Thou art Being and Breath,
> And what Thou art may never be destroyed.

Is there any more arresting verse in any literature than that fifth one, enshrining as it does in four brief lines a conception of the Lord of the Universe no laborious volumes have made so convincing?

The ardour and intensity of the poem are testimony to the sincerity with

[1] See especially the *Bhagavad Gītā* Disc. 13 and 18.

which it was conceived. The presentation was original, and being what it was, the poem was long neglected, as so many others in English literature which betrayed cosmic or mystic significance.

Yet we should not hastily conclude that this poem which coincides with so much in Indian religious thought does not owe anything to Vedânta. The writings of Emerson in America and James Martineau in England were recent publications when the poem was written, and there had never been any English prose more nobly in harmony with the Indian religious ideals and cosmic intuitions than that of Martineau. Here are some of his sayings.

There comes a time to us all when the sense of responsibility starts up and rebukes our anxiety for ease; tells us that we are living, fast and once for all, a life that enlarges to the scale of eternity, and is embosomed everywhere in God.

We acknowledge space and silence to be His attributes; and when the evening dew has laid the noonday dust of care, and the vision strained by microscopic anxieties takes the wide sweep of meditation, and earth sleeps as a desert beneath the starry Infinite, the unspeakable Presence wraps us close again, and startles us in the wild night-wind, and gazes straight into our eyes from those ancient lights of heaven.

To make reason our book-keeper, and turn thought into an implement of trade,—this is not life. In all this but a poor fraction of the consciousness of humanity is awakened: and the sanctities still slumber which make it most worth while to be.

Speaking of meditation, in contrast to study, reasoning, deliberation and self-scrutiny, he says:

Its view is not personal and particular, but universal and immense,—the sweep of the nocturnal telescope over the infinitely great, not the insight of the solar microscope into the infinitely small. It brings, not an intense self-consciousness and spiritual egotism, but almost a renunciation of individuality, a mingling with the universe, a lapse of our little drop of existence into the boundless ocean of being. It does not find for us our place in the known world, but leaves it for us in the unknown. It puts nothing clearly before our feet, but a vault of awful beauty above our heads. It gives us no matter for criticism and doubt, but everything for wonder and for love. . . . .

Silence is in truth the attribute of God; and those who seek Him from that side invariably learn that meditation is not the dream but the reality of life; not its illusion but its truth: not its weakness but its strength. . . .

All great things are born of silence. . . . Nowhere can you find any beautiful work, any noble design, any durable endeavour, that was not matured in long and patient silence.

God has so framed our memory that it is the infirmities of noble souls which chiefly fall into the shadows of the past; while whatever is fair and excellent in their lives comes forth from the gloom in ideal beauty, and leads us on through the wilds and mazes of our mortal way. . . . .

Our very progress, which is our peculiar glory, consists in at once losing and learning the past; in gaining fresh stations from which to take a wider retrospect and become more deeply aware of the treasures we have used.

If we cannot find God in our house and mind, upon the roadside or the margin of the sea; in the bursting seed or opening flower; in the day-duty and the night musing; in the genial laugh and the secret grief; in the procession of life, ever entering afresh, and solemnly passing by and dropping off,—I do not think we should discern him any more on the grass of Eden, or beneath the moonlight of Gethsemane.

Tomorrow morning, if you choose to take up a spirit of such power, you may rise like a soul without a past.

Here by the middle of the nineteenth century we have, in verse and prose, a kind of conviction of the whole being which is too rarefied a state for the average man to be even interested in. Such utterances place their writers in the category of those who have been described as 'the much smaller number of great men . . . . . who have attained to unmistakeable vision of life as a whole. . . . . Their activity is determined by their love and wisdom, and

not by rules. In the world, but not of it, they are the flower of humanity.'

The music of Vedānta, tuned as it is to the cosmic process, is a very high strain indeed. The abstract thought with which this unique music is found in such exalting fusion, may with justice claim to be the most comprehensive scheme of the higher logic the world has known. It is alien to the English mind, which, indeed, has reached the heights in whose atmosphere no ordinary intelligence can function, both by intuition and by the elaborate evolution of the processes of experiment. But there has always been a shyness of mystic thought in England. It is now, of course, a matter of full consciousness of exposition, and even of attempted analysis.

But the English way is to descend as rapidly as possible from such altitudes, whether of individual or group attainment. A Traherne is simply allowed to fall into oblivion; a Blake is labelled as mad; a Wordsworth for nine-tenths of his poetic career lumbers along like a patient camel. And at most times men who have been subject to such illumination have been left alone unless, as Jakob Boehme, they have associated themselves with a great religion, or as George Russell, with a material movement.

In the whole pilgrimage of English poetry, in which I would include prose of transcendental quality, the souls which have attained to moments of mystic vision are indeed few and far between. But their work is remembered and treasured by those down the centuries for whom they wrote, and such utterances as the following, in tune with the unfathomable yearning of the soul wherever and in whatever conditions it is finding expression, stand as witness to the hierarchy of our poetry, its power of revealing a lasting radiance through words, and its alliance, (in order and beauty) with the ascension which we feel to be the secret of the rhythm of Nature, of all Creation.

As man is of the world, the heart of man
Is an epitome of God's great book
Of creatures, and man need no further look.
JOHN DONNE

Thou art in all things one, in each thing many:
For Thou art infinite in one and all.
GEORGE HERBERT

You never enjoy the world aright, till the sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars.
THOMAS TRAHERNE

The wild deer, wandering here and there,
Keeps the Human soul from fear.
WILLIAM BLAKE

Dread powers, that work in mystery, spin
Entanglings of the brain.
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

And what if all of animated Nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the soul of each, and God of all.
S. T. COLERIDGE

The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines; Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity.
P. B. SHELLEY

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, would fain arrest:
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.
ROBERT BROWNING

The Originatress comes,
The nest of languages, the bequeather of poems, the race of old,
Florid with blood, pensive, rapt with musings, hot with passion.

[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Siva* 10.

Sultry with perfume, with ample and flowing garments,
With sunburnt visage, with intense soul and glittering eyes
The race of Brahma comes!

WALT WHITMAN

It seems to me that no hour of the day passes that the whole world does not show itself to me.

WILLIAM MORRIS.

Brahma, all alone in gladness, dreams the joys that throng in space,
Shepherds all the whirling splendours onward to their resting place,
Where in worlds of lovely silence fade in one the starry race.

A. E.

Images well up before the mind's eye from a deeper source than conscious or subconscious memory.

W. B. YEATS

What is spoken of is not a spirit beyond all spirits, but one which is in all spirits, which is in us and which we are.

PROF. J. A. SMITH (Oxford)

It cannot be denied that every one of the foregoing passages is likely to appeal to a cultivated Indian as something congenial, and to draw from him parallels in his own literature. For him they would all have one origin, in the great body of doctrine, of illumination, he calls Vedânta. But for an Englishman they would have another parentage, deriving from Plato and Plotinus. And if he went further he would have to admit the Ionian ancestry of the philosophers of early Greece, and so a probable connection with Babylon and India and the extreme probability that Plotinus, lecturing at Alexandria, was still more directly in touch with Indian thought. At a very early date we have Anaxagoras saying: 'There is a portion of everything in everything.'

And each one of these passages is as a portal into a separate world, which if we visit we must linger in, however brief the time may seem,—for one moment, intense beyond all time.

Each of these names is a symbol of power to create groupings of words whose dynamic character, derived from the mysterious spirit of the universe, dispels the multitudes of popular books of any period as foam of the sea before the storm winds.

Each is as the seed of a tree in a forest of trees so varied in their form, their loveliness, their suggestion of mysterious power, that the forest itself becomes, in the words of the Mahabharata, a meeting-place of the Gods.

How these speak of the forest, the bright company of spirits in human form gathered from the centuries into an hour of memory! Each name, and all it betokens, gives out such radiance that in it we wonder that we ever could return to the darkness of triviality.

Viewed as a procession through the ages, we are aware of a culmination in our own time, and that culmination is marked by a conscious approach to Indian ideals and even Indian imagery. The passage from Whitman which I have given above has a purpose here in that it shows the West contemplating sons of the East.

From Whitman, rather than from his countryman Emerson, has come a sense of human kinship with what some are pleased to call subhuman powers, a sense of the universal dwelling within the soul. It had been expressed by James Martineau in terms of inspired theology; by Emily Bronte in lines of divine inspiration.

Whitman was to associate it with the daily doings, the most definitely material adjuncts of life. Even as Shakespeare so miraculously turned the body of a drowned man into a perfect carol, so Whitman, over and over again finds the source of rapture in the life around him. Watching what he

calls a common marvel, a thrush feeding its young, he says:

If worms, snails, loathsome grubs, may to sweet spiritual songs be turned,
If vermin so transposed, so used and blessed may be,
Then may I trust in you, your fortune, days, my country.

And all his best work is testimony to the world and all we see of it, as something so different when looked upon with insight.

I will show that whatever happens to any body it may be turned to beautiful results.
And that all the things of the universe are miracles, each as profound as any. . . .
A leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars.

How close this is to the conclusions of modern science, which has declared that a tree contains more mystery of creative power than the Sun, from which all its mechanical energy is derived!

Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* is a book within easy reach. There are others not so well known, yet equally deserving from the point of view of the subject of this paper. In the Scotch writer William Sharp, who used the pseudonym Fiona Macleod, the Englishman Richard Jefferies, and the Irishman George Russell, whom we know as A.E., we have men who all found in their situation and circumstances an urge to express conviction and emotions which were beyond time, and which bring India and those far Western peoples into a spiritual unity never attained before. It is, maybe, a cyclic return to a fullness of Aryan faith which the rivalries and preoccupation of the past two millennia have shattered in disaster after disaster.

Here I can only indicate by quotation the spirit of those three writers. It would not be difficult to parallel almost everyone of them, as those already given, by passages from Indian writers.

In these quotations, again, are to be found the supreme intuitions to which you give the name Vedânta, for which we are without any name but the ambiguous *mysticism*,—though I do not mean by this that mysticism is synonymous with Vedânta.

Richard Jefferies, Fiona Macleod and A.E. were all sharers in the troubles of Western civilisation, which have accumulated during the last three score and ten years—and all found solace and stimulus in a sense of oneness with Nature. This experience, which is a sign of a higher spirit in the truest sense, naturally forms a basis for the transfiguration of everyday facts in poetic or prophetic ways of much variety,—ways of sympathy, of aspiration, of transcendent vision and illumination.

Here are some thoughts and visions of Fiona Macleod.

She leans over cradles, and when babies smile they have seen her face.
Old magical writers speak of the elemental affinity which is the veiled door in each of us. Find that door, and you will be on the secret road to the soul.
The same instinct that impels the soul into the incalculable void, moves the leaf with the imperious desire of the grey wind.
There are stars in my inner life that guide my stumbling feet.
The Winged Destiny, which leans from Eternity into Time, and whispers to the soul through symbol and intuition the inconceivable mystery of the divine silence.
Ana, that most ancient goddess, the Mother, after she had fashioned all the gods, and had made man out of rock and land and water and the breathing of her breath, made woman out of the body of a wave of the sea and out of foam of apple-blossom and out of the wandering wind.
When from too great weakness she could no more go out upon the heather, or

> stand by the brown rushing burn with its fern-shadowed pools, or could no more gather flowers, or watch the stars gather in still companies out of dove-grey silences, Ian saw that the beauty of these things, so near and familiar, so remote and beyond all words, had passed into her. There was not anything lost to her of the falling dew, of the loosened fragrances, of the flickering of leaf and fern, of the little radiant life of flowers, of the still stars; these passed into her, and were a bloom upon her face, and a mystery in her eyes, and a light upon that which was comrade to those momentary breaths, and to that other Breath, wherein these were neither less nor greater than the shining constellations, and the ancient time-forgetting stars.

Richard Jefferies was an adherent of that religious faith which is held by countless among mankind without any formulation or ritual other than those which are intuitively expressed,—a faith which, after long centuries of divergence, at last merges with the Eastern conception of the Dance of Life, or, as voiced by Spinoza: 'Joy is man's passage to a higher perfection.' It is the explicit faith of Whitman, and of Browning:

> Oh the wild joys of living. . . . .
> How good is man's life, the mere living: how fit to employ
> All the heart and soul and the senses for ever in joy.

Of James Stephens:

> Goodness and kindness are, perhaps, beyond wisdom. Is it not possible that the ultimate end is gaiety and music and a dance of joy?

And it is in the heart of Jefferies himself:

> How willingly I would strew the paths of all with flowers; how beautiful and delightful to make all the world joyous. The song should never be silent, the dance never still, the laugh should sound like water which runs for ever.

It is the greater faith—beyond all dogma—of all those who live and strive for the increase of joy and vitality as their thank-offering to the Eternal Spirit.

Here are a few of the thoughts of Richard Jefferies, in language which is at times poetry of exquisite cadence.

> The rich blue of the unattainable flower of the sky drew my soul towards it, and there it rested, for pure colour is rest of heart.
>
> The soul throbs like the sea for a larger life. No thought which I ever had has satisfied my soul.
>
> When the crescent of the new moon shone, all the old thoughts were renewed.
>
> From the tiny mottled egg come the wings that by and by shall pass the immense sea.
>
> Earth holds secrets enough to give our race the life of the fabled Immortals.
>
> Could we employ the ocean as a lens, and force truth from the sky, even then I think there would be much more beyond.
>
> The beautiful swallows, be tender to them, for they symbol all that is best in nature and all that is best in our hearts.

The first chapter of *The Story of My Heart* consists of a long prayer to be absorbed in the cosmos, for a soul far beyond conception of the past, the present and the fulness of life. It is surely unique in literature, though it has affinities in many languages, from the *Bhartri Hari* to Sri Aurobindho, from St. Francis of Assisi to Maxim Gorki and Knut Hamsun. From far south to extreme north the song of praise has been set going, and there is nothing man can do in these days of the darkness of the soul that can stifle it for long, for in all things of which we can think there ebbs and flows the surge of the mystic force we call life; even in silence and death, which are only such in relation to our states of thought or feeling at certain times.

All sound, all colour, all that can be apprehended by the senses, is the expression of this primal and eternal energy. With one being it finds utterance in the desire for possession; with

another in renunciation and the consequent liberation of spirit. All the manifold processes of existence, instinctive or volitional, from the formation of mountains to the prayer of a nun, are necessary parts in this everlasting harmony, and that is why we do wrong when we try to confine a human soul to any creed that can be composed in words.

The deeply religious writing in prose and verse of A. E. comes like a benison to all his forbears to whom I have made reference. And what he has written carries tones of conviction just because it is not the utterance of a recluse but of one who has all his life toiled against the discouragement and the difficulties of his fellows. He of all I have mentioned owes much to India, and nobly has he made known and sanctified her gifts. In his heart have merged two of the world's most radiant mythologies, fused in traditional forms of English verse, and in a prose which in *The Interpreters* contains passages of tense emotion which demand more than silent reading,—rather solemn intonation in the dome of an ancient cathedral. He had powers of vision into the past and the future alike, as well as into the depths of the Now, and he has a heart whose beating rings in sympathy with all the needs and joys and aspirations of humanity. His every utterance proclaims his realization of what he has himself called :

> The Divine Mind whose signature is upon us in everything, and whose whole majesty is present in the least thing in nature.

Here is my choice of his sayings which are pertinent to our present considerations.

> There is not a pin-point in visible space which does not contain a microcosm of heaven and earth.
>
> As I walked in the evening down the lanes scented by the honeysuckle, I felt that beings were looking in upon me out of the true home of man.

> I am the heartbreak over fallen things,
> The sudden gentleness that stays the blow,
> And I am in the kiss that foemen give
> Pausing in battle, and in the tears that fall
> Over the vanquished foe.

> I am convinced that all poetry is, as Emerson said, first written in the heavens, that is, it is conceived by a self deeper than appears in normal life, and when it speaks to us or tells us its ancient story we taste of eternity and drink the Soma juice, the elixir of immortality.
>
> The Master of Life is in all, and I am as excited with wonder at the creative genius shown in the wildest dream as in the most exalted vision.
>
> I believe that for myself and for all of us there has been an eternity of being, and that many spheres are open to us.
>
> Those who are lost and fallen here, tonight in sleep shall pass the gate,
> Put on the purples of the king, and know them masters of their fate.
>
> I think that meditation is beginning anew, and the powers which were present to the ancestors are establishing again their dominion over the spirit.
>
> Where the cool grass my aching head embowers
> God sings the lovely carol of the flowers.
>
> Consciousness prolongs itself in meditation and ecstasy into a vaster being, and we do not know whether there is any end to our being.
>
> Age on age is heaped about us as we hear:
> Cycles hurry to and fro with giant tread
> From the deep unto the deep: but do not fear,
> For the soul unhearing them is dead.
>
> There are legions of allies for us in air, in earth, in sea, ready to do our bidding when we come to our full stature and can command them with wisdom and power.
>
> O Master of the Beautiful
> Creating us from hour to hour,
> Give me this vision to the full
> To see in lightest things thy power.
> This vision given, no heaven afar,
> No throne, and yet I will rejoice,
> Knowing beneath my feet a star,
> Thy word in every wandering voice.

Recent events have shown us that we are again submerged, and with us the whole world of men,—not in the great waves of thought whose symbols are such names as Plato, Sankaracharya, Immanuel Kant,—but in an ocean of bitter trial, an inundation of evil from which, in order to live, we have to struggle to emerge. To this far end it is equally the duty of those who uphold and glorify Vedânta, or any other interpretation of life and its ideals, to be ever striving to break through any bonds which could make their world of thought a closed system.

What are those bonds?

Surely all that is not poetry, that true poetry which A.E. tells us is only written on the moment of Transfiguration; all that endless weaving of exposition and discussion which often makes our reviews such dull reading; all escape into abstraction, all refusal of simple achievement, of vividness, of the smile of life.

All evil appears to be bound up with its own cure. In an age when interest in mechanism has developed to such an extent that as Count Keyserling says, a grandson of eight knows far more of the structure and working of a motor car than his grandfather,—it is just the leaders of science who are discovering by their own patient methods things that have long been intuitions of poets and mystics. We are told that Balfour Stewart 'supposed of the aether that there was a continual transference of energy to it from the visible universe, and that this stored-up energy might form the basis of an immortal memory for man and nature.'

It is on these Himalayan heights that the leaders of Western scientific thought meet with the minds that represent Vedânta, and the direction in which they are moving may be indicated by the words of one who has endeavoured to find expression for the approach to the Ineffable.[1]

'If, as philosophers affirm, the visible world exists only in and for consciousness—if it is but the perception of a perceiver—then for each conscious person there exists a different world.

It follows logically that these countless personal consciousnesses in which the three-dimensional perception of the world inheres, may be thought of as so many 3-spaces going to form a higher or four-dimensional unity—the consciousness of humanity as whole.

Now suppose a man to dwell constantly in the thought of this humanity, to identify all his interests with its large interests, is it not thinkable that he might transcend the personal limitation, and merge himself into the larger consciousness of which he has all the while been a part?'

And there are pregnant words of Prof. Eddington as to this forward movement of human intuition, both as to the nature of our apperception, and the process in which we are all, man, earth, and universe, so mysteriously involved.

'We cannot say that the rainbow, as part of the world, was meant to convey the vivid effects of colour; but we can perhaps say that the human mind as part of the world was meant to perceive it that way. . . . . .

If the scheme of philosophy which we now rear on the scientific advances of Einstein, Bohr, Rutherford, and others is doomed to fall in the next thirty years, it is not to be laid to their charge that we have gone astray. Like the systems of Euclid, of Ptolemy, of Newton, which served their turn,

[1] Claude Bragdon in *The Fourth Dimension*.

so the systems of Einstein and Heisenberg may give way to some fuller realization of the world."[1]

[1] *The Nature of the Physical World*, p. 329 and p. 338.

May we say that it is the constant endeavour towards this higher realization, rather than any formulation of past endeavour, which constitutes the real worth and meaning of Vedānta?

THE ORIENTAL POINT OF VIEW—AN APPROACH

By Dr. Sudhindra Bose

[The difference in outlook between the East and the West is as between poles. While the East is after universal love, Ahimsā, the West is after power and self-aggrandisement. Dr. Sudhindra Bose of the State University of Iowa, U.S.A. points out this difference and deals briefly the essence of the teachings of the Oriental master thinkers like Buddha, Lao-tze and Confucius.]

I

Voltaire draws an interesting picture of two great but self-satisfied civilizations in "A Conversation with a Chinese." It is related that early in the 18th century there was a Chinese in Holland who was both a learned man and a merchant. This Chinese, who spoke a little Dutch, happened to be in a bookseller's shop. He asked for a book and was offered Bossuet's *Universal History*.

At the title *Universal History*, cried the Oriental: "How pleased am I to have met this book. I shall now see what is said of our great empire, of a nation that has subsisted for upwards of 50 thousand years. I shall see what these Europeans think of our religion, and of the pure and simple worship we pay to the Supreme Being. What a pleasure will it be for me to find how they speak of our arts, many of which are of a more ancient date with us than the eras of all the kingdoms of Europe."

"Lord bless you," said the bookseller, "there is hardly any mention made of that nation in this work. The only nation considered is that marvellous people, the Jews."

"The Jews!" said the Chinese; "those people then must certainly be masters of three parts of the globe at least. But does not this book take notice of some other nations?"

"Yes, the Greeks."

"Greeks! Greeks! Who are those Greeks?"

"Why," replied the book-seller, "they were masters of a little province, about two-hundredth part as large as China, but whose fame spread over the whole world."

"Indeed!" said the Chinese, "I declare I never heard the least mention of these people. Tell me what other unknown things does this *Universal History* treat of?"

"It treats of the Roman republic, of Julius Cæsar. . . ."

"Yes, yes; I think I have heard of Julius Cæsar. I remember him now. Was he not a Turk?"

It has now been two hundred years since Voltaire's Chinese merchant asked for a book in the Holland book-shop, and during that two hundred years con-

siderable progress has been made in unfolding Oriental history and life to the West. Still, much remains to be done. Still, there is a considerable room for misunderstanding.

Whoever has studied the history of Oriental culture attentively must have noticed that the greatest heroes of the Oriental nations were the scholars and the prophets. They have, however, been in the main ignored or belittled by European scholars. This may be due to the fact that the greatest hero of the European countries was the warrior, who is still regarded as the highest type of man.

Western historians have conferred the title of *Great* upon Alexander, Cæsar, Constantine, Louis XIV of France, Peter of Russia, and Napoleon Bonaparte—men who appear to an Oriental as first-class cut-throats, ruffians and glorified gangsters. The efforts of some sentimental historians to put halos around the heads of these madmen are amusing. Alexander, the Macedonian wild man thirsting for blood and debaucheries; Cæsar, the super-egoist who tried to become a god; Constantine, the emperor who murdered his son, nephew and boiled his wife to death and became a Christian; Louis XIV, the expert bully; Peter, the blustering tyrant of Russia; Napoleon, the scourge of humanity—these pitiable madmen would never be dubbed in the Orient as "Great". In the Eastern perspective, the virtuosity in the art of murder is no title to greatness. Westerners still live in an age in which the voice of the cannon is worshipped as the voice of God. They still go across half the continent to cut the throats of their fellow-men, as one put it, at the sound "of two sticks on an ass's skin". When the world becomes really civilized, it will perhaps learn to commit all blood-thirsty people to an asylum for the violently insane. For that is where they naturally belong.

II

Let me invite you to consider with me this one question: Is there an Oriental point of view in the most fundamental aspects of life? I say—at once—that there is, especially in the broader phases of philosophy and religion.

At the very outset an Oriental is struck by the astonishing fact that most of the ancient nations of the world have died and passed away. Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece and Rome, whose soldiers struck terror into the hearts of the world, have disappeared and are almost forgotten. Their magic skin of military victory has shrunk and they have vanished. There are, however, three ancient nations which have managed not only to survive, but to exert a powerful influence on human civilization all through the ages, down to the present time. These three nations are the Chinese, the Hindus and the Hebrews.

I have not included in the list the modern Italians and the modern Greeks for obvious reasons. They are not an old people inheriting an old culture, let us say, like the Chinese. They are, in a sense, a new people trying to build a new culture. They do not represent a continuity of ancient civilization from the remote past up to the present, as do the Hebrews, the Hindus, and the Chinese.

When one examines the various reasons for the survival of these three nations, one comes upon a very startling fact. He finds that these three peoples were the first among the ancients to recognize a new type of hero—namely, the prophet or seer-hero, as

opposed to the warrior-hero that all other nations venerated and worshipped.

In the early stages of their history, to be sure, one discovers some fighting propensities among these three races. The world's food supply in those days was scarce, and everybody had to struggle to get his share of the food. Dr. Henry Thomas in his most illuminating volume, *The Story of the Human Race*, points out that before long these three races began to produce and honor a group of men who dreamed and talked about wisdom and peace, when all the others were still intent upon their plunders and conquests. Confucius and Lao-tze in China, Buddha in India, and Isaih among the Hebrews blazed a new trail. These are the men who put a new desire into the hearts of their nations—a desire to live and let live, a desire to dream dreams and see visions.

And these nations which produced the prophets of peace and seers of wisdom are, significantly enough, practically the only nations which have survived and retained their spiritual vigour down to our own day. The warrior nations having wasted their fury and their strength, they fell and they died. The Hindus, the Chinese and the Jews saved their strength and lived. Even now, in spite of the buffetings of an unkind fate, these three nations are still able to give to the world such men as Sun-Yat-Sen, Bergson and Einstein, Gandhi and Tagore.

There are some who say that the modern Jews are neither a race nor a nation. It is also asserted that they are at present more Occidental than Oriental. That is, indeed, a controversial subject into which I cannot enter here. Let me, therefore, confine my attention to India and China.

III

The Hindus of India belong to the white or Caucasian race which lived in the tableland of Central Asia. They came to India twenty centuries before Christ. Their new country was warm and its soil was fertile. Here they evolved a unique civilization: it aimed not only at economic provision, but it concerned itself with literature and art, religion and philosophy. Of the six great epic poems of the world, India produced two: Râmâyana and Mahâbhârata. India gave to mankind its Shakespeare of the Orient—Kalidas, author of the "Lost Ring" and other dramas. India gave to the world two out of six of its greatest historic religions: Hinduism and Buddhism.

Hinduism is a very ancient religion: it is as old as the Hindu race, which goes back to the nebulous dawn of history. Scholars naturally have failed to assign any exact date to its beginning. The Vedas are the principal source of this religion. The Vedas declare: "That which exists is one; sages call it by various names." The whole universe is the projection of Brahman. He is the material and efficient cause of the universe.

The basic ideas of Hinduism, says an eminent Indian scholar, are two: "First, the inner divinity of man. Man is potentially divine and possesses infinite goodness and power. Second, life's ultimate value is spiritual, and all human concerns, to be truly fruitful, must be controlled and guided in reference to this ultimate ideal."

It was into such an environment that Buddha was born, about 600 years before Jesus. His problem was to find a way out of the misery of life and the indignity of death. Let us briefly examine his philosophy and his doctrine of good life here on earth.

We are all of us, Buddha said, a family of brothers in a world of sorrow—and this relationship includes not only every member of the human race, but all creatures that breathe and suffer and die. Every living thing was to him "a poem of pity".

He gave his people ten commandments; and the first and most important of these was: "Thou shalt not destroy life in any form". Since we have no power to create, we have no right to destroy. It is what we call in Sanskrit Ahimsâ, non-violence, pity, love. This was the corner-stone of all his teaching.

The other cardinal principles of his ethical system were moderation, truth, and purity. By his own action he showed the wisdom of moderation. Born a prince he was brought up in the lap of luxury. This he discarded to practice a life of severe austerity and mortification. This, too, he renounced to choose a middle path. He found happiness in the doctrine of "nothing too much".

He taught self-control as against self-indulgence. He was equally opposed to the intoxication of lust, the intoxication of power, and the intoxication of conquest. All three alike lead to madness in the end. It is the sign of a diseased soul to be over-ambitious, to crave for mastery over the weak and for victory in war. For victory is the father of death.

How, then, are we to overcome this thirst for conquest in the human heart? By the paradox of love, said Buddha. By forgiving the conqueror. By trusting him as a sick child. By repaying hatred with kindliness. For it is only this way that you can get a world of quarrelsome children to grow up into civilized and peaceful men and women. He taught his people the heroism of suffering without inflicting pain, and the courage of dying without killing. Above all, he taught them tolerance. The Buddhist is one of the most tolerant persons on earth. Unlike the Mohammedan—and may I add the Christian—the Buddhist has never shed a drop of blood in a holy crusade and he has never persecuted a single infidel for the sake of Buddha.

Buddha gave up a throne to live among the disinherited. The very last act of his life was to bless a beggar who came to him for words of comfort. Buddha had reached the age of eighty. Illness had overtaken him. As his life was ebbing away, he called to his side the outcast who had come to beg for the alms of a few gentle words. The hand of the dying Prince sought the hand of the beggar, and the last word he spoke was a word of pity for a brother in sorrow.

IV

Let us now turn to China, also a cradle of an ancient civilization. For three thousand years the Chinese have worshipped the scholar as a hero. The Chinese have scarcely any respect for those nations which still regard their soldiers, their bankers and their prize-fighters as their finest citizens.

The Chinese are very proud of their history. According to their legends, their civilization is twenty thousand years old. The soldiers, until recently, were at the bottom of the social scale—along with the butchers and the businessmen—and the scholars were at the top. The kings of the country were praised not for gaining victories, but for maintaining peace. Their subjects disliked fighting, and they had a profound respect for the dignity of human life.

Here are some of the contributions of China to the world. The Chinese were the first people to cultivate the

silk-worm and manufacture silk. They developed the architecture of the pagoda that resembled a series of tent-roofs placed one above the other. They studied medicine, they wrote poetry, and they became acquainted with the movement of the stars. They organised, for the education and the government of the masses, an aristocracy of noblemen, or mandarins. This was an aristocracy of learning, and not of birth. Anybody, even the son of a street sweeper, could become a mandarin if he acquired the necessary education. On the other hand, the son of a mandarin might become a street sweeper if he had no inclination for learning.

The mandarins were not an idle class. They entered the civil service and helped the kings to govern the country. Most of the Chinese provinces therefore enjoyed an intelligent form of monarchy without too much repression. It was the rule of the philosopher-statesmen.

China gave to the world two great men; Lao-tze and Confucius. Lao-tze was born about 600 B.C., just fifty years before Confucius. It is interesting to note that Lao-tze, Buddha and Confucius, who were the "Three Supreme Teachers" of the Orient, all lived in the same century.

Lao-tze tried to teach men to love justice, to be temperate, to be natural, to abolish capital punishment, and to make the world a happier place to live in. Who can deny that those were beautiful ideals?

Like all wise men, Lao-tze did not love war. Indeed, he despised war. "Weapons, even when they are victorious", he said, "are not blessed among tools. He who rejoices at victory, enjoys the killing of men, and he who enjoys the killing of men cannot hold the kingdom."

Lao-tze was a great teacher, but the Chinese regard Confucius as the greatest of all that their country ever produced. Confucius maintained that if mankind would only be governed justly, for a single century, all violence would disappear from the earth. Accordingly, he laid down a set of principles for the government of his people and for their self-discipline. He maintained that self-control is the root of all things. To quote:

"The Ancient kings who wished to make their kingdom perfectly happy, first put their states in order. Since they wished to put their states in order, they first made their own families happy and harmonious. Since they wished their families to be happy and harmonious, they first controlled themselves. Since they wished to control themselves, they first purified their hearts. Wishing to purify their hearts, they first tried to think rightly. Wishing to think rightly, they learned all that they could learn. One learns by finding out the truth about things. Having found out the truth, their learning was complete. When their learning was complete, they were able to think rightly. When they could think rightly, they were able to purify their hearts. Their hearts being pure, they could control themselves. When they could control themselves, they could make their families happy and harmonious. Their families being happy and harmonious, they could put their states in order. Their states being in order, the whole kingdom was happy and peaceful."

Would that our modern rulers pay attention to this teaching of Confucius!

Surely one of the great things that the Western world has to learn from the Chinese is the fact that all our happiness and all our trouble come from within ourselves. The Chinese keep repeating this point in a thousand

ways all through their history. "Archery", said Confucius, "is like the life of a good man. When the archer misses the center of the target, he turns around and seeks the cause of his failure within himself."

Confucius, unlike Buddha and Lao-tze, did not believe in the doctrine of repaying arrogance with humility, and violence with love. He saw no reason for turning the other cheek. "Treat your enemy with justice and your friend with kindness", was his prudent advice. "Be fair to your enemy, but it is brutal to avenge an injury. Be loyal to yourself and charitable to your neighbours"—this was really the sum and substance of Confucius's teaching.

When his followers asked him to define his entire code of ethics in a single word, he replied: "Is not reciprocity the word?" And when they asked him to explain his meaning, he said: "Reciprocity means just this: what you would not have done to yourself, do not do to others."

This Golden Rule of Confucius became, five hundred years later, the Golden Rule of Christ. It seems, however, that in some of the Western countries the revised version of the Golden Rule is: "Do unto others as they do unto you, only do him first."

Confucius died in obscure poverty, an old man of seventy-two. His life had been a failure, he thought. Today the books of Confucius are as popular in China as the Bible is in the West. For more than two thousand years his teaching has been the law of China. Confucius—like Christ—has, alas, become a God! Both of them tried to bring into existence a new race of gentlemen, or, to use the word in its true sense, a new race of gentle men. Of the two, you may ask, which has succeeded the most? I cannot tell. I do not know. But so far as I am aware, there is not a single hymn in China that begins with the threatening words: "Onward Confucian Soldiers!"

V

I have tried here to give briefly the essence of the teachings of the Oriental master thinkers. From the classic ages of the great Oriental nations there flow into the lives of the common people certain fertilising streams and ideals. These are for India, according to the author of *The Heritage of Asia*, the quest for the Unseen, and the ideal of Ahimsk or love. China has looked more to the beauty of human relations and the embodiment of cosmic harmony in society. In the golden ages of Korea, too, something of Hindu mysticism and of Chinese humanism was blent in a fine synthesis which inspired the Japanese and sent them models of secular as well as of religious achievement.

Religion is the soul of Asia. By this I mean that the Oriental society is based upon the principle of religion and that religion always includes philosophy. In Oriental thinking, religion and philosophy are one. Yet, the leading countries of Asia—Japan, India, China and Korea—had principles of good government and standards of progress. They have produced works of secular kind, such as the forts and palaces of India, the gardens and pavilions of feudal Japan, the palaces and landscapes in China, the medieval palaces of Korea—perfect in harmony of setting, color and line. They rank among the wonders of the architectural world. All these nations have their great masterpieces of art, their secular dramas, their novels, their lyric poetry.

When we seek characteristic notes of the civilization of each of the great Oriental nations, we must bear in mind that it is rather a matter of emphasis

than of difference. Asia is one, as is all humanity. The Alps, the Rockies and the Himalayas divide only to unite. This is the Oriental point of view, for as Confucius said: "All Men Within Four Seas are My Brothers."

A SCHOOL OF MANKIND

By Paulus Geheeb

[Paulus Geheeb is an educator of International fame in Europe and was the director of the famous school at Odenwald. In this article, which is the text of his speech at a conference in Zurich, he conceives of a School of Mankind, where all the cultures of the world would be represented each with its own separate working community of teachers and students, such communities living side by side and mutually enriching one another. In this way through proper education he hopes to bring about better international relationship in the world.]

It may seem very out-of-date to speak of a School of Mankind. It was the fashion at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th to talk much of humanity and citizenship of the world, but the history of the last hundred years seems to prove that humanity is as yet an empty, abstract concept dwelling in the brain of a Kant, a Herder or a Schiller. Nevertheless, as Nietzsche once said: "The decisive happens in spite of the facts", and just because the idea of such a place seems so out-of-date to us, there is nothing our age needs so badly as a School of Mankind.

Our ideal remains fixed before our eyes: that of the economic and cultural co-operation of mankind bound together in one brotherhood. Such a macrocosm should be mirrored in its essential features in the microcosm of the school community.

In considering all human and cultural evolution we must start with the individual. Human growth is first of all a completely individual matter. Pindar's saying "Become what thou art!" expresses the final aim of all human development. Goethe formulated the same ideal in the verses:

"Gleich sei Keiner dem andern; doch gleich sei jeder dem Höchsten.
Wie das zu machen? Es sei jeder vollendet in sich."

(Let none be like another, yet each be like the Highest. How can that be? Let each be perfect in himself.)

Thus, too, the development of mankind is primarily a matter of individual peoples, individual nations. Each of us is first of all a Swiss, or a German, or a Frenchman, and develops as such. All education is conditioned by nationality, is dependent upon the geography, economics and political form of the particular nation. Every civilized state requires universal education to protect the child from abuse by the family or by the society, and to assure free development and education to the individual, thus treating the individual as an end in himself. Happy the nation whose leaders wisely confine themselves to this task and allow full freedom to the individual for cultural development, following the conception outlined by Wilhelm von Humboldt in his early work entitled "Ideen zu einem Versuch die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staates zu Bestimmen." (An Essay on

the Limits of State Activity.)

National education is inevitable in so far as every child grows up surrounded by the scenery and culture of his own country, the unifying element of which is both historically and organically the mother tongue. For almost a quarter of a century I was the director of the Odenwaldschule, and during that time I have often been much puzzled in answering the question frequently asked us as to the measures we took to instil the love of their country in our children. An educational colony, living in glorious German scenery and introducing German children to the riches of German culture primarily,—what more can be done to inculcate true patriotism?

Nevertheless, just as in such an "educational province" we experience daily the normal tension which exists between the individual and the community,—the two foci of all cultural development,—so we should get our young people to experience in practice the further tension that comes from the relation of the nation to mankind. It is not enough, in order to achieve this, that a national school should accept children of other nations as its guests, so to speak, in the way the Odenwald school did (about a fifth of the pupils of the Odenwald were foreigners). In the School of Mankind, as far as possible, all the great cultures of the present day would be represented,—not only the Western cultures, French, Anglo-Saxon, German, Slav, but also the Eastern ones, especially the Chinese and the Indian,—each with its own separate working community consisting of worthy representatives of the particular culture as teachers, and of children belonging to the race and nation in question. These communities would exist side by side in the school with equal rights and would mutually enrich one another. In course of time it should be possible to attract fine educationists from the different countries as well as children of the most diverse nations, and thus build up each separate community in such a way that it embodied the national culture worthily and could introduce the newcomer to it in an attractive way.

Imagine then a school in the form of a Landerziehungsheim (country boarding school) made up of five or six such cultural communities, each of which consists of an average at first of twenty members, teachers and children belonging to a particular nation. These independent communities would find their happy synthesis in the consciousness of representing ideally the culture of Mankind. The government of the whole would rest in the hands of a small committee consisting of a representative of each community. It is possible that for a time there might be one person who held all the threads of government in his hands. It will not be hard to overcome language difficulties. In no case should one language dominate. Besides a thorough study of the mother tongue, it would be taken for granted that three languages should be learned: English, French and German. Each community would be an independent group, living if possible in a separate house. School assemblies, religious worship, common meals and many other occasions would suffice to unite all these national communities into one harmonious whole. The basis of organisation would be not the language but the cultural unity. Another principle of division would, however, be introduced by the attempt to form working groups in particular subjects consisting of members of different nations, in so far as insurmountable technical differences, such as those of method, do not exist. Such groups of boys and girls belonging to different

nations would not only work in the shops of carpentry, book-binding, weaving etc., but could easily be formed for the natural sciences and also for courses in the general history of civilization. When a child belonging to one of the great cultures entered the school he would normally join the community of his own nation. In other cases the decision would depend upon such factors as attitude and inclination and upon the question as to which community would help the child's development most. Account would also, of course, have to be taken of previous training and knowledge of the language. The more firmly a child were grounded in the culture of his own nation (to lay this foundation would be the chief task of each national community), the closer and more fruitful would be his contact with other foreign communities.

I know that in many lands this idea of a School of Mankind hovers as a vision and a hope before the eyes of an increasing number of young teachers; they look with longing for its realization. The ubiquitous microbes of nationalism and fascism have caused a most happy reaction; for unnumbered millions have become aware of the desire to establish above the mutually distrustful nations, bristling with arms, a community of mankind serving a common ideal. The evil moral consequences of the world war have increasingly convinced men, during the last twenty years, of the value of education in the sense of character formation. The economic crisis, besides, which might lead many superficial observers to think that soon nobody will have any money left for education, has made numberless parents realize that they can leave their children no better and safer heritage than as complete an education as possible,—one that shall equip them physically and mentally, technically and morally, to face the terrible problems of the modern world. From all countries, therefore, children should flock to this School of Mankind, once it is founded. Expensive boarding schools, which provide the spoilt children of rich parents with comfortable lives and much service as the result of little effort, have no right to exist today. The kind of school we are thinking of presupposes that the principle of education for self-government shall be bravely carried through to its ultimate consequences. It would be a school community in which each member, from the youngest to the oldest, contributed to the support of the whole, everyone being responsible for it according to the extent of his powers and mental development. All would take part in the necessary work in house, garden and field, so that a simple and externally unassuming life, not requiring any servants, would be accepted as the normal and desirable way of living.

My late friend, Dr. Becker, at one time Minister of Education for Prussia, once outlined the problem of education in the present cultural crisis in a short article of great insight, towards the end of which he sketched the spirit of such a community as I am contemplating in the following words: "Only when one recognizes in others—no matter of what nationality, class, or religion—the Eternal and Divine that one feels in oneself and for which one claims the respect of others, only then will the state of mind exist on which the temple of a new humanity can be erected. By the united efforts of nations working together an international organization can be created, but one can only create the international spirit by a new understanding as between man and man. One must have the courage to adopt an attitude of mind which allows to others all that one demands for oneself. True

internationalism rests upon the basis of national education. Only upon such a foundation, utopian though it may seem, can anything fruitful be done. For all national education aims at bridging over and reconciling class antagonisms and religious intolerance. Where such national education starts from the purely human standpoint, as it must to be effective, it inevitably serves the cause of internationalism."

I have spoken to you of this conception of mine, which may perhaps appear utopian to many, because it seemed to me that there was no forum more interested or more competent to discuss it in a friendly spirit than the Swiss Section of the New Education Fellowship, particularly as Switzerland offers the most favourable external and internal conditions for the foundation of such a school.

When Kant in 1784 published his "Idea of a Universal History adapted to World Citizens," and in 1795 his philosophic sketch "Towards Eternal Peace", he felt confident that reasonably intelligent political leaders would never again allow a war to break out. Since then we have become convinced with H. G. Wells that world peace is fundamentally an educational problem, although we are equally well aware that educators work more slowly than diplomats and armament firms. But of our final success we remain assured. For we are of the faith of Schiller:

> "Von der Menschheit—du kannst von ihr nie gross genug denken;
> Wie du im Busen sie trägst, prägst du in Taten sie aus."

"Of human-kind you can never think highly enough; for as you conceive it in your heart, so you will create your humanity in your deeds."

THE CAVE TEMPLES AT ELEPHANTA AND ELLORA

By Prof. Akshaye Ch. Bose, M.A.

[Prof. Akshaye Chandra Bose deals with the artistic and religious significance of these cave temples.]

I

Nothing is more interesting in history than to mark the different stages through which a living nation passes, generation after generation, in its endeavour to preserve its vitality. In the elementary stage of a nation's life there is a severe struggle for existence which calls into service all its strength, stamina, and courage. The readiness to fight, the will to victory are at this stage the *sine qua non* of national existence. Sometimes a nation freely sacrifices its men and money just to escape annihilation. It often purchases its liberty and political integrity at a tremendous price.

But in spite of the severity of the struggle for existence, nations do succeed in establishing themselves and settling down to a life of peace. But here arises a fresh difficulty. Unless a nation can find new channels through which its energy can flow, peace often comes to mean decadence and degeneration. What a civilized nation does to avoid these is to follow up its physical triumphs by intellectual and spiritual ones.

The first task of civilization, it would

appear, is bravely to face the chaos and conflict of primitive life and exert a powerful will to lay down the foundations of corporate existence. Its second task, which lifts it to higher plane of existence, is to engage the intellect in extending the boundaries of knowledge and the spiritual powers in realising and expressing all that is deepest in human experience. Here strength makes room for reason, and valour for vision. After the warrior come the scientist, the artist and the sage. Life grows richer and fuller. The victories of peace are found to be even more brilliant than those of war.

India, with her civilisation going millenniums back, came to recognise, in days of remote antiquity, the necessity of strength and valour as well as of the artistic and spiritual vision for national existence on the civilized plane. And she came to possess not only a profound spiritual vision, but also a delicate sense of aesthetic values. An Indian sage writing at least three thousand years ago told his fellowmen:

Śabdāya ddaṁbardghātam mahate vināddam. (Yajurveda, ch. 30)—"For noise, beat the *ddaṁbard*, but for sublimity, play on the *vinā*."

Ages before the modern nations came into being, India had realised how life was ennobled by art, and how civilized society was distinguished from the savage by the finer sensibility of the spirit to the aesthetic appeal.

II

How profuse has been the expression of the soul of India in terms of art! From the sublime poetry of the *Rigveda* to the noble strains of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, and from these to the mellifluous grace of Kalidasa with his worthy successors in the middle ages and modern times, we have as great literature as humanity can ever boast of. Our music that began with the *Sāmaveda* has, for all that we know, flowed in an uninterrupted course to the present day, enriching itself by all inventions and influences, local and foreign, age after age. In the wall paintings of the Ajanta Caves we have as fine painting as has ever been dreamt of by the greatest artists of the world. And the innumerable temples of India provide us with some of the finest specimens of architecture and sculpture. What sculptural and architectural treasures have been lost through vandalism and the ravages of time at Taxilla, Mathura, Benares, Nalanda and other religious and cultural centres in India we need not pause to think over; what we possess is enough in quality and quantity to engage the most reverent attention of the world.

In the following lines I propose to consider the aesthetic and spiritual significance of the cave temples and sculptures at Elephanta and Ellora. Some western art-critics have declared the magnificent "Trimurti" at Elephanta to be the greatest sculpture in the world, and the "Kailasa" temple at Ellora, in which a whole rock has been chiselled into the most delicate forms of architecture and sculpture is in a sense the most miraculous building ever shaped by the hand of man.

III

The island of Elephanta lies to the south of Bombay at a distance of about six miles from the city and four miles from the shore of the mainland. It is quite small, having a circumference of only four miles or so. Two hills stand out in the middle with a deep valley between them, their tops being about 500 ft. from the sea-level. The island is at present inhabited by about 500 people, who make a living by fishing

in addition to the yield of the small patches of rice-fields.

More than a thousand years ago this island was selected for sculptural and architectural purposes by the Hindus and the result of their endeavour is little short of miraculous. There are four complete and two incomplete caves. Of these the Great Cave, with its finely wrought pillars, cut out of the main rock itself, and magnificent sculptures standing singly or in panels, all similarly chiselled from the main rock, not a single stone being brought from outside, is unique for its superb art treasures. It contains the colossal bust of Trimurti and fine panels, on a heroic scale, of Siva and Pârvati, besides other sculptures.

The sculptures belong to one of the most creative periods of Indian life when art, the search of ideal form within the bounds of finite life, became wedded to religion, the search of the ideal spirit in boundless infinity, with the result that religion became humanized and art spiritualized. At the time when these temples and sculptures were made, Saivism was what may be called the national religion of India. In it we find a final spiritual fusion of Aryan and Dravidian cultures.

The patriarchal Aryan contemplated the divinity as father, the matriarchal Dravidian as mother. *Sa no bandhur janitâ sa vidhâtâ*,—"He is our friend, our Father, our Lord"—says the Veda, representing Aryanism; *Yâ devi sarvabhuteshu mâtri-rupena samsthitâ*—"The Goddess who is present in all beings as the mother"—says the Tantra, initiated by Dravidian culture. The synthesis was found by imagining the ultimate reality as Parents, as Siva and Pârvati. "I adore Pârvati and Siva, the Parents of the universe," sings Kalidasa, in the Prologue to his world-famous *Sâkuntala*, "who are joined each to the other like sound and sense in the word." Siva and Pârvati are to the philosopher Purusha and Prakriti, the dual principle in creation; but to the mythologist and the artist, they are two humans with all that is tender and noble in human nature.

The finest artistic imagination has been applied to the representation of this Divine Couple. Especially the marriage of Siva and Pârvati has been a theme of inexhaustible artistic interest. It has been rendered into wonderful sculptural panels on the walls of Ellora and Elephanta. We have to go to Kalidasa's *Kumâra-sambhavam* for a parallel to these. The time will certainly come when the student of Kalidasa will consider his studies incomplete until he has seen these beautiful sculptures.

One of the most attractive panels in Elephanta represents this theme. After her age-long Tapasyâ to have Siva as her husband, Pârvati has obtained her heart's desire. She is being actually married to him! How modest yet happy she looks! Siva, a youth, stands noble and graceful by her side, equally happy at the event. Behind Pârvati is her father Himalaya, majestic in his bearing. But a sadness has spread over his face: he is parting from his beloved daughter. The bride's maid stands close to the bride. Behind her stands the Moon-god, Chandra, with the "auspicious pitcher" filled with nectar. To the left of Siva is the priest of the ceremony, Vishnu himself, who is supported on the athletic shoulders of Garuda, the lord of birds. Above, there have come from the ends of the horizon Apsarasas, Kinnaras, Tapaswis and the rest of the aerial host. The figures of Siva and Pârvati are on a colossal scale, the others are shorter and present a picturesque background.

The grand statue of Pârvati which

represents the Mother of the universe primarily stands for the Indian woman in all her modesty and majesty. The spectator seems to see in it the visible representation of Mother India herself!

The Arya-Dravidian combination is noticeable in the external features of this as well as of other sculptures. While the general stature and cut of the faces are Aryan, the thick nether lips bear a Dravidian touch. We shall not be surprised if it is discovered that the models of the figures were people who formed a mixture of the two great races.

In the centre of the Great Cave, surrounded by magnificent pillars lies the inner shrine of Siva where, instead of the image, the sign or the Lingam is placed. Guarding this shrine stand the stone Dwârapâlas,—colossal male figures of imposing stature. The one that stands facing the entrance is superb in its grandeur and grace. It is a majestic figure, broad-chested, broad-shouldered, with leonine waist and athletic legs (the knee-joints distinctly visible) and head held in a stately manner, the face clean-shaved and extremely graceful in its contour. We find here a fine combination of masculine power and feminine delicacy. This is perhaps the masculine form that India at the zenith of her civilization accepted as the ideal for the masses, and perhaps New India will turn to this for a model of masculine beauty.

IV

The most important sculpture in Elephanta, however, is the gigantic bust of Trimurti, facing the entrance of the great cave. This bust, rising about eighteen feet from the floor, stands out of the back wall of the cave, and forms the central figure among the sculptural panels. The head in the middle with the neck and the chest makes a majestic natural figure straight facing the spectator; on either side of this head are joined two others, looking in opposite directions, that are equally gigantic in scale and equally imposing. At first sight the colossal statue staggers us with awe; but what delicacy of line, what grace of form, what sublimity of expression in those gigantic faces! And what subtle decoration! On each head is a crown most marvellously wrought, as if the artist thought he was working on ivory and not stone! On the chest hangs a lovely necklace. On the ears there are ear-rings.

The Trimurti represents Ishwara or the Supreme Being in His three aspects as Brahmâ, Vishnu and Rudra,—God the creator, God the preserver, and God the destroyer. On the right (of the spectator) there is Vishnu, serene and meditative, on the centre Brahmâ, regal and gracious, and on the left Rudra, with snakes in his crown and round his neck, fierce and terrible. As the whole atmosphere in the cave is Saiva, we could take them as the threefold manifestation of Siva himself. But it must have been a Saivism which was capable of absorbing within itself the great rival conceptions of divinity and evolving a Divine Idea embracing all the three paths,—that of Jnâna or knowledge, that of Bhakti or love and that of Karma or action. The Trimurti conception, thus, unites the three rival attitudes towards religion and life and is a complete synthesis of Hindu religious ideology.[1]

The harmony represented by the power and dignity of the faces combined with the variety of their expression—serenity, benevolence, terror—makes the highest possible artistic appeal. The chest is broad, virile, majes-

[1] In later times the trinitarian conception was further humanized in the personality of the three headed Datta.

tic. The whole figure suggests an epic grandeur of conception characteristic of the most vigorous intellectual and spiritual periods of India. The world does not possess another piece of sculpture which presents such a wonderful combination of vastness of mass and delicacy of contour, of towering majesty and tender grace.

And in this noble statue the Hindu mind has given the highest expression in stone to its sense of the Divine in terms of sublimity and beauty. But how few Hindus of today know that their greatest stone image, which is also claimed to be the world's greatest sculpture, lies not in Benares or Puri or Rameswaram or Dwaraka, but in an obscure island away from her shores, called Elephanta by the Portuguese, which is too tiny to be identified on the ordinary map?

V

Why this island (called by the less known name Ghârâpuri in the vernacular) was selected for such stupendous artistic work is a question for archeologists to answer. "At one period," says the *Imperial Gazetteer*, "from the third to perhaps the tenth century, the island is supposed to have been the site of a city, and a place of religious resort. Some archeologists would place here the Maurya city of Puri . . . In the rice fields to the east of the northern landing place brick and stone foundations, broken pillars, fallen statues of Siva and other traces of ancient city have been found."

It is interesting to note that Ghârâpuri or Elephanta occupies practically the same place on the Western coast of the Indian peninsula as Jagannathpuri (Puri) does on the Eastern. Both lie in the same latitude. Was it so designed?

The Elephanta cave temples are still places of worship. On the Sivarâtri day the people of the locality and the neighbourhood assemble to worship Siva. Hundreds of pilgrims cross the sea to the little island for the purpose. When in the past thousands used to do so, how grand must have been the scene!

VI

Ellora is another centre of Arya-Dravidian art, much larger than Elephanta and vaster in design. The cave temples, thirty-four in number, lie in the territory of the Nizam of Hyderabad, at a distance of over 150 miles from Bombay and about ten miles from Aurangabad city.

The caves extend in a line about a mile and a quarter in length, facing the west. Shafts of light from the setting sun penetrate into the interior, and illumine the otherwise shadowy statues, paintings and architectural designs.

The most important of the cave temples and the most marvellous as an architectural achievement is the Kailasa (Cave No. 16). Imagine the architect standing before the rocky scarp of a hill over 100 feet high from the ground, and forming a design in his head to reduce an area of about 200 × 200 feet of hard rock into a grand temple with pillars, porticos, staircases, decorations and innumerable sculptures, large and small, all cut out of the rock, not requiring a single patchwork to be made with material brought from outside. Imagine the accuracy with which the minutest detail must have been designed so as not to allow a single square inch to be spoilt. What meticulous care, what patient labour, what exquisite skill must have gone to the cutting of the rock into the miracle that it is now! The time spent on it has been calculated to be a century. The monetary value must be measured

in crores of rupees. What spiritual earnestness, what constancy of faith and purpose, what intensity of artistic feeling lie behind this grand house of worship!

The Kailasa stands unique in world architecture for its grand conception and the almost superhuman effort and skill that went to its making. A monolithic pillar is a wonder; but what about a monolithic temple, 107 feet high, and 150 feet broad, including within it wall and portico and hundreds of sculptures?

What should we think of the people who thought such a building worth their while and were capable of constructing it?

VII

The temple is a Hindu pantheon. At the entrance there are sculptures of Ganesh and Durgâ and of Lakshmi on the lotuses with her attendant elephant. On the outer wall of the main temple are engraved Krishna and Siva-Pârvati and the feminine trio, Gangâ, Lakshmi and Saraswati. There are also panels representing Yogi Siva, Bhairava Siva, Siva in his Tândava dance, the Trimurti (on a smaller scale and artistically less suggestive than the Trimurti at Elephanta), the Avatârs, and groups illustrating Ramayana and Mahabharata stories. There are certain sculptural panels that are common between Elephanta and Ellora; e.g. Ravana trying to lift Kailasa on which Siva and Pârvati and the divine family are living, the battle fury of Bhairava or Vira-bhadra, (which is more pronounced in outline than its prototype at Elephanta), and the most favourite of sculptural themes, the marriage of Siva and Pârvati, shown here as well as in Cave No. 29, in different stages and settings. The face of the bride Pârvati has a haunting tenderness and grace about it, which inevitably remind one of the sweetness and nobility of Indian womanhood of which we have not seen the last yet.

Numerous statues of elephants are shown as supporting the Kailasa temple, so that, viewed from the height of the adjoining corridor, the temple looks like a grand chariot borne by elephants. The top of the temple like its other parts is also profusely decorated with sculptures,—those of Apsarasas, Kinnaras and other members of the heavenly host, some of them extremely graceful.

Ascending a few steps from the ground we enter the grand court of the temple, 160 × 190 feet, with stately pillars, in which worshippers used to assemble to offer their prayer. Connected with it by a bridge is Siva's bull, Nandi, and on either side of the Mandapa stands a tall pillar, 45 feet high, called Dhwajâdand flag-staff, (also Dipmâl, light-post), having on its top the Trisula of Siva. As one sits in the court one is filled with a deep sense of awe and serenity.

On the ceiling of the hall are fine paintings including a remarkable figure of "Nateswara Siva" (Siva, the Lord of dance).

VIII

The Cave No. 29 comes next to the Kailasa as a treasury of sculptures representing Hindu divinities. The dancing pose of Siva that is painted on the ceiling of Kailasa, is represented in a stone panel here; besides there is Bhairava Siva in the terrible fury of battle. Two grand figures, one of a female and another of an elderly man are believed to be Sitâ and Janaka. Other panels include one representing Râvana. There are two panels in this cave showing the marriage of Siva and Pârvati—a subject of which the sculptor never seems to tire.

As in the great cave at Elephanta, there is an inner shrine containing the Sivalingam, with eight Dwârapâlas or doorkeepers at eight points, each with a female companion. (At Elephanta the Dwârapâlas stand single. Was there a transition from the celebate ideal to the conjugal or vice versa?)

The cave overhangs a valley where a river begins its course. It commands a most delightful view.

IX

In the great cave at Elephanta we see the Trimurti embodying a synthesis of Hindu divine ideas. The thirty-four cave temples at Ellora, extending over a mile and a quarter, illustrate the synthesis of Indian religions. Half of the thirty-four caves, occupying the central position are Brahmanical, the others are Buddhist and Jain. On the right of the Brahmanical caves lie twelve Buddhist caves, and on their left five Jain caves. If the Trimurti of Elephanta represents the trinity of God the creator, God the supporter, and God the destroyer, the mile and a quarter long series of temples in Ellora represent the trinity of Religion as Brahmanism, Religion as Buddhism, and Religion as Jainism; in other words, the unity of spirit in the midst of the diversity of form. Here, it would appear, is a greater and grander synthesis effected! Just as Brahmâ, Vishnu, Rudra got united in Siva, so Brahmanism, Buddhism, Jainism were united into Indian Spiritualism[1] or as it has been called since, Hinduism.

The Buddhist group (caves Nos. 1-12) includes the famous Vishwakarma cave (No. 10) with a grand *chaitya*. The Jain group (Nos. 30-34), also called the Indra Sabhâ, presents a fine spectacle of wonderful sculptures representing Mahâvir, Parsanâth and Indra, Indrâni and their divine court. There is a large lotus beautifully carved in stone on the ceiling.

The cave temples were built, according to archeologists, from about the fifth to the ninth or tenth century. If so, it was not by mere chance that the three great religions of India accommodated one another. There is no sign to show that the temple of any one of the religions represented at Ellora was built on the ruins of another. The unfailing courtesy shown by monarch and people alike age after age in matters of religion[2] has been characteristic of Indian civilization and of other civilisations influenced by India.

Imagine a pilgrim paying his visit to the Ellora shrines. If he is a Hindu, he first goes to the Kailasa temple, and fills his eyes and soul with the wonder of the place. Then he passes on to the other sixteen Hindu cave temples. But can he stop there? No! If for nothing else, then for the very simple reason that he does not know where Hinduism ends and Buddhism and Jainism begin! (And do we know any better today?) He goes on visiting the Buddhist and Jain temples as well. So his religious pilgrimage means paying homage to, and obtaining spiritual inspiration from, all the three religions of India.

[1] Not in the modern sense of spirit-hunting which should really be called "Spiritism".

[2] Even the Pathan and Moghal rulers seem to have extended a similar courtesy to these cave temples, for no trace of vandalism is seen in them. The isolation and seclusion of Ajanta and Elephanta may have been their protection (though Elephanta was subjected to a good deal of Portuguese vandalism), but Ellora, lying so near the centres of Moslem government,—Aurangabad and Daulatabad,—and in the neighbourhood of the big fort at the latter place, must not have enjoyed such security.

It is also notable that this great museum (as it is at present) of Hindu art and religion is under the fostering care of an enlightened Moslem State.

And as I followed the footsteps of the imaginary pilgrim on the cool afternoon of a summer day, I was struck not only by the wonder of the architecture and the sculpture, but also by, what seemed to me, the greater wonder of this religious harmony. And my mind turned from Ellora (in the vernacular, Verul or Velur) to Belur. Ellora worked out a national synthesis of religion, Belur aims at working out a universal synthesis. The task is certainly a difficult one, but not, as I told myself at that moment, too difficult for India, with such magnificent record of spiritual synthesis.

ZEN, DHYANA AND JHANA

By Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, D.Litt., M.A.

[Mrs. Rhys Davids is well known for her laborious work in the field of Buddhism. Now she is the President of the Pali Text Society, London.]

In last November's issue of this Journal, Swami Jagadiswarananda gave an informative account of how 'Zen', an outcome of the Indian Buddhism brought to China, survives in Japan. On his treatment of 'Zen' itself I have no comment to offer. I do not hold myself competent to judge at second-hand about survivals of ancient exotic teachings. But I have asked the Editor to allow me to comment on the treatment, in that article, of that for which I do 'hold a brief', namely, on early Buddhist Jhâna. Here we have a variant of Indian Dhyâna, (a) which was a remarkable expansion of the earlier Indian Dhyâna, (b) coming to undergo, after that expansion, a marked degeneracy into a largely negative exercise, emptied of the positive element which had constituted the expansion.

The evidence on which I base both expansion and decline I have published during the last eight years: in the *Calcutta Review*, in my books *Gotama, the Man* (1928), *Sakya, or Origins of Buddhism* (1931), *Manual of Buddhism* (1932), *Outlines of Buddhism* (1934), *Buddhism* (*Home University Library*, 1934). Is it unreasonable to expect, that this evidence, drawn from study of the Pali Canon, should be at least weighed and criticised, when writers are bringing up the uncritical, unhistorical acceptance of what Jhâna meant for the first century or so of Buddhism?

To explain in the fewest words possible:—Dhyâna, Jhâna (and Yoga too) are, by most, held to be included under our word 'meditation', concentrated meditation. In the early Buddhist expansion of Dhyâna it was *nothing of the kind*. Even in the somewhat earlier Upanishadic definition, given in the Chândogya of the 'more' (Bhuyas) which Dhyâna is shown to be in the concept of Nâma, Dhyâna is not meditating. Meditating is a distinctly intellectual exercise. But here we have no such reference; we are bidden look at the stillnesses and silences of nature—of earth, sky and mountain. There broods over the little paragraph a watching, an awaiting, almost a listening for what shall come. In Jhâna this attitude has taken positive form. The man watches, awaits, listens; it may be, he comes to hear, even to see. And if he be thus fortunate, he learns what his fellowmen could not tell him. A Bhûyas has come into his life. Fellowmen no longer of earth are able to get

into touch with him. India had then come to call these fellowmen Devas; men who had left the earth and, being held worthy in their new world, were free and were willing to help the fellowman yet on earth.

But in time, with the growth of pessimistic ideals, which were a feature of early Indian monasticism, not earth only, but all life, all worlds were held to be an outlook to be shunned. Safety lay in concentrating that outlook on an impossible self-perfecting in this life only. And so the friendly helpers were no longer listened to, and Jhâna became described in formulas of a negative, eliminating kind—eliminating, not in order the better to hear messages brought to the man through the finer body, but in order to cut out all sense-messages whatever, gross or subtle.

Even this purgative process does not amount to meditation. The attainment prescribed in the fourfold (or fivefold) Rupajhâna is said to be just Sati (awareness, mindfulness) and Upekkhâ (poise, indifference): a good attitude for attentive listening, but not constituting positive meditating. There are fetches of imagining to be compassed in the so-called Arûpa (sightless) Jhânas, but it is the former Jhânas which are the ever recurring interest in the Pali Suttas, and are the practice described as "the way for access to Rupa-worlds" (Dhammasangani).

Jhâna of the negative kind prescribed in the 'Rupa' formulas still has its votaries here and there in South and in Central Asia among men who, for all the benefit they are to their fellowmen, are utter wash-outs. But if Buddhism in any country, if man in any country yet comes to wake up to the mighty 'more' in his life which he may secure through practice of the Jhâna used by Gotama Sâkyamuni and his fellow-workers, I hardly think that this time he will let it fall away again. This is a pious hope, but I have at least in my daily experience a guarantee of what this intercourse will have meant for them. If I have more to say of them than have other writers, I owe it to this most precious 'Bhuyas'.

QUITTERS OR UPLIFTERS?

By Sr. Nihal Singh

[St. Nihal Singh is well known as a journalist. He is widely travelled both in the East and the West and as such has a keen insight into men and institutions. In this article he gives a general survey of the Ramakrishna Mission and its activities.]

I

A boy with a trusting nature brought to me a photographic print he valued very greatly. The figure was much faded, as if time, aided by the carelessness and probably also the incapacity of the photographer, had tried to efface it from the silvered surface of the paper. The background was a jumble of greenery. The figure seemed to sink into it.

The lad had pathetic faith in my ability as a photographer. He would not be content, he said, to have me restore the print to its pristine condition, but wished me to improve upon the photographer's work—make the figure stand out, cameo-like.

I feared his ideas could not be carried

out: but to please him I set to work, soon after he had left me, to do what I could. First of all I spread a thick, even layer of paint over the background until every vestige of greenery had been obliterated. Against the uniformly clear surface the figure appeared to be much more prominent.

Then I pinned the print against the easel-board to make a new negative. Relying upon past experience, I used a film coated with a sensitive emulsion guaranteed to yield vigorous results. To heighten the effect, I resorted to a device that had proved successful in similar cases. Before the lens I mounted a piece of gelatine containing concentrated orange dye, which arrests certain components of the solar rays, thereby producing "contrast".

Convinced in my mind that I had succeeded in my object, I took the exposed film into the dark room and developed and fixed it with solutions correctly compounded at the time. So eager was I to examine the results that I could hardly bear to wait for the moment when the white light could be turned on with perfect safety.

To my great surprise—and chagrin—the negative proved to be a failure. The background was reproduced in it as if the print from which I had copied had not received a stroke of paint. All the greenery was there, muzzling the figure.

A little reflection soon revealed the cause. The gelatine containing the deep orange pigment that I had put before the lens had proved my undoing. Among the rays it intercepted were those from the tint that I had used in painting out the background. Either I should have used a different colour or done without the pigmented gelatine. In other words, one neutralised the other.

II

This sad experience took my mind back to the days when I was only a boy, nearly five decades ago. Many of the men who went about in a geruā (ochre) robe as a symbol of their having renounced the world might just as well have dispensed with that garb, for it did not serve effectively to hide their attachment to the pleasures of the flesh.

One instance has left an indelible impression upon the tablet of my memory. Just as I was entering my teens a Sādhu came to the small Punjab town where I was residing with my parents at the time. He was a fine-looking man, tall, broad-shouldered, deep-chested and muscular in build. Even for a Punjabi, his skin was remarkably fair. His black moustache and beard strongly contrasted with his complexion and set it off. His matted hair, besmeared with ashes, hung almost to his waist.

His features were more like those of a god than a human being—regular and finely chiselled. The nose was long and straight, without a trace of the "hook" that marks the Punjabi from Indians of other provinces. The mouth was perfectly formed, with red lips that were neither thin nor thick.

The eyes were large and almond-shaped, like those one sees in old paintings. A light seemed to burn behind them. Very few persons had the opportunity of seeing this gleam, for the Sādhu had habituated himself to keeping his eyes averted from other people's faces and seldom lifted them above the spot on which they were fixed, a foot or so in front of where he sat.

I had been greatly attracted by his personality and often went to see him after I had eaten some food upon returning from school. My mother did

not encourage these visits, fearing, with her wonderfully acute intuition, that the Babaji, as she called him, might entice me away from home. My comings and goings had, therefore, to be strictly private.

One afternoon when I made my way towards the edge of the little town where the Sâdhu had taken up his quarters under a noble tree, I found a great crowd assembled. From their raised voices I concluded that some untoward event had occurred.

Such indeed was the case, I soon learnt. The Babaji had run away with the gold and silver ornaments of a young woman who had fallen prey to his wiles.

Unfortunately, this Sâdhu was not the only black sheep in the flock. He typified a class of persons who had renounced the world only in order to shirk personal and domestic responsibilities and to batten upon the fruits of other men's industry. "Quitters" were they, in the real sense of the word and a burden on Mother India.

III

There were, in my boyhood days, Sâdhus of the nobler kind. No doubt of it. One saw them seldom, however. They shunned the haunts of men. One heard of them from persons who had the good fortune to come in contact with them, by rare chance, in the innermost recesses of the forest or upon mountain-tops, where they practised austerities so severe as to daunt even a brave spirit and gained empire over the flesh.

My child-mind often sat in judgment over these holy men. As is almost invariably the case with unripe judgment, it was harsh. I criticised them for concentrating solely upon their own soul-development, taking no thought of their fellow-creatures who were hurting their feet as they stumbled along the rough, thorn-strewn path of the world.

IV

Shortly before I launched out upon the sea of life, a strange stirring was felt in the province of my birth. A gerua-robed monk had come to Lahore. His figure was tall and broad—statuesque—crowned with a face of remarkable strength lit up with large, luminous eyes. Above his high, noble forehead he wore an ochre-coloured turban.

He could talk English faster and better than highly educated Britons. Instead of entering a government office or a learned profession, he had chosen to take Sannyâs—to renounce the world. After wandering all over India, he had gone to America and later to Europe, where audiences had listened spell-bound to his discourses on Yoga; and distinguished men and women of the Occident had acclaimed him as their Guru.

The message of virile manhood that he delivered still echoes in my ears. He urged our people to come out of our "rat-holes"—to shake off our lethargy—to get rid of the depraved mentality that made us regard multi-millions of our country-people as "untouchables."

V

One instance may be cited as typical of the influence that the Swami Vivekananda exerted over men of my generation. A professor at one of the colleges in Lahore—Ram Tirath by name—was so powerfully affected that he placed his gold watch and chain—his most prized possessions—at the holy man's feet.

Swamiji had no use for such things; but he did not wish to hurt the

SWAMI VIVEKANANDa—THE FOUNDER OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION ORGANISATION

Professor's feelings. So he took the presents in appreciation of the fine spirit shown by Ram Tirath.

A day or two later, when about to leave Lahore, he took the watch and chain and, putting them in the Professor's pocket, said: "I will keep them there."

As soon as Ram Tirath went home he took the watch out of his pocket. The hands were pointing exactly to one o'clock. He broke the spring. The hands stopped moving—stopped for ever. In later years he used to take the watch out of his pocket, point to the figure one and say that he was at one with Swami Vivekananda.

Shortly afterwards the Professor himself renounced the world; and has ever since been acclaimed as the Swami Ram.

VI

In 1906, when I landed upon the Pacific Coast of the United States of America and made my way to the Atlantic seaboard, I came upon men and women who had heard the Swami Vivekananda at the Parliament of Religions at the World's Fair at Chicago. They never tired of telling me how he had taken the huge audience by storm. Even when no longer in his magic presence and under the spell of his eloquence, his message had continued to move them.

I recall the poetess Ella Wheeler Wilcox writing to me in the first letter I received from her that among her numerous experiences she prized most highly the opportunity she had had of sitting at the Swami's feet. She wished that the work he had begun of introducing the East to the West could be continued, as the contact held forth a rich promise of reconciling the two and benefitting both.

That wish was to be gratified sooner than Mrs. Wilcox expected. An order of monks inaugurated by the Swami Vivekananda took up in right earnest the work where the Master left it.

VII

I have come upon members of this order as I have wandered over the face of the globe, everywhere more than answering the exacting standards of Sadhu-hood that I had formulated at a stage of my mental development when objectivity had not had time to obtrude itself upon idealism. By their unostentatious, loving labour, they have brought wisdom and peace to thousands of men and women in various countries and raised India in their estimation.

Among the ranks of this order, I encountered, some eight years ago, a monk who, before he took Sannyâs, worked in a newspaper office with which my relations were particularly close throughout the time he was there. Learning that I was in Colombo, he called upon me and we had a heart-to-heart talk. Later, as I travelled in the Island which the Sinhalese still call Lanka as their (and our) forefathers did, I came across him again and again, carrying the light of the *Vedas* and *Vedanga* to people who had almost lost touch with Eastern culture. His shaven head, uncovered by cap or scarf, topped a tall, stalwart figure draped in the *gerua* robe, the nether end of which came down nearly to his bare feet thrust into roughly cobbled slippers. For so large a man he spoke in a low, sweet voice, most uncommon in a son of Dravida (southern India). To hold converse with him was to find peace in the midst of turmoil. The mind floated upon the wings of thought to ethereal, nobler regions.

On one occasion this Swami brought to me a brother monk. Unlike him short in stature and inclined to be stout, he was devoted to the literature—religious and secular—created by the Tamils.

In an island that owes its prosperity in a considerable measure to the labour of men, women and children brought over from southern India, but looked upon as hardly better than a species of draught animal, contact with him raised India in the estimation of the autochthons of the Island and the foreign settlers among them. Whenever he and I happened to be in the same place subsequently we would spend hours together talking of the rich cultural treasures that had been accumulated by his forbears.

VIII

Side by side with this work of enlightening the mind and sustaining the soul, the monks of the order engage in social service in its manifold phases. I have gone into the lowliest quarters of an Indian city and seen some of them at work teaching "untouchables" to rise out of the filth in which they were born. In a mat-covered shed I have stood beside an ochre-robed monk while he cleansed the arm of a patient and gave an injection with a hypodermic needle that had been sterilized with scientific care. In the wards of a hospital in another Indian city monks think nothing of doing work that we in India regard as "menial" and in so regarding it display our degeneracy.

I have liked the Swamis all the better because an "urge" from within led them to equip themselves for the particular endeavour in which they engaged. A sense of self-satisfaction might have kept them from realizing the need for such training. Without this conquest of self they would not have been able to render the maximum service that they were capable of giving.

Not so very long ago I came upon a young member of the Order who was filled with the noble longing to give his best to India's citizens of tomorrow. To prepare himself for that labour of love he had studied all the books on child-welfare that he could get hold of and had gone from one centre to another in the United States of America observing the methods employed, until he felt that he would be able to shoulder similar responsibilities in much different conditions in India, without aid or guidance.

The Swamis engaged in teaching of one kind or another, impressed me likewise. Not only were their hearts in what they were doing, but they had taken the trouble to equip themselves for the task they had undertaken.

IX

Nor are these monks content to plod in the furrow ploughed by others, but they are trying to break fresh ground. Some of them have, for instance, gone away from cities and towns where the amenities of "modern life" are being multiplied, and have taken up their abode in the countryside among the tillers of the soil lacking many of the advantages deemed as elementary in lands more favoured than ours. There they are applying themselves to cultivating the minds of the boys and girls.

Their aim is to dispel the darkness that has enshrouded rural India—another way of saying most of India—but to dispel it in a way that will not glorify the metropolis—provincial or central—in the sight of the lads and lassies and breed in them the desire to participate in the hectic urban joys that often destroy the body as well as the soul. They, on the contrary, strive to awaken in the child-mind an intelligent interest in their surroundings and to train that mind and also the hands to make the soil yield much more than it does today.

Side by side with this mental and physical culture, the character is being

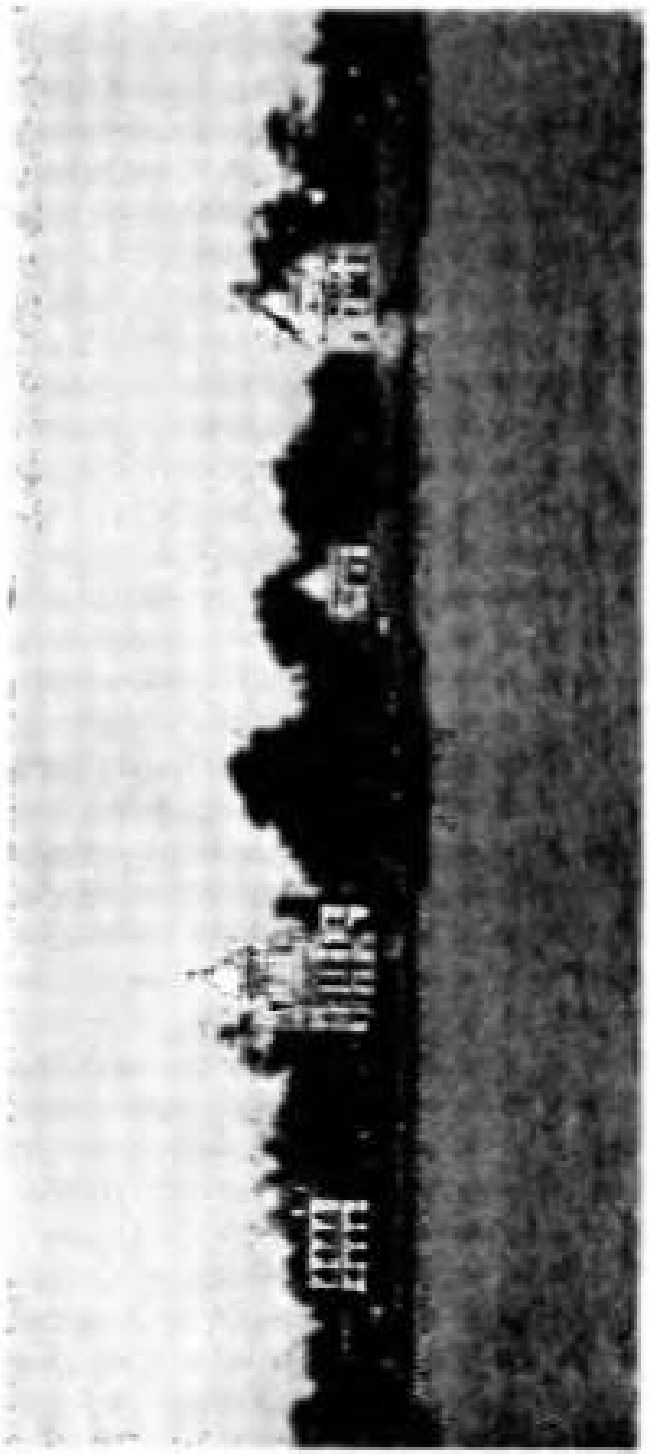
SWAMI BRAHMANANDA
(PRESIDENT FROM START TO 1922)
SWAMI SHIVANANDA
(PRESIDENT 1922—1934)
SWAMI SARADANANDA
(SECRETARY FROM START TO 1927)

SWAMI AKHANDANANDA
THE PRESENT PRESIDENT

SWAMI SUDHANANDA
SECRETARY 1927—1934

SWAMI VIRAJANANDA
THE PRESENT VICE-PRESIDENT

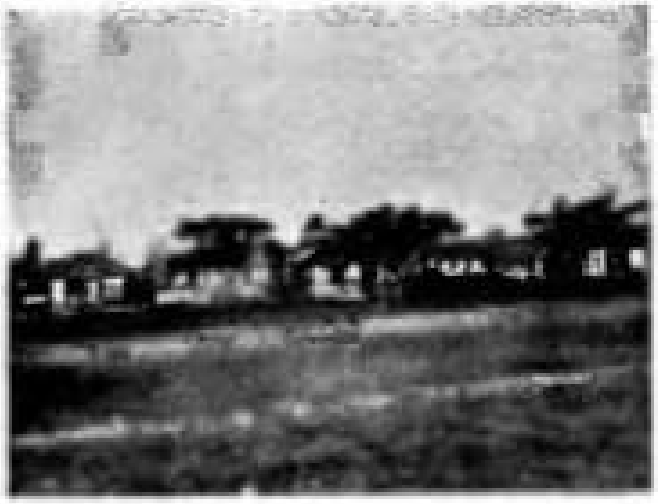
SWAMI VIRAJANANDA
THE PRESENT SECRETARY



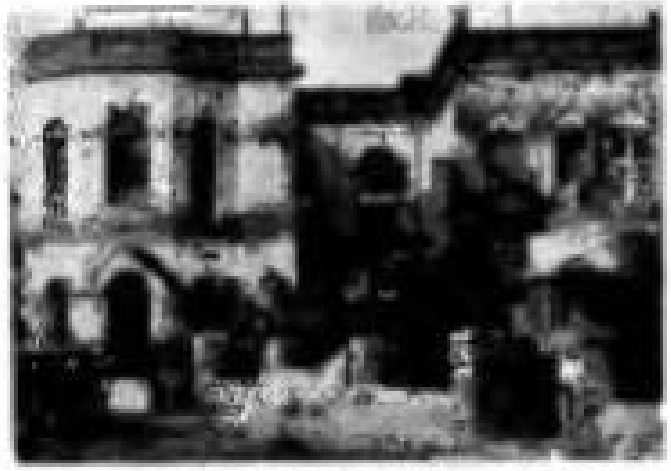
THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, BELUR

Ramakrishna Mission Institutions

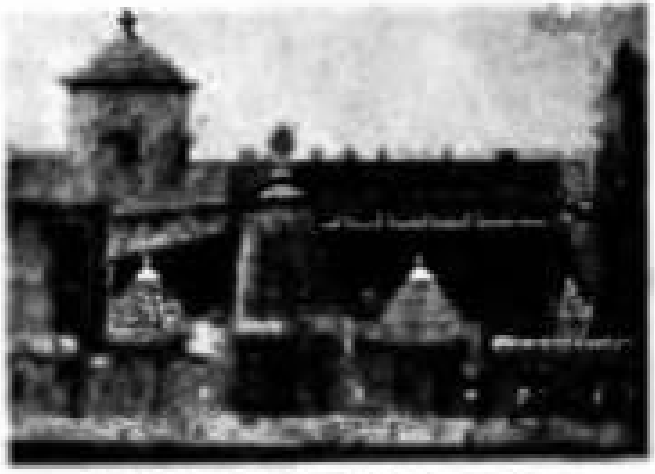
SEVASHRAMA, BENARES



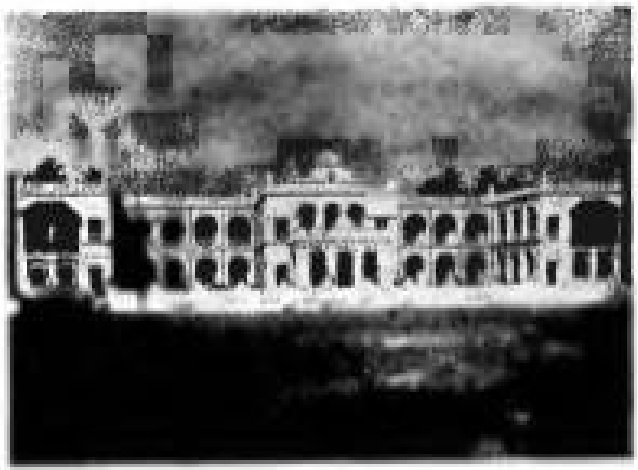
SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON



MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE INSTITUTION, CALCUTTA



SISTER NIVEDITA'S GIRLS' SCHOOL, CALCUTTA



STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS

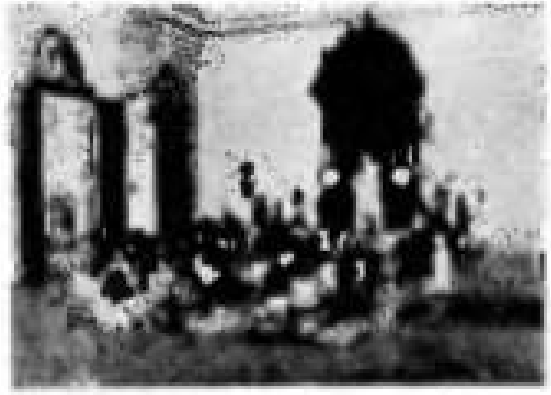
VIDYAPITH, DEOGHAR

STUDENTS' HOME, CALCUTTA

STUDENTS OF THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, BELUR, AT AGRICULTURE

Ramakrishna Mission Institutions

A WARD IN THE SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON



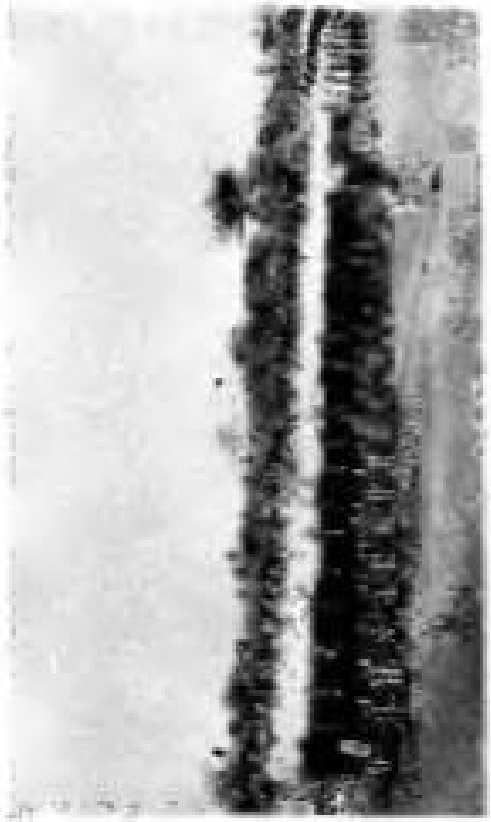
BOYS AT PLAYERS, MADRAS STUDENTS' HOME

BOYS OF A SCHOOL FOR UNTOUCHABLES

GIRLS OF THE SARADA MANDIR, SARISHA, PLAYING AT VOLLEY BALL

RAVAGES OF THE EARTHQUAKE IN ASSAM

SITE SCENE OF THE MISSION OF RELIEF AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE



MAIN HALL OF SARADA MANDIR BOYS, BANGORE

FREE READING ROOM AND LIBRARY, BANGORE

built up. The whole being is, in other words, developed and not merely the mind.

Nor are the adults being neglected. Apart from the education that filters to them through their children who come in living contact with the Swamis in the class-room, the playing field and the garden plot, influence of a much more direct character is exerted and, whenever possible, instruction of a simple but intensely practical character is given to make life more fruitful and brighter.

This is the type of rural upliftment that promises India a rich harvest. I only wish that there were enough Swamis with these enlightened ideas and efficient methods to carry it on in all parts of the Motherland.

Educational work in a city, where attempted, is likewise full-orbed. I recall visiting an institution in a provincial capital, for instance, where not only languages, arts and sciences were being taught, but the inner man and its corporeal tenement simultaneously received attention.

This sort of three-fold culture one has a right to expect from the disciples of the Swami Vivekananda, who carried an awakened soul in a virile body and who had for every one a message charged with potentiality.

X

Thus day-to-day work is supplemented, whenever the need arises, with special effort. When Deva Indra, in his inscrutable wisdom, withholds showers and the seed that has been planted is charred within the fevered womb of Mother Earth—or when that powerful god withdraws the invisible sheet that holds up water in mid-air and the rivers rise boistrously, devastating everything upon which they surge—or when there are growing pains deep beneath the khaki-coloured crust upon which we have to live and move and the streets and structures made by us rock and crash to the ground—or when some dire epidemic scourges a town, a district, or mayhap a province—every Swami at every Ramakrishna Math or Mission who can possibly be released from his ordinary duties rushes to the scene of the catastrophe. With solicitude sustained by love that passeth understanding, he, oblivious of his own needs, succours the suffering, feeds the famishing survivors, rescues the perishing, binds up broken limbs and returns dust —even dust loathsome in the eyes of others—to dust—ashes to ashes.

Go now this minute to the temple of Parthasarathi. . . . Yes, down on your faces before Him, and make a great sacrifice, the sacrifice of a whole life for them, for whom He comes from time to time, whom He loves above all, the poor, the lowly, the oppressed. Vow then to devote your whole life to the cause of the redemption of these three hundred millions, going down and down every day.

—*Swami Vivekananda*

THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT IN THE WEST

By An Observer

The East has ever been the land of Wisdom. And in the East, India has been the eternal power-house of spirituality, for she has devoted all her energies to spiritual pursuit, to the discovery of spiritual laws that govern the internal nature of man. As such, she possesses the secret of life which she holds as a great trust, and she has fulfilled this trust most efficiently whenever the world was in need of a spiritual re-adjustment, by giving of her wisdom to the civilized nations of the world. She has held on to truth caring little for all those things which the rest of the world values so much. This is what has made her great in the eyes of the world from the dawn of civilisation.

And what has she achieved by this untiring and single-minded devotion to Truth? She has discovered the religion of Vedânta which is the oldest religion, yet quite new, and in addition, in complete harmony with modern science.

The West has awakened to the fact that it has much to learn from the East. In the beginning it was a mere intellectual affair, as was seen in the interest taken by persons like Max Müller, Schopenhaur, Deussen and a host of Indologists in the Sacred Books of the East. But it was lacking in that personal touch which is most essential in the imparting of knowledge. This personal touch was established in 1893 when at the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago, the Swami Vivekananda, the foremost disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, for the first time appeared amongst the representatives of the civilized nations of the world, as the representative of the Hindu Religion and Culture. Here was in flesh and blood what the West had till then learnt from books.

His personality made a great impress on all with whom he came in contact. He travelled all over the United States and in the language of the *New York Paper*, "He lectured and in a sense proselytized from Main to California." He toured through the various countries of Europe, especially England and France, expounding the Vedânta philosophy and proclaiming to the nations of the world the potential divinity in man, thus bringing hope to downtrodden humanity. And the West heard him in raptures. After the Parliament of Religions, hundreds of enlightened and liberal-minded persons, Emersonians, Transcendentalists, New-Christians, Universalists and others, either hearing him personally at the Parliament or reading the glowing accounts about him, felt the Swami was indeed another Oriental Master come to them with a new message. The doors were thrown open everywhere he went and men of learning, scientists and philosophers, society people and many clergymen of note came to know him intimately, both in the United States of America and Europe. Some of them accepted the teachings of the Swami while others were very much impressed by his new thought. A great thinker and writer in London, famous for its conservatism, wrote about the effect of his teachings thus: "To not a few of us the words of Swami Vivekananda came as living water to men perishing

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ENTERING THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS, CHICAGO, 1893

of thirst. Many of us had been conscious for years past of that growing uncertainty and despair with regard to religion, which has beset the intellectual life of Europe for half a century. Belief in the dogmas of Christianity had become impossible to us, and we had no tool, such as we now hold, by which to cut away the doctrinal shell from the kernel of Reality in our Faith. To these the Vedânta has given intellectual confirmation and philosophical expression of their own mistrusted intuitions. 'The peoples that walked in darkness have seen a great light.' So that, if it had done no more, merely by enlargement of our religious culture, this system of thought would have been of incalculable benefit to us. But it has done much more." Even a critic of the Swami and the Vedânta Movement in the West admits his influence in the following language: "Yet the basis of his popularity was deeper than all this. He was a man with a great heart who opened up new vistas of expanding life and religion to thousands. In him they saw an international fellowship, especially with the lovely and loving land of India and felt a release from the stuffy chambers of familiar dogma. They thrilled to discover a new and exhaustless spiritual treasure which would ennoble their own religious life. Here was something savoring of ancient Oriental wisdom yet refreshingly new."[1]

The Expansion in U.S.A.

Swami Vivekananda started his permanent work in New York in the winter of 1894. This was the first Vedânta Society started in America. His work grew so rapidly that it became impossible for him to conduct the work single-handed. He sent for Swami Saradananda another disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. At the end of June 1895 the Swami arrived in New York meeting *en route* Swami Vivekananda who was by that time in London. Soon after Swami Saradananda's arrival in New York he was invited to speak at the Greenacre Conference of Comparative Religions after which he was invited to lecture in Brooklyn, New York and Boston. Later he settled in New York and carried on the work of Vedânta till January 1898 when the Swami Vivekananda who had great faith in his organizing genius recalled him to India to organize the Indian work.

Swami Abhedananda, another brother disciple of Swami Vivekananda, who was left in charge of the London work when the Swami returned to India, was asked by him to go to New York and take the place of Swami Saradananda. It was under the able leadership of Swami Abhedananda that the Vedânta Society of New York became organized and incorporated. Soon his masterly interpretations of the philosophy began to draw large crowds. His talks from pulpits of orthodox churches, cultural societies and universities were highly appreciated by all. The growing work of New York necessitated the help of capable assistants and Swami Bodhananda and Swami Paramananda were called in 1906 to help in the work. In 1909, Swami Paramananda established a new Centre in Boston and later in 1928 a second Centre, the Ananda Ashrama at La Crescenta, California, a peace retreat for spiritual culture. In 1926, Swami Akhilananda came to help him in his work but later in 1928 he was asked to start another new Centre in Providence, R. I. His activities in Washington created great interest in Vedânta there and so in 1932 Swami Vividishananda was called

[1] *Hinduism Invades America*, by Wendell Thomas, p. 77.

SWAMI SARADANANDA

SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

SWAMI TURIYANANDA

SWAMI TRIGUNATITA

from San Francisco to start a Centre in the capital of the New World.

In 1912 Swami Abhedananda started an Ashrama at West Cornwall, Connecticut, and Swami Bodhananda assumed charge of the Vedânta Society in New York. During Swami Bodhananda's able leadership a spacious house was purchased by the Society in which it is housed at present.

From 1912 till today the Swami had four Swamis to help him in his work: Swami Raghavananda in 1923, Swami Gnaneswarananda in 1927, Swami Devatmananda in 1930, and Swami Nikhilananda in 1932. Of these, Swami Raghavananda returned back to India in 1927, and Swami Gnaneswarananda was sent in December, 1929, to start a Centre in Chicago, which he was able to inaugurate by January 19, 1930. Swami Devatmananda was asked to take charge of Portland work in 1932, when Swami Prabhavananda who was in charge of Portland work left for Hollywood to start a Centre there. Swami Nikhilananda was asked in 1933 to start a second Centre in New York itself, thus extending the work of the existing Centre to meet the demands of the extensive city. This gives us in short the growth of the Vedânta movement on the Atlantic coast, Ananda Ashrama alone being on the Pacific coast.

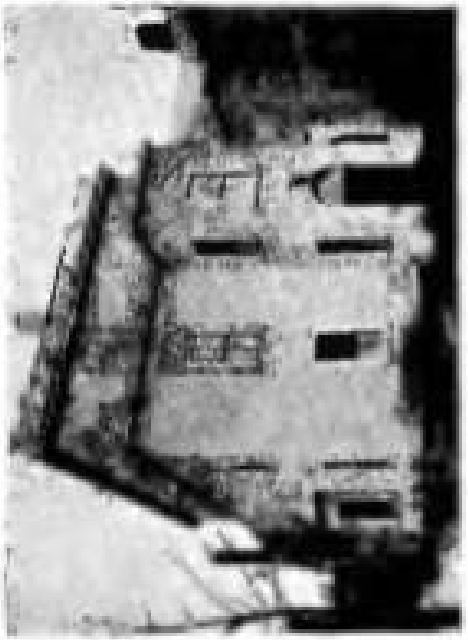
Now to the Pacific coast. Swami Vivekananda visited America for a second time in 1899. Swami Turiyananda accompanied him. Leaving Swami Turiyananda in New York, Swami Vivekananda went to South California. He delivered a series of lectures in Los Angeles, Pasadena, Oakland, Alameda and San Francisco. As a result, several Vedânta Centres were formed but the most important one was at San Francisco, which has continued uninterruptedly since that time. The Swami sent his brother disciple Swami Turiyananda to take charge of the San Francisco work and also of the Santi Ashrama started a few miles from San Francisco in the San Antone Valley. At this place of retreat Swami Turiyananda spent many months of the year in spiritual practices and training of disciples.

After Swami Turiyananda's return to India in 1902, Swami Trigunatita was sent to carry on the San Francisco work. Under his leadership, form and unity were given to the Society and the first Hindu Temple was built in the West which still houses the Society. Here the Swami established a monastery where a number of young men devoted themselves to spiritual pursuits under his training though necessarily continuing to earn their living by various occupations. After his passing away in 1915 Swami Prakashananda who was assisting him for sometime assumed charge and carried on the work with great success till 1927 when the cruel hand of death took him away. After his passing from 1927 till 1932 Swamis Madhavananda, Dayananda and Vividishananda were consecutively in charge. Since 1932 Swami Ashokananda has been in charge of the Society.

Thus the Vedânta movement in U. S. A. has been progressing in two main streams on the Atlantic and the Pacific coasts from New York and San Francisco Centres respectively, the two places of Swami Vivekananda's activities on these two coasts.

Expansion in Other Countries

In 1932 at the request of "El Hogar de Amigos de Buenos Aires" in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentine, South America, Swami Vijayananda was deputed from India for the purpose of expounding the Vedânta philosophy in



THE VEDANTA SOCIETY OF NEBRASKA

THE VEDIC TEMPLE, PORTLAND

THE HINDU TEMPLE, SAN FRANCISCO

THE VEDANTA HOME, MINNEAPOLIS

SWAMI BODHANANDA

SWAMI TURIYANANDA

SWAMI PRAKASHANANDA

SWAMI JNANESHWARANANDA

SWAMI AKHILANANDA

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI DAYANANDA

that distant land. The Swami had to learn Spanish for this purpose. He has been doing excellent work expounding the Indian Wisdom through classes and public lectures, which are heard by as many as five hundred to thousand. On March 17, 1935, the Swami founded the Ramakrishna Ashrama in that city.

At the insistent call of a group of sincere souls, Swami Yatiswarananda was sent to Wiesbaden, Germany, in 1933, for a period of six months, by the Belur Math authorities in India. But the hankering for spirituality in Central Europe is really so great that he has been detained all these years there. During his tours the Swami has come in touch with some of the best Indologists and thinkers in Germany and has visited many universities. He has also visited Ascona in Switzerland, Vienna, and then Cracow in Poland, to speak at the International Moral Educational Congress. Thence he visited Warsaw. He is now seriously thinking of making the base for Central European work somewhere in Switzerland, a neutral country, where people of all countries can come and meet freely and be inspired by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda message in an atmosphere of harmony and goodwill.

In September 1934, Swami Avyaktananda sailed for England with the idea of preaching Vedânta. He began his work in right earnest and has been successful in creating interest which has resulted in the starting of a Vedânta Society in London.

Swami Adyananda at the invitation of some friends was sent to South Africa in 1934. He toured all over Natal and the Eastern Province. Much interest was created in Vedânta everywhere he went. Mayors presided at nearly all the meetings which were well attended by both Indians and Europeans who flocked to listen to the Swami speaking on Indian Culture and Philosophy. He also addressed the students of the Rhodes and Witwatersrand Universities and had an interview with General Hertzog, the Premier.

The Teaching

In short, it is really surprising to note how the Vedânta work is rapidly progressing in the West which shows that it is supplying a great need there. Many are feeling a religious void which is most satisfactorily filled by Vedânta. It is a thing to be noted, however, that Vedânta is not supplanting the religion of the countries, but is broadening the outlook of the people, instilling into them the most universal principles of Religion as distinguished from religions. It is a pleasing sight to see Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Agnostics and Atheists concentrating their minds in the meditation class, on a larger ideal under the guidance of a Hindu. The Swamis help the Christians who come to their lectures and classes to a better understanding of Christ. It is surely a great achievement to have them acknowledge that up to the time when they heard Swamis' interpretation of the significance of the word and life of Christ as being of more vital importance than church doctrines, they had not been able to appreciate the breadth and greatness of Christ's spiritual heritage to mankind.

In this connection the following passage by a correspondent in *New York Times* is significant: "I do not know much about Oriental Religions, but I sometimes go on Sunday afternoons to listen to a Hindu Swami; and strange as it may appear to some of your readers, I find he teaches a very pure and lofty morality, very near akin to that of 'the Sermon on the Mount and sets forth some religious speculations teaching the eternal destiny of the

SWAMI DEVATMANANDA

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA

SWAMI ASHOKANANDA

SWAMI VIJAYANANDA

SWAMI YATISWARANANDA

SWAMI AVYAKTANANDA

A CONGREGATION AT ONE OF THE VEDANTA CENTRES

human soul which are worthy of serious attention. But when I visit some of our so-called Christian Churches in this city, I find the thought so thin and the pomposity so thick, that I usually drop into a quiet doze; whereas the Hindu preacher can keep me awake and furnish me with food for a dreamy meditation afterwards. And this is another reason why I think we should leave the preaching business to the Orientals themselves."

What has India Gained?

To India the Swami Vivekananda's work in the West has been of the greatest importance, for it has raised India and Hinduism in the estimation of the West. It is true a few had preceded the Swami, but these had either a leaning towards alien cultures or spent their energies in exposing the defects of Hinduism. *The Mahratta* writing on the Swami's work after his passing away said: "But none of them succeeded so well as the Swami in pushing the campaign of aggressive Vedantism into the hearts of the Europeans and the Americans. Possibly the Swami came on the scene when the ground was better prepared for him by rationalizing scientists who had suddenly shaken Christian belief, but possibly also the Swami possessed that dash and that intense love of Hinduism," which his predecessors lacked. "Naturally enough, therefore, none of them succeeded in getting a hold over the popular mind, and though they won admiration from Europeans, they could not make Hinduism as much respected as it is today owing to the efforts of Swami Vivekananda."

Thus the Swami has shown that India's destiny in life is not all to beg, but that she has also to give, that she has to go out and conquer the world with her culture which contains lofty and sublime ideals of life and that this self-assertion, the assertion on her supremacy in the higher phase of life must be the very basis of her nationalism. His call has been heard by his countrymen and since his going to the West many Indians of repute have been to the West, carrying the torch of Indian culture. They have changed their methods and instead of going on bending knees they have held their heads erect, proud of their hoary heritage, and have given the message of the Aryan Rishis to the proud West and the West is beginning to shake hands with the East on terms of equality.

What this contact beween the East and he West will lead to, Dr. Lewis G. Janes, Director of the Cambridge Conference, U. S. A. has aptly described as follows: "The walls of demarcation are being broken down. The immemorial superstition which forbade the Hindu to cross the water or leave the soil of India, is already undermined. . . . By this contact, sure to become greater in the coming years, science and material progress are to be married to the hopeful philosophy of the new spiritual awakening, and the two hemispheres are to be united into the higher life—the Universal Brotherhood of man. . . . Science may clasp hands with the loftiest spiritual philosophy, and together they may rationally labour for the conquest of the world."

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE PASSING OF KING GEORGE V

A great and noble king has passed away. The news has come like a shock to his loyal subjects the world over. Not only is the British Empire in tears, for to them it is like a personal calamity, but the whole world mourns his loss, as he had endeared himself to all by his qualities of head and heart.

To King Edward VIII, the new King-Emperor, the Queen-mother and the Royal family we offer our heart-felt condolences in this terrible affliction that has befallen them. May God grant them peace and fortitude to bear it.

King Edward VIII who ascends the throne of his fathers brings to his task personal qualities which has endeared him to his subjects all over the Empire and it is our earnest prayer that the Lord grant him wisdom and long life to fulfil worthily, like the late King, the responsibility that has now fallen on his shoulders.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA CENTENARY

The birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna comes off on 26th February, 1936 and it will be celebrated for one year in all parts in India and abroad with due solemnity between that date and February 1937. To celebrate it in a fitting manner the Ramakrishna Centenary Celebration Committee consisting of influential men of leading and light, has been formed with its headquarters at Belur Math, District Howrah. This committee has drawn up a magnificent and comprehensive scheme to create a permanent memorial and to do all to propagate the message of this great teacher, and to carry out the scheme a strong executive committee and a number of sub-committees have been formed. The scheme in brief runs thus:

(1) A nucleus of a Central Fund under the Ramakrishna Mission will be established with a view to helping forward humanitarian activities such as (a) Relief Work during flood, famine, pestilence, etc., and (b) Mass Education—if possible on vocational and industrial lines. (2) Establishing an Institute of Cultural Fellowship in Calcutta for the promotion of mutual understanding and goodwill among all sections of people in India and abroad. It will have a hall for holding classes and lectures, a library and a reading room. Extension lectures will also be arranged from time to time in different parts of India and abroad. The membership of the Institute will be open to all. (3) Publication of a Centenary Memorial Volume dealing with the evolution of Indian thought and culture in their diverse aspects from the Vedic times, written by distinguished Indian scholars. (4) A centenary Album will be published containing pictures of Sri Ramakrishna and the disciples of the Master. Also it will contain different Centres of the Math and the Mission with explanatory notes. (5) Specially designed Memorial Medallion will be struck to commemorate the Centenary. (6) Erection of a suitable memorial of Ramakrishna at his birth-place, Kamarpukur.

Besides these works of permanent importance a Convention of the monks of the Ramakrishna Order and others interested in the movement, a Convention of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain monks, a Parliament of Religions, a Conference of women admirers and devotees, lectures and essays to propagate the message of Sri Ramakrishna and pilgrimages to important places associated with the life of Sri Ramakrishna are among the other important items in the programme of celebration.

The Centenary Celebrations will have a fitting termination with the opening of the Temple of Sri Ramakrishna at the Belur Math.

The response so far received is very satisfactory and spontaneous. People of different shades of opinion and spheres of activity have enrolled themselves as members. Among the Vice-Presidents of the General Committee there are High Court Judges, Vice-chancellors of Universities, professors, doctors and eminent lawyers.

All over India in important places meetings have been held in which distinguished men have spoken on the life and message of Sri Ramakrishna and emphasized the importance and necessity of celebrating the centenary in a befitting manner. Provincial committees have been formed in all the provinces and they have drawn up their own programmes. The Committee at Delhi is organizing an extensive lecturing tour in

the Punjab and Rajputana the main feature of which will be educative. The provincial committee of C. P. and Berar is very active and the Swami-in-charge is touring round, delivering lectures and raising funds. Messrs. M. S. Aney, Ghanashyam Singha Gupta, M. L. A., Dr. N. B. Khare, Dr. G. S. Patwardhan, Mr. W. R. Puranik (Government Advocate, Nagpur) and other distinguished persons of the province have issued an appeal for the celebration of the Centenary. There was a propaganda tour in the United Provinces. At Allahabad, among others, Pandit Iqbal Narayan Gurtu, Vice-Chancellor of the Allahabad University, Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Usha Nehru, Sir Syed Wazir Hassain and Pt. Hridayanath Kunzru have joined the local Committee and have become President and Vice-Presidents. In Benares itself three committees have been formed of which mention may be made of the Benares Hindu University Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Committee with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya as President, Prof. A. B. Dhruva, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Pt. Pramathanath Tarkabhushan as Vice-Presidents and Dr. U. C. Nag as Secretary. The Sannyasis Sangha too has formed a committee of it own. At Prayag, during the time of the recent Ardhakumbha Mela a public meeting under the auspices of the Religious Convention Sub-Committee was held with Revered Swami Jayendra Puriji in the chair. Some of the leading Mandaleswars were present. Eloquent tributes were paid to the greatness of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna "who by his marvellous life of spiritual reliastion has not only brought back new life to Sanatana Dharma but reestablished it in its pristine glory and held the same before the eyes of the people of both the hemispheres."

In Bombay, Poona and Nasik arrangements are being made for the celebration. Sardar S. C. Mudaliar is taking active part in the work, and Mr. R. G. Pradhan, ex-M. L. C. is working for its success in Nasik. Swami Adyananda is touring in Gujarat and Kathiawar and organizing the celebrations in these two provinces.

The activities of the Foreign Celebration sub-committee is very encouraging. The committee came in touch with the distinguished men and women of the Foreign countries who have enlisted themselves as members of the General Committee. Swami Yatiswarananda who is in Germany is coming in touch personally and by correspondence with noted people and wherever he goes he is organizing the celebrations. Many works of Swami Vivekananda have been translated into German, French and Swiss which will be a permanent work. The different centers in America which number nearly a dozen are very active and arrangements have already been made in New York and other places. Swami Avyaktananda, who opened a centre in London only very recently, has also formed a committee in London with some of Swami Vivekananda's friends and admirers. The Celebration Committee in Poland among other things has proposed to issue special memorial stamps on the occasion of the celebrations.

The proposed Centenary Volume—"The Cultural Heritage of India" is in progress and it will be published soon in two parts of about thousand pages each. There will be about ninety articles, written by eminent scholars representing about fifteen Universities of India, on a variety of subjects ranging from the Pre-Vedic period to the present time. Besides the Volume will contain articles on science and art and the Ramakrishna Movement which will form the concluding portion of it. Concession is given to those who register their orders before the book comes out.

VIVEKANANDA ANNIVERSARY

DELHI

The public meeting in connection with the celebration of the 74th birthday anniversary of Srimat Swami Vivekananda was held on Sunday 26th January at the assembly hall of the Municipal Board High School, New Delhi, under the presidency of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, K.C.I.E. Swami Vivekananda.

Sir Ramaswami observed that in his early years he had the privilege to come across Swami Vivekananda on the eve of his momentous journey to America. It was a matter of profound revelation to him to listen to Swami Vivekananda. India was then in the cross road under Western influence, forgetful of her past and with no hope for the future except the awakening caused here and there by the Theosophical Society. A Hindu had then to apologise for his existence—so much overcome he was by the spirit of inferiority complex. Vivekananda, who imbibed the culture of the East and the West, came not a day too soon to be the torch-bearer of India's sacred

heart. So much enamoured of the West the people were then that the Swamiji rightly conceived that to revivify his own countrymen he must obtain response first from the West. So the Hindu monk first captivated the West with India's spiritual grandeur before he could bring inspiration to his own countrymen to have faith in her past glory and to remember that the cosmic energy always comes from the East as the sun rises in the East. He was one of the prime disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, a great soul which has always ornamented and characterised Indian life. To describe Ramakrishna is a difficult task—he was the genial descendant of those sages who realized the oneness of humanity. He was in the comity of Buddha, Kabir, Nanak, Ramanuja and the progenitor of the Jain religion. Swami Vivekananda preached what Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa realized in his life. He taught that our religion was ecclectic—each man is out for himself for his own salvation. His faith in the Vedānta was so comprehensive that a social or a political worker even may find inspiration from his message. He is essentially a bridge between the old and the new India.

Mr. N. C. Mehta, I.C.S., briefly referred to his meteoric career and observed that he was the harbinger of the light that bathed the valley of Hindustan. When the star of India was at its lowest an attempt to carry the message of Indian civilization abroad almost bordered on madness. But with the resourcefulness of his extraordinary and dynamic energy Swami Vivekananda made the impossible possible and imbued with the spirit of Sakkya Muni, he raised the edifice of India's spirituality on a sound bed rock in America. He was not keen for his own salvation, but for the salfation of the myriads of the poor in the country round him. He set his face against sectarianism and opened his order to everybody. His conception of Hinduism was all-comprehensive. Nations have also their cycles not only in material glory but also in spiritual achievement. The monk of Bengal, a country practically of emotions could successfully appeal to the hearts of England and America for the happy combination in him of unlimited energy and emotion. His was truly a life of dedicaton, work and activity. Although he left his mortal garb 38 years ago the flame is still aglow to bring warmth and sunshine to a despondent heart. The wrangling of creed will be hushed if we can imbibe the spirit of his message.

Rangoon

Rangoon, Jan. 23.

The seventy-fourth birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated during the week end with great eclat in the Raja Reddiar School Hall with Sir Arthur Page, Chief Justice of Burma, in the chair. There was a big gathering of several hundreds of people from all communities. Lady Page was present.

The meeting commenced with the saying of prayers to the accompaniment of violin by the girls of the Reddiar High School. Sir Arthur, in his opening speech, said that Swami Vivekananda was a robust spiritual man and his teachings were so beautiful and wholesome that India should go ahead of bringing them to mind with great benefit. The Swami founded an organisation which was not only good because it taught to become unselfish, but also great as it translated into practice what it taught.

"It has been a great privilege," remarked the honourable president "to be connected in more ways than one with the Mission's activities in Burma. The moral teaching and spiritual precepts of Vivekananda have come to Burma across the Bay and local people can never repay for all they have done for them. I do hope that there will never come a time when this anniversary will be forgotten but year after year it will gain strength and courage."—Associated Press.