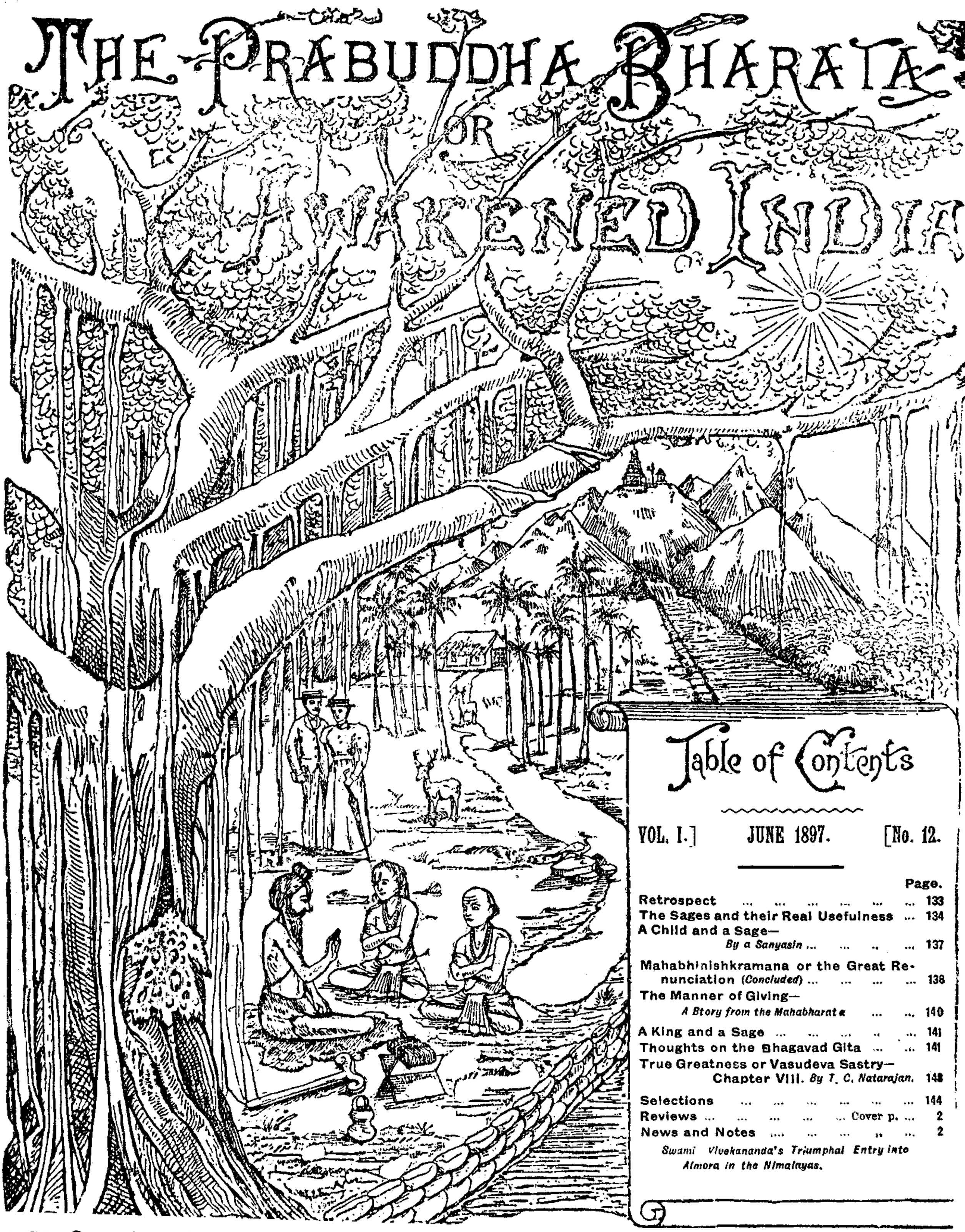
THE PRABUDDHA BHARATA

OR

AWAKENED INDIA



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VOL. I.] JUNE 1897. [No. 12.

Reviews.

The Dawn :—a monthly magazine devoted to religion, philosophy and science (41, Lansdowne Road, Bhawanipoor, Calcutta: annual subscription for India and Ceylon Rs. 4). The object or policy of the journal is 'to make a special study of Hindu life, thought and faith in a spirit of appreciation, while fully alive to the usefulness and the necessity of the existence of all other systems secular or religious, Eastern or Western.' The first two numbers (March and April) are full of interesting matter. There are two well written articles on the 'Situation in India.' The situation is on the whole well explained and the issue directly and emphatically stated and a further and more detailed discussion of it is promised. The article entitled 'What is Truth' is interesting. The question is discussed in the light of Sankara's definition 'that which is ever permanent in one mode of being, is the Truth.' In an article on the Vedanta Sutras the writer joins issue with the hasty conclusion of Prof. Thibaut that recognised authorities in Vyasa's time denied the doctrine on which the system of Sankara hinges, *viz.*, the doctrine of the absolute identity of the individual soul with the Brahman. Judging from the first two numbers, we have no hesitation in saying that the magazine promises to be a useful addition to the existing number of journals in the field of religion and philosophy and we heartily wish it every success. Our desire is that the present number of such journals should be multiplied tenfold and the philosophy of the Upanishads studied and expounded in a variety of ways and from newer and newer standpoints.

News and Notes.

The Swami Vivekananda's Triumphal Entry into Almora in the Himalayas.—Under strict medical orders to take rest in the mountains, the Swami Vivekananda, after spending the last two months at Darjeeling, has now gone to Almora, N.-W.-P., meeting with a most cordial, unofficial welcome at Lucknow (where he remained one night) on the way. At Kathgodam on Sunday, he was met by several Almora admirers and one of his English disciples, who accompanied him on the ride through the hills to Almora. At Lodea, close to Almora, on Tuesday afternoon, there was a large crowd of citizens waiting to convey him the final part of the journey, and at their request the Swami mounted a horse dressed in handsome trappings and headed a procession into the town. It seemed that as the bazar was reached, every citizen of the place joined the company, so dense was the crowd that some difficulty was experienced in leading the Swami's horse through. Thousands of Hindu ladies from tops of the houses and windows showered flowers and rice on the Swamiji as he passed along. In the centre of the town, a section of the interesting old fashioned bazar street had been turned into a pandal capable of holding three thousand people, decorated cloth stretched across from side to side of the street forming the roof, and the ends being decorated with festoons of flowers, banners, &c. In addition, every house displayed lights till the town appeared to be a blaze of light, and the native music with the constant cheers of the crowd, made the entire scene most remarkable, even to those who had accompanied Swamiji through the whole of his journey from Colombo.

Naturally with from four to five thousand crowding inside and outside of the pandal, and with excitement in full play, the proceedings of the formal welcome were brief. Pandit Jwala Dutt Joshi read first a Hindi address of welcome on behalf of the Reception Committee of which the following is a translation :—

"Great-Souled one. Since the time we heard that, after gaining spiritual conquest in the West, you had started from England for your fatherland, India, we were naturally desirous of having the pleasure of seeing you. By the grace of the Almighty, that auspicious moment has at last come. The saying of the great poet and the prince of Bhaktas, Tulsidas—"A person who intensely loves another is sure to find him" has been fully realized to-day. We have assembled here to welcome you with sincere devotion. You have highly obliged us by your kindly taking so much trouble in paying a visit to this town again. We can hardly thank you enough for your kindness. Blessed are you! Blessed is the revered Gurudeva who initiated you into *Yoga*. Blessed is the land of Bharata where, even in this fearful *Kaliyuga*, there exist leaders of Aryan families like yourself. Even at an early period of life, you have by your simplicity, sincerity, character, philanthrophy, severe discipline, conduct, and the preaching of knowledge, acquired that immaculate fame throughout the world, of which we feel so much proud. In truth you have accomplished that difficult task, the task of proving to the learned people of England and America the superiority of the ancient Indian creed over other Religions, which no one ever undertook in this country since the days of *Shri Shankaracharya*."

And after referring in grateful terms to the unselfish labours of the Swami, both in the Parliament of Religions and afterwards in America and England, he proceeded to say :—

"We have heard with great pleasure that you intend establishing a *Math* (Monastary) here and we sincerely pray that your efforts in this direction may be crowned with success. The great *Sankaracharya* also after his spiritual conquest, established a *Math* in the sacred *Badrikashrama* in the Himalayas for protection of the ancient religion. Similarly, if your desire is also fulfilled, India will be greatly benefitted. By the establishment of the *Math*, we Kamaonees will derive special spiritual advantages and we will not see the ancient religion gradually disappearing from our midst.

From time immemorial, this part of the country has been the land of asceticism. The greatest of the Indian sages have passed their time in piety and asceticism in this land, all of which have become a thing of the past. We earnestly hope that by the establishment of the *Math* you will kindly make us realize it again. It was this sacred land which enjoyed the celebrity all over India of having true religion, *Karma*, discipline, and fair dealing, all of which seem to have been decaying by the efflux of time. And we hope that by your noble exertions this land will revert to its ancient religious state.

We cannot adequately express the joy we have felt at your arrival here. May you live long, enjoying perfect health and leading a philanthropic life. May your spiritual powers be ever on the increase so that through your endeavours the unhappy state of India may soon disappear".

Pandit Hari Ram Pande followed with a second address from the Swami's host, Lala Badri Sah and a Pandit read an equally appreciative Sanskrit address.

The Swami made a brief reply only. He said :—"This is the land of dreams of our fore-fathers, in which was born Pârvati, the mother of India. This is the holy land, where every ardent soul in India wants to come at the end of its life and to close the last chapter of its mortal career here. There on the tops of the mountains of this blessed land, in the depths of its caves, on the banks of its rushing torrents, have been thought out the most wonderful thoughts, a little bit of which has drawn so much admiration even from foreigners, and which have been pronounced by the most competent of judges to be incomparable. This is the land which, since my very childhood, I have been dreaming of, in which to pass my life, and, as all of you are aware, I have attempted again and again to live here forever, and, although the time was not ripe, and I had work to do and was whirled outside of this holy place, yet it is the hope of my life to end my days somewhere in this father of mountains, where Rishis lived, where philosophy was born. Perhaps, my friends, I shall not be able to do it, in the same way that it was my plan before—that silence, that unknowingness, would also be given to me, yet I sincerely pray and hope, and almost believe, my last days will be here of all places on earth. Inhabitants of this holy land, accept my gratitude for the kind praise that has fallen from you for my little work in the West. But, at the same time my mind does not want to speak of these works, either in the East or in the West. As peak after peak of this father of mountains began to appear before my sight, all those propensities to work, that ferment that had been going on in my brain for years, seemed to quiet down, and, instead of talking about what had been done, and what was going to be done, the mind reverted to that one eternal theme which the Himalayas

always teach us, that one theme which is reverberating in the very atmosphere of the place, the one theme the murmur of whose dreams I hear, the one thing that I hear in the rushing whirlpools of its rivers—renunciation. "*Sarvambhoti bhayânvitam bhuvi hrinam bairâgya meveibhayam*.—everything in this life is fraught with fear. It is renunciation that makes one fearless." Yes, this is the land of renunciation. The time will not permit me, and the circumstances are not proper, to speak to you fully. I shall have to conclude, therefore, by pointing out to you that these Himalayas stand for that renunciation, and the grand lesson we shall ever teach unto humanity will be renunciation. As our fore-fathers used to be attracted towards it in the latter days of their lives, so strong souls from all quarters of this earth, in time to come, will be attracted to this father of mountains, when all this fight between sects, and all those differences in dogmas, will not be remembered any more, and quarrels between your religion and my religion will have vanished altogether, when mankind will understand that there is but one eternal religion, and that is the perception of the Divine within, and the rest is mere froth; such ardent souls will come here knowing that the world is but vanity of vanities, knowing that every thing is useless except the worship of the Lord and the Lord alone. Friends, you have been very kind to allude to one idea I have yet in my brain, to start a centre in the Himalayas and perhaps I have sufficiently explained myself why it should be so, why above all, this is the spot which I want to select as one of the great centres to teach this universal religion. These mountains are associated with the best memories of our race, if these Himalayas are taken away from the history of religious India, there will be very little left behind. Here, therefore, must be one of those centres, not merely of activity, but more of calmness, of meditation, and of peace, and I hope some day to realise it. I hope also to meet you at other times, and have better opportunities of talking to you. For the present let me thank you again for all the kindness that has been shown to me, and let me take it as not only kindness shown to me in person, but as representing religion which may never leave our hearts. May we always remain as pure as we are at the present moment, and as enthusiastic for spirituality as we are just now."

The proceedings closed with frequently renewed cheers for the Swami, who was the guest that night of Lala Badri Sah.—*The Advocate.*

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Prabuddha Bhârata

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ब्रह्मविदाप्नोतिपरम्.

"He who knows the Supreme attains the highest."—*Tait. Upa.* II. 1. 1.

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Retrospect.

The present number concludes the first volume of the *Prabuddha Bhârata* and it is now time enough to ask what we have learnt from it. Thus questioning ourselves, we find we have learnt many things. Indeed, even its short history is remarkably full of lessons and one of the most important which we, *i.e.*, those who are connected with it, have learnt and which we shall do well to carry with us to the very end of our lives is this—sincerity of purpose and purity of heart work wonders even in this 'iron age.' We had no grand ambitions when we started the journal such as bettering the world and so on. All that we wanted was to improve ourselves, and we had a conviction that what is good for us may at the same time be useful to some others. Nor had we any such motives as fame, position, money, &c. The idea of starting the journal struck us providentially, as it were, and whatever may be its fate in the future, we should be eternally grateful to God for having allowed us to enter into the work with singularly pure hearts. We were at the time perfectly free from both *rajasic* self confidence and *tamasic* ambition. In such a happy state which we shall ever remember with pleasure, we sought and obtained permission from where such permission should be obtained and 'commenced operations.' What success has attended us is due entirely to the blessings we received and the purity of our hearts. And that success has been of no small measure. On every side we were 'crammed' as it were, with sympathy, and everywhere, men—for whom we cannot be sufficiently thankful—identified themselves with the cause *quite unsolicitedly* and worked for its success—so that at the very starting we had 1,500 subscribers and every month the number has been steadily increasing and now it stands at about 4,500. Our journal thus happens to be the most widely circulated monthly in all India. The first two issues have had to be reprinted and we have a very limited number of copies of the other issues though we printed 5,000 copies of every number.

Besides such patronage from the public at large, we were *unsolicitedly* favored with expressions of encouragement and appreciation by several eminent personages, whose words are always entitled to our respect.

Mr. H. Dharmapala, General Secretary, Mahabodhi Society wrote, for instance, "All hail to the *Prabuddha Bhârata*. I send herewith one pound sterling in the name of the Mahabodhi Society for the *Prabuddha Bhârata*. May its mellifluous fragrance purify the materialistic atmosphere of fallen India! Your efforts will be crowned with success and *Prabuddha Bhârata* will surely awaken the lethargic sons of "Bharat Varsha." The following were some of the opinions with which we were favoured :—

MRS. BESANT—"I think it is admirably written and edited and should be most useful to our beloved India."

THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT—"The ideal is beautifully expressed in the leading article as 'one, where religious toleration, neighbourly charity, and kindness even to animals form the leading features, where the fleeting concerns of life are subordinated to the eternal, where man strives not to externalize but to internalize himself more and more, and the whole social organism moves, as it were, with a sure instinct towards God.' The method of introducing this ideal adopted by the paper is a novel one, it is principally in the form of parables, or short stories embodying some principle or philosophical idea;..... It is a pleasant attractive form of presenting truth, and in these novel reading days will command more attention than the gist of it would if presented unclothed."

HENRY B. SMALL, late Secretary, Agricultural Department, Canada—"I think that *Awakened India* is a wonderful issue and full of material that should be valued alike by Christians and all others."

COULSON TURNBULL, PH. D.—"I am very much pleased with the *little gem* and when I return home (Chicago) shall try to assist its sale."

In conducting the journal we always keep in our minds the advice Swâmi Vivekânanda gave to us at the very ontset :—"Avoid all attempts to make the journal scholarly: it will slowly make its way all over the world I am sure. Use the simplest language possible and you will succeed. The main feature should be the teachings of *principles* through stories. Do not make it metaphysical at all... Go on bravely. Do not expect success in a day or a year. Always hold on to the highest. Be steady... Be obedient and eternally faithful to the cause of truth, humanity and your country and you will move the world. Remember it is the person, the life, which is the secret of power, nothing else..." It shall be our endeavour in future also to strictly adhere to his advice, more fully even than we have been able to do this year. It was suggested by some of our subscribers that the form of the journal should be changed. Certainly, it will be a convenience if it could be published in a book form. This, however, does not seem to be possible just now; for if the

matter we give in our journal were to be accommodated in a book form, it will require at least 36 pages; and including advertisements and all, the pamphlet will swell to forty pages and then it cannot go by the quarter-anna privilege system. Besides, more paper will be required and then the nominal subscription of Rs. 1-8 will hardly cover the printing and establishment charges. So the subscription will have to be raised which many may not agree to. If however we get double the number of subscribers we now have, we shall be able to issue the journal in a book form without raising the subscription. It all depends on the support we get. If every one of our subscribers would not only register his own name for the second year, but also secure at least one new subscriber, which could easily be done if only one has the mind for it, the journal would surely appear in a book form.

No pains will be spared to make the journal more interesting, instructive and readable than even it is at present, and arrangements are being made to secure the assistance of well-known writers on the Vedânta and, God willing, the journal will be improved in every way. All that we can say is, that we shall work with zeal and sincerity, no matter what the result might be. "To work alone we have the right but not to the fruit thereof." To work without motives, and without caring for results—this is our ideal, and may He who is both inside and outside us, who without eyes sees everything and without ears hears everything and whom the Vedas proclaim to be our own Self, enable us to work without self-conceit and false ambitions; may He allow us the privilege of being pure in heart and good in all we do and say; and may we work—so long as we have to work—without forgetting that all work in this world is enbjective more than objective and helps ourselves rather than others.

The Sages and their Real Usefulness.

Apart from our inability even to comprehend it, union with Godhead, absolute identity with the Brahman, which numberless sages have realised, both in our country and elsewhere, is distinctly our destination and the highest that will surely fall to our lot at the end of our often wearisome pilgrimage in the world. To regard as the ideal anything lower than this, such as 'getting leave to work' and the like, is really to limit our vision and hinder our growth. 'Better aim at a lion and miss it, than hunt a jackal and catch it' is the proverb.

We have seen what the true ideal is, but in these days, the philosophy of the shopkeeper is so much in the upper hand that it is not enough that a thing is true, it must at the same time be useful. Utility is the guardian angel of the Society, the tutelary goddess at its gate, and even Truth has to bend her knees before her and beg for admission. This surely is not a good feature. Is it not enough for a man's being honored that he has found out and reached the Truth? Should it also be proved that he is of some use to this dream-world? Homer, we may be sure, never troubled himself about this question of practical utility or to use a familiar phrase 'earthly use' when he composed his Iliad. A bag of rice is of more 'earthly use' than the statue of Venus; is that the standard? If so, to trade in liquors is certainly more profitable than reading the Upanishads, and to convert our temples into factories and workshops may be a useful reform. Utility! it is the merchant's metaphysics, and when any nation trusts to it for guidance, we may be sure its decline is close at hand.

Even according to the utilitarian standard however, the idle sage is of greater value to the society than many an active reformer. In the first place, that a nation is capable of producing a sage is the surest sign of its vitality. It is not every country that can produce sages. A sage is no journeyman's work of Nature. 'Of thousands of mortals, one strives for wisdom, and of thousands of those that so strive, one knows Me according to my true nature,' says Śri Krishna (Gîtâ VII. 3). The sage then is the ripest, the sweetest fruit of the tree of the universe, and woe to the man who speaks lightly of him. It has been very wisely observed, 'When the 'self,' as we understand it, is annihilated—when the soul has been able to endure the transcendent vision of itself as Deity—when difference no longer exists, and the one is merged in the all, the storehouse of spiritual energy is thereby replenished, and all humanity receives an impulse that raises them a step nearer the Divine union also—nay, further, the Divine impulse after passing through man descends to vivify the lower creation. The whole universe is thrilled by it!' To develop ourselves to the utmost is therefore the highest service that we can ever do to the universe. 'The sympathetic relief of physical suffering is well; the teaching by which man's mental horizon is widened, and man's moral nature is elevated, is better. They both form but worthy preludes to the higher goal. But best of all is to *become* the spiritual pabulum by which humanity lives.'

A sage, a genuine sage, not the Birmingham article we so often meet with in these degenerate days, but a man of sterling worth and wisdom, like Vasista, Vyâsa, Śuka, Vâlmîki and others,—is one of those rare phenomena, in the occurrence of which, the whole universe becomes filled with joy. That the gods danced in the sky and filled the earth with showers of flowers, that the winds blew sweet odours, and the trees put forth flowers, even out of season, when the great Râmas, Buddhas, Christs and Krishnas were born, are not mere poetic fancies; they all embody the truth, though in a figurative way, that the universe becomes thrilled with joy at the birth of its greatest saviours. One atom can never move without dragging all the rest of the world along with it, and no man can ever become a sage, therefore, without proportionately raising the whole world. The highest

service that we can ever do to the world is, therefore, to become sages.

India was at its best, at the time of its greatest sages. The world has yet to see another court like that of Janaka, the royal sage of Videha. Some of the most prosperous and best governed kingdoms of the world flourished in the times of Vyâsa, and Vâlmîki. Ikshvâku, Raghu, Daśaratha, Râma, Bali, Dharmaputra, Śibi, Mândhâta, Parikshit, these and many other kings of undying renown were contemporaries of our rishis. The Vedas abound in astronomical allusions and there were few sciences unknown to the seers of the Upanishads which have been discovered hy modern nations. Even the art of war seemed to have attained a wonderful degree of perfection in those remote days. It is foreign to our present purpose to enter into the history of ancient India, but what is claimed is, that the palmiest days of our poor country were in those remote ages when the Upanishads were first composed, and when the country was saturated with the spirit of those mighty utterances, and filled with sages who lived as the personal embodiment of the truths contained in them.

A sage is, indeed, the surest guarantee for a nation's life and strength. A nation may lie dormant and apparently dead, but the noose of Yama will never fall upon it so long as there is left in it one sage, one perfected man alive. Whatever may be the present condition of our country, however helpless and impotent it may appear, there can be no cause for despair until its sage-producing capacity has not wholly gone from it. So, this is the test for a nation's greatness—has it produced any sage, any great adorable character? If it has not, its prosperity will be short-lived like the wealth of a thief. Many a great empire has tumbled down without leaving any trace behind and without the possibility of ever reviving, solely for want of spiritual strength, for want of inspiring traditions and ever enduring spiritual ideals; and the curious phenomenon is that while so many nations have come and gone, India the oldest of them all, stands in the midst of their sad wreck which history unfolds to view, still young and vigorous though so old, with seemingly endless capacity for producing, if need be, newer and newer sets of saints, sages, warriors, kings and poets and blessed with a strange sort of virginity like the daughter of Yayâti in Mahâbhârata, who, the moment a child was born to her, could become a virgin again and thus bring forth any number of children without losing her youth. And the only explanation for this wonderful phenomenon is that it owns the *amritakalaśa* (the fountain of life)—the Upanishads, and that its soil has been, times without number, blest by the footprints of the mighty lords of creation who—such was the strength of their self-realisation—could destroy, as it were, by one glance the countless multitudes of worlds above and below, saying, Discard shall we, as a vessel of filth, the whole macrocosm and the microcosm' (Adhyâtma Upa.). What we here speak is history reliable and exceedingly instructive. And in the light of this great fact, the highest service which a true son of India can do to it is, not to reform it after the model infant nations not yet past even *Bâlârishta*, the ills of infancy, nor to try to revive old institutions, old sacrifices and old rituals, thereby forcing the country backward by thousands of years, but to develop oneself to the utmost and become a grand sage of the old rishi-type. This is the highest service imaginable at this juncture; if this were not possible, the next best is to prepare the country for the appearance of such sages by cleansing it of the innumerable shams and superstitions that now linger in and corrupt it. And when the sages come, not as now, here and there rarely, but in large numbers, the whole country will fully awake like the serpent-bound army of Râma at the sight of Garuda and then will be seen revived in tenfold grandeur the glories of ancient India.

When the sages come, with them will come reformers, workers, saints, poets and others, for, all these are really the servants of those sages. They merely render into deeds the thoughts of these latter.

As Swâmi Vivekânanda rightly says, 'Even the Buddhas and the Christs are but second-rate men; the greatest men of the world have passed away unknown. These highest ones silently collect ideas and the others, Buddhas and Christs, go from place to place preaching and working. The highest men are calm, silent and unknown. They are the men who really know the power of thought. They are sure that even if they go into a cave and close up the door, simply think five thoughts and pass away, these five thoughts will live through eternity. They will penetrate through the mountains and cross oceans and travel through the world and will enter into some brain and raise up some man, who will give expression to these five thoughts." Such is the power of the idle sage.

Another way in which the sage does good to the world is by the silent power of his example. In our hasta to do, we often forget the value of example. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that character is formed more by the silent influence of examples which steals on one than by the training which one actually receives.

The skies that speak not, the silent hills, the seas, 'vast, voiceful and mysterious,' the silent influence of surroundings, and in fact all nature which suggests more than speaks, these do more for us than the books we read and the words we hear. The voice of silence is more valuable than the voice of speech. What is said, teaches less than what is left unsaid, and the highest teaching so beautifully symbolised in the Chinmudra scene under the banyan tree, is silence (*mau-*

na). The world really owes its best to men who were content to be, rather than ambitious to do. The reforms of men like Râmânuja, have created results which are just the reverse of what their large hearts aspired to bring about, while the hold of the seers of the Upanishads on the world is ever on the increase. Let us not however be misunderstood. Every country owes much to its active workers, but the best in every country is due to those mighty men who lived more than worked, who worshipped more than served.

Then again, work here is always subjective rather than objective, for, as has been well said, the world is like a dog's curly tail and can never be thoroughly mended. In helping others therefore, we really help ourselves and the converse cannot but be true, for we cannot help ourselves without at the same time helping others. In the earlier stages of individual evolution, for instance in Karma-Yoga, the truth of this is self-evident, but it is no less true in the later stages, Bhakti-Yoga, Râja-Yoga and Gnâna-Yoga. What is really good for us, must necessarily be good for the universe, for the part is not opposed to the whole. Each of us has a well-defined and necessary place in the economy of the universe; we are members of it and when we grow, the world also grows with us. The world may be likened to a big tree putting forth leaves, flowers and fruits. Just as no single fruit can ripen without the whole tree ripening in proportion, so our advancement necessarily means the advancement of the whole universe. Therefore *being* necessarily means *doing* and the highest life is the highest service.

It has been very wisely observed that 'the state in which the rulers are most reluctant to govern is best and most quietly governed, and the state in which they are most willing is the worst.' This beautiful observation of Plato involves a precious truth which may well be extended to other departments of activity than governing a state. For instance, it may be said that the teacher who is most anxious to teach, often teaches little, while he who has no idea of teaching, often teaches best. The Upanishads, for example, came from men who were not in the least ambitious of assuming the rôle of teachers and from whose minds the distinctions of teacher and the taught, had been completely wiped out. These ancient seers, who have given to the world the richest legacy it has and at whose feet numberless generations of men of all creeds and countries have sat and will sit till the very end of the world, never communicate a single truth, however simple, as if they were authors of it. Śuka learnt it from Vyâsa, Vyâsa learnt it from Nârada, Nârada learnt it from Prajâpati, Prajâpati learnt it from Vishnu and so on *ad infinitum*. Now-a-days every man passes for an original writer, if he could steal a few sentences from others, and the more one steals without acknowledgment, the more is one original, and all of us are teachers and philosophers! This is the difference between teaching and teaching. So in doing also, those who are anxious, do little, while those who have no ambition for active service, turn out to be our greatest benefactors. Unconscious work, *i.e.*, work for which the author takes no credit is always the best, just as the Upanishads which are *apaurushêya* (impersonal). Therefore did Jesus say 'Let not your left hand know what your right hand giveth.' To fancy that 'every flower enjoys the smell it gives' is an unholy sentiment and has its inspiration from our own littleness which will never allow us to do a good thing without getting vain of it —a littleness so common that the poet says 'Pride is the last infirmity of noble minds' and for which the 'absolute and final' cure is to know that what work is done is done by Prakriti (Nature) and that the A'tman, which alone really is and which we ourselves are, is eternal, infinite and actionless.

Though the sage is under no compulsion to do Karma, it does not follow that he never does Karma. Says Śri Krishna, 'I myself Arjuna, have not in the three regions of the universe anything which is necessary for me to perform, nor anything to obtain, which has not been obtained; and yet I live in the performance of moral duties. If I were not vigilantly attentive to these duties, all men would presently follow my example.' (Gîtâ III, 22 and 23.) In the same way the *gnâni* also, though he has nothing to gain by the performance of Karma, still works for the benefit of the world. Indeed, he lives solely for the good of the world and his whole life is a voluntary dedication to the service of the suffering humanity. But for such sacred and unselfish dedication, where should we have been? All the world's scriptures, those eternal books without which the world of man would have been no better than a forest infested with wild beasts, are, to use a Vedic expression, the breath of sages. And in India, our everything we owe to these sages, not merely the scriptures but even the sciences including that of war. The very rivers and mountains of our land, though partly a gift of nature, came to us through our sages who have invested them, each in proportion to their natural importance, with a wealth of traditions and a halo of glory and made them so different from the rivers and mountains of other countries.

One most noteworthy feature with regard to these sages is, that whatever they do, bears on it the impress of truth and eternity, and is most far-reaching and permanent in its results. Take for instance the Upanishads, the authors—who they were God alone knows—say again and again with regard to their conclusions. 'This is truth'; 'this has been established'; 'this has been declared', 'we have heard it told' and so on. And these conclusions have stood the test of ages and are more unshakable than the Himalayas. Age after age their

empire widens and they seem to have been permanently tied up with the world. Contrast with them the conclusions of modern philosophers, philologists, ethnologists and even scientists. In these days the longest life for a theory seems to be ten years, and the rage for theorising is such, that, to cite an example, within the last few years the imaginary home of the Aryan, has been made to travel from one end of the world to another.

To turn to lesser works, the Râmâyana and the Mahâbhârata, for example. They are the wonders of the world. As colossal as the pyramids but far more educative and humanising, they were the preservers of India during the dark ages—that long night of ignorance in which the Vedas were practically non-existant for the people at large, and but for them our national virtues would have been totally lost and ourselves should have ceased to exist as a nation long ago. For centuries they served as our natural Bibles, but unlike the other Bibles they both amuse and elevate. And even from a literary point of view they excite our wonder, for, the world has yet to see poets who could give us Sîta, Sâvitri, Draupadi, Rukmani, Rama, Dharmaputra, Bhîma, Arjuna, Bhîshma, and a host of other immortals and above all that Lord of immortals, Krishna, even to understand whom is a feat not yet accomplished by the best intellects of our time? Let us next glance at the work of our sages as lawgivers. Whatever might be the evils in our society at the present day, is it not a wonder that they are so few considering the snfferings we as a nation have gone through for scores of centuries? The mighty lawgivers of old have permanently moulded the character of our society and, through their superhuman strength and foresight it is, that we as a nation have survived the numberless onslaughts made on us by every passer-by for scores of centuries. Bad times these were, but our sages have carried us safe through them, and henceforth, there is no fear. How could a nation die which has not conquest and tyranny but renunciation and divinity for its ideals? And in what words could those mighty sages of old be praised—who, in a world where struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, or, in other words, selfishness and hatred, would seem to be the order of things, had the foresight and wisdom to choose renunciation and divinity as the ideals for our nation and had the boldness to launch it in a race with other nations all of which are now dead, having given place to newer and newer ones, while ours still survives in health and vigour?

The secret for the success of sages in their undertaking is that they do nothing for themselves, and even doing, they do not do. "He who beholds inaction in action and action in inaction is wise amongst mankind," says the Gîtâ (IV, 18). 'Inaction in action' means doing, but with the knowledge that the real self or the Átman is not the doer. The sage never thinks that *he* does a thing, for the 'he' no longer exists for him. He is one with the Átman which is always actionless, and in his eyes, really there is nothing done and much less does he care for the fruits of his actions. When finishing his Sûtras, Nârada says:—"So says Nârâda without caring what others might think of him."

This is the spirit in which sages do their duties. As they are really free from all selfishness and egotism it is really God that speaks and acts through them. 'That such and such is the truth was declared unto the rishis by the Invisible voice,' says the author of the Sarvasâropanishad. Through them, God shines in the world. God manifests himself through all, but our selfishness and egoism suppress that manifestation as dark clouds hide the sun, but these being absent in the sage, he is God himself and whatever he does is really the work of God. 'I regard the sage as Myself,' says Sri Krishna (Gîtâ VII. 18.)

A Child and a Sage.

There was a good sage in the olden days well versed in all the scriptures. These scriptures did not at all satisfy the cravings of his mind, for, he wanted to know nothing less than the whole of God. Finding no help in the Scriptures, he went away to a solitary place far from the haunts of men, and there built a hermitage to devote himself entirely to realise the full knowledge about God. This hermitage was situated a little way off from an arm of the sea and unless the sea were very stormy no dashings of waves and breakers could be seen or heard. All around was very placid and calm and peaceful. At such a quiet nook, the hermit whose desires were very few, devoted his whole day and night for the realisation of the one desire of his heart. Days and months passed, but he could not make out any thing about God. Years after years rolled away, the persevering and assiduous hermit was as ignorant as before. Youth passed away and grey hairs began to peep out from amongst his long brown looks, and still the problem remained unsolved quite as before. One day, he was walking on the beach with a dejected and pensive look, thinking about his unsuccessful struggle and considering whether he might give up the attempt or not, when, casting his eyes before him he saw at some distance a little boy, just on the brink of the water, busy with something. Thinking that a certain fisherman's child had been left there by its father who had gone perhaps to the open sea to catch fish, but not satisfied as to why the father should bring such a little child from home and leave it there thus alone, he went up to it to inquire. The child was however, quite unconscious of his approach, for it was very busy throwing water from the sea on the sands with its tiny hands. At such a novel sight, the curiosity of the sage was roused to its utmost degree, and he began to interrogate the boy as to who he was, why he was throwing water in that way, where his father had gone, and sundry other things, to all of which the boy had no time to answer—the little pretty creature was so engrossed in its apparently fruitless work. At last, when the sage grew too importunate with his questions, the child without wanting to be disturbed any more, answered him once for

all "Sir, I have no time to talk with you. Don't you see that I have to throw off all the water of this ocean and thus dry it up?" "Are you mad," ejaculated the sage, "you little creature! you want to dry up the whole of this limitless ocean which the whole human race together can never think of attempting?" "Why, sir?" answered the cherub-like pretty figure before him with a petulant look "Is it impossible for me to dry up this finite ocean and see what is concealed in its depths, if it be possible for you to know and unravel the infinite profundity of God?" With this, the child vanished from the spot and was seen no more. But its sweet words which had found entrance into his heart, always rang in his ears and filled him with unspeakable joy. From that day forward he gave up his vain pursuit, and instead of trying to *know* God, he began to *love* Him. Afterwards he became a great devotee, and whenever he wanted and wept for the child who had thus saved him from a fruitless struggle, the child would surely appear dancing before him and talk with him so sweetly that he would cry out to the child, "Thou art my God, O my darling, I have found Thee out at last" and go into a state of ecstacy.

A SANYASIN.

Mahabhinishkramana

OR

THE GREAT RENUNCIATION.

(Concluded from page 125.)

True renunciation is always a matter of the mind; it may or may not be attended with external renunciation; very often it is, and in most cases, the latter is a great help to the former; at least in Siddhârtha's case it was so.

After leaving his father's dominions, Siddhârtha went from place to place begging with his bowl and at nights slept on the grass, homeless and alone. He lived for a time like a *Rishi* engaged day and night in meditation. When he went out to beg, all those who saw him said "He is a noble *muni*, his very approach is bliss, ah, what a joy for us," and vied with one another to give him food. The majesty of his mind was ill-concealed under the poverty of his garb. His noble rishabha-like gait betrayed his royal birth and his eyes beamed with a fervid zeal for truth, while the beauty of his youth was transfigured by his holiness. All that beheld him gazed at him in wonder, and mothers, when they saw him go by, would bid their children fall at his feet and kiss him; and young Indian maids would silently love him and worship his majestic form often as he paced gentle and slow, 'radiant with heavenly pity and lost in care for those he knew not save as fellow-lives.'

On Ratnagiri, there dwelt a number of *Yogis* who practised diverse forms of self-mortification known as *Hatayoga*. Siddhârtha fell in with them and outdid them in the rigor of Hatayoga practices, and the result was as might have been expected that his health got shattered, so much so, that, when he went to bathe in a river, he could not rise out of the water and had to take hold of a branch of a tree close by. He soon saw the utter futility of such physical tortures which Vedântism has never been slow to condemn; and leaving off the company of the gaunt and mournful Bhikshus, he retired with weak and faltering steps to a grove close by, where a simple shepherd woman, seeing him about to swoon with weakness and hunger, kindly nourished him with fresh milk, curds and rice. The simple unquestioning faith of the woman and her pity and love, made our prince exclaim,

"Thou teachest them who teach,
Wiser than wisdom in thy simple lore.
Thy way of right and duty: grow, thou flower!
With thy sweet kind in peaceful shade—the light
Of Truth's high noon is not for tender leaves
Which must spread broad in other suns, and lift
In later lives a crowned head to the sky.
Thou who hast worshipped me, I worship thee!
Excellent heart! learnèd unknowingly,
As the dove is which flieth home by love.
In thee is seen why there is hope for man
And where we hold the wheel of life at will."

Refreshed by what he ate, he rose and went to the shade of a large Bodhi tree which has become immortal with him, who sat and thought under its shade. He did not stir from that shade till his inner vision was opened once for all and the light of heaven flashed in his mind in all its fulness and glory. He sat and contemplated for days and nights on the darkened mysterious problems of life, not knowing the hours as they passed along and forgetful of even meals and rest. The questions which troubled him were the old old ones, what is the meaning of life? Why all this struggle on earth? and where would it all end? This was the hour of trial. Great was the strife with him and often was he tempted. He withstood all temptations boldly and overcame selfishness, lust and desire which in a Protean variety of shapes wooed him to return to the loving embrace of his beautiful Yasodhara and to his ancestral sceptre and throne. Hard was the struggle against the army of passions that rose and waged fierce war. By intense and resolute struggle and by the force of abounding love and faith, the evil within him was overcome and the result was, Siddhârtha got enlightened. From this moment he became a Buddha and the light of Heaven shone within him in all its ancient glory.

"Then he arose—radiant, rejoicing, strong—
Beneath the Tree, and lifting high his voice
Spake this, in hearing of all Times and Worlds:—
"Long have I wandered! Long!
Bound by the chain of desire
Through many births
Seeking thus long in vain,
Whence comes this restlessness in man?
Whence his egotism, his anguish?
And hard to bear is samsâra
When pain and death encompass us.
Found! it is found!
Author of selfhood,
No longer shalt thou build a house for me
Broken are the beams of sin;
The ridge-pole of care is shattered,
Into Nirvâna my mind has passed,
The end of craving has been reached at last."

Here was the great renunciation, true Sanyâsa of the Upanishads. Renunciation does not consist in flying away from wife and children—they are not the real samsâra to be given up. Restlessness of the mind is the real samsâra (Maitreya Upa.) When the mind is restless, there is samsâra and when it attains rest it enjoys moksha (Yoga Sika Upa.) What is really to be given up is the restlessness of the mind, the dominion of the self and attachment. If these be given up as Buddha did under the Bo tree, then the glory of true Sanyâsa or renunciation is realised. Who is a sanyâsin? "He is the real sanyâsin," says the Nirâlambopanishad, "who, leaving off all

Dharmas and the attachment of 'I' and 'mine' and taking refuge in Brahman (or Nirvâna), is convinced, through practical realisation of great sayings like—'That art Thou.' 'All this is Brahman' and 'There is here nothing like many,'—that he is himself Brahman, and moves in the world in changeless and undisturbed meditation. He alone is worthy of worship, he is the real *yogi*, the real *paramahamsa*, the real *avadhûta* and the real *Brahmagnâni*." He is the Paramahamsa Parivrat who is ever in the contemplation of the Pranava, the symbol of Brahma. (Paramahamsa Parivrâjaka Upa.)

Buddha was truly one of the perfect sanyâsins of the world. They err who think that the Nirvâna he promised to his followers is mere annihilation. Buddhistic Nirvâna is not the least different from the Vedântic moksha. The former emphasises the negative aspect—the annihilation of the false self (the jîva, the transmigrating ego), while the latter presents the positive aspect—identity with the Brahman, *aham Brahmâsmi*. Rightly has it been said

> "If any teach Nirvâna is to cease,
> Say unto such they lie"

for, it is nothing but the negation of our illusion and the realisation of truth. Certainly it is not the false life that the majority of us live, for

> "If any teach Nirvâna is to live
> Say unto such they err, not knowing this,
> Nor what light shines beyond their broken lamps,
> Nor lifeless, timeless bliss."

The Buddhist or for that matter the Vedântist, 'seeking nothing gains all.' To him 'foregoing self the universe grows I.'

'There was, it might be said, little that Buddha discovered for himself newly. His great doctrines, the doctrine of Karma, that of transmigration, that of final absorption or *Nirvâna* and others were already in the Upanishads. Buddha's glory consists not in having discovered new truths of metaphysics, but in having emphasised the ethical aspect of the Upanishads at a time, when exclusive attention to dry forms and cumbersome rituals had all but robbed the Hindu religion of its life. Indeed, there is nothing new under the sun and when this is recognised it will no longer be matter for surprise that the great masters of antiquity have all taught very nearly the same solution for the problem of life. The Upanishads repeatedly preach the conquest of desires, the subjection of the self. "When all the desires cease which were cherished in his heart, then the mortal becomes immortal, then he obtains the Brahman here, (in this life)." Katha. Upa. VI. 14. This is the central lesson of the Upanishads. And,

> "Seeking nothing he gains all
> Foregoing self, the universe grows I",

is the central lesson of the Gospel of Buddha, Christ, Confucius, &c. The truth is one; only, it is presented in diverse ways; and here we see the meaning of what Śri Krishna says "I create myself, and thus appear from age to age for the preservation of the just, the destruction of the wicked and the establishment of virtue. (Gîtâ, IV. 8). Much depends, however, on the setting in which the great truths are presented. The chief defect in Buddha's system—no blame however, to the great master—as in several others was, that it was not supported strongly enough by rational and deep searching philosophy. Every religion has to satisfy both the head and the heart and in some cases, unfortunately, the necessary intellectual sanction is wanting. There is such a want in the case of Buddhism, though it is not so great as in the case of Christianity. Another great defect was that the final end was too meagrely indicated to be properly understood and as a consequence, Buddhism had unfortunately degenerated into something very much akin to Atheism, and reformers like Sankara found it necessary to overthrow it. If, on the other hand, the final end of man had been more distinctly chalked out and more concretely and attractively idealised as in the Vedânta, Buddhism would have had quite a different career. True it is, that the subjugation of mind is duly insisted upon in that noble religion, but the conquest of the mind could never fully be accomplished, unless through love of the final ideal. It is the peculiarity of the human mind that it refuses to be crushed and can be conquered only by being bribed to love. Indeed, it never gets annihilated but only transfigured into love. The lower self can never be abandoned except in exchange for the higher and to make such an exchange possible, it is very essential that the higher self should be attractively presented. The Nirvâna of the Buddhists is too negative to be sufficiently enchanting, at least, in the lower stages of spiritual growth and hence ensues a great difficulty in practical realisation. It is true that the Âtman of the Upanishads, though a positive ideal, is in some degree an abstract and ethereal entity, but the Vedânta has bridged up the chasm between it and the average human mind, by means of Sagunopâsana or worship of God with attributes, which gradually leads on to the attainment of the real, attributeless Brahman. Buddhism, as taught by Buddha, did not attach sufficient importance to God-worship; indeed, Buddha himself, owing perhaps to the peculiar requirements of the age, discouraged enquiry into the nature of god and the origin of things.

> "Look not for Brahm and the Beginning there!
> Nor him nor any light
> Shall any gazer see with mortal eyes,
> Or any searcher know by mortal mind;
> Veil after veil will lift—but there must be
> Veil upon veil behind.
> Stars sweep and question not. This is enough
> That life and death and joy and woe abide."

A religion without God is however an impossibility and an authoritative "Question not" does not subdue the curiosity of man. Non-attachment is almost an impossible condition; at the best, it only means, that the mind leaves hold of lower things for the sake of higher and, when it realises its true nature, rejects all things high and low as illusion. It is a great advantage to humanity that God, the highest of things, should be presented to man at every turn in the course of his evolution. And it is with this object that man is enjoined by the Vedanta to do motiveless karma and dedicate it to God. "Whatever thou doest, O Arjuna, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou sacrificest, whatever thou givest, whatever thou shalt be zealous about, make each an offering unto me." (Gîtâ, IX. 27). The absence of God-element is a great drawback in Buddhism and besides leaving no scope in it for Bhakti-yoga, takes away very much from even the Karma-yoga.

Apart from these defects which time has perhaps removed, Buddha's system is one of the noblest legacies handed down from man to man. Some of the very best features of modern Hinduism owe their existence to the influence of Buddha who was in truth the last, but, one of the greatest of the interpreters of the Upanishads and one of the greatest of the Yogis that blest our earth with their examples. To few of the great religious reformers

of the world, was it given to live such high and noble life as Buddha lived, and if to-day we enjoy the light of the Upanishads, it is as much owing to him as to the later reformers, Sankara and others.

"The Manner of Giving."

A STORY FROM THE MAHABHARATHA.

King Ashtaka of Viśvâmitra's race once performed a great Horse sacrifice (Aśvamedha), and, there came to that sacrifice among others, the three brothers also of that king, Pratârdana, Vasumanas and Shivi the son of Uśinara. After the sacrifice was completed, Ashtaka was proceeding on his car along with his brothers, when, they all beheld Nârada coming that way. At once they saluted the celestial Rishi and said unto him, "Do us the favor to ride on the car with us;" and saying, "So be it," Nârada mounted on the car. While they were all thus going, one of the kings addressing Nârada, said, "Oh! Holy one, I desire to ask thee something," and the Rishi said, "Ask." Thus permitted, the king said, "We all four are blessed with long lives and have indeed every virtue. We shall therefore be permitted to go to a certain Heaven and dwell there for a long period. Who amongst us, however, oh! sage! shall fall down first." Thus questioned, Nârada replied, "This Ashtaka shall first come down." Thereupon the inquirer asked for the cause, and the Rishi answered, "I lived for a few days in the abode of Ashtaka. One day he carried me on his car out of the town and there I beheld thousands of kine of various colors, and seeing them I asked Ashtaka whose they were and he answered me saying. 'These are gifts made by me.' By this answer he gave expression to his own praise. It is for this answer of his that he will have to come down from Heaven'. After Nârada had said so, one of the kings again enquired, "Of the other three of us who then will stay in Heaven, who shall fall down first?" The Rishi answered, "Pratârdana" and on being asked for the cause, he continued, "Pratârdana was one day taking me with him on his car drawn by four horses, when, a Brahmin begged him for a horse. Pratârdana replied, "After returning home I will give thee one." Thereupon the Brahmin said "Pray let it be given to me soon;" at once the king gave unto him the steed that had been yoked on the right hand wheel of the car. Then, there came unto him another Brahmin asking for a steed; the king unyoked and gave the one that was attached to the left wheel of his car and proceeded on his journey. Then, there came another Brahmin desirous of obtaining a horse; the king at once gave him the horse on the left front of his car and proceeded on his journey with only one horse. A short while after, there came unto him another Brahmin begging for a horse; the king said unto him, "On returning home I will give thee a horse"; but the Brahmin said, "Pray let the horse be given to me soon," and the king gave him the only horse he had and seizing the yoke of the car himself, began to draw it; and as he did so, he said, '*There is now nothing for the Brahmins to ask.*' The king had given away, it is true, but he had done so not quite willingly and with pleasure and for that remark of his he shall have to fall down from Heaven." After the Rishi had said so, one of the two kings that remained asked, "Who of us two shall first fall down?" The Rishi answered, "Vasumanas." The enquirer asked for the reason and Nârada said, "In the course of my wanderings, I arrived at the abode of Vasumanas; at that time the Brahmins were performing a ceremony for the sake of procuring for the king a flowery car from the Gods. I approached the king's presence, and when the Brahmins completed the ceremony and the flowery car became visible, I praised that car and thereupon the king said of his own accord, 'Holy one! By thee hath this car been praised. Let this car therefore be thine,' but he did not give it away to me. I said nothing at that time. But sometime after, when I was in need of a car, I went to Vasumanas and praised the flowery car, and the king said, 'it is thine,' but did not give it to me even then. I went to him a third time and admired the car again; the king exhibiting the flowery car to the Brahmins cast his eye on me and said merely, 'Oh holy one! then hast praised the flowery car sufficiently' without making me a gift of that car; and for this, he will fall down from Heaven." One of the kings then said, "Of the two, the one who is to go with thee, and yourself who will fall down, thou, or he?" Nârada answered, "Shivi will go, but I will fall down." "For what reason," asked the enquirer, and Nârada said, "I am not the equal of Shivi. For, one day a Brahmin came unto Shivi and asked him for food and Shivi replied 'I am thy servant, let me have thy orders.' The Brahmin answered, 'This, thy son, known by the name of Brihathgarbha should be killed, O king, and cooked for my food.' Hearing this, I waited to see what would follow. Shivi then killed his son and cooking him duly and placing that food in a vessel, went out in search of the Brahmin. While he was thus searching for the Brahmin, some one said to him, 'The Brahmin thou seekest, having entered thy city, is setting fire to thy abode, thy treasury, thy arsenal, the apartments of the ladies, and thy stables for horses and elephants'. Shivi heard all this with great composure, returned home and said to the Brahmin whom he found there, 'O holy one! the food has been cooked.' But he spoke not a word; and Shivi, with a view to gratify him, said, 'Oh holy one, eat thou the food.' The Brahmin, looking at Shivi for a moment, said 'Eat it thyself.' Thereupon Shivi said, 'Let it be so' and cheerfully proceeded to eat it. At once the Brahmin caught hold of his hand and addressing him, said, 'Thou hast conquered wrath, There is none equal to thee,' and saying this, he adored Shivi, and when Shivi cast his eyes before him, he beheld his son, standing as a child of the gods decked in ornaments and emitting fragrance from his body. And the Brahmin having accomplished all this, suddenly vanished from sight. It was Vidhâthru himself who had come in the guise of a Brahmin to try the Royal sage. After Vidhathru had disappeared, the councillors said to the king, 'Thou knowest everything, for what didst thou do all this?' And Shivi answered 'It was not for fame, nor for acquiring objects of enjoyments, that I did all this. This course is virtuous; it is for this, that I did all that; the path which is trodden by the virtuous is landable; my heart always inclineth towards such a course.' This high instance of Shivi's blessedness I know and that is why I say he will continue in heaven longer than I."

The above story is a beautiful instance of what our ancients thought about giving. A beggar is *Vidhâthru* the god himself. Swâmi Vivekânanda beautifully says, "Do not stand on a high chair and take five cent bits and say 'here, my poor man' but kneel down and say, 'Lord, allow me to help, so that I may be blessed by helping you.' It is not the receiver that is blessed, but the giver. Give praise to the Lord that you are allowed to exercise your power of benevolence and mercy, and all

these things in the world, and thus become pure and perfect....All the work you do is subjective—for your own benefit. God has not fallen into a ditch for you and me to help him ont by building hospital or something of that sort. He allows you to work, he allows you to exercise in this great gymnasium, not to help him but to help yourself. Do you think that even an ant will die for want of your help? most arrant blasphemy! Do you think that you can help the least thing in the universe? You cannot. When you give a bit of food to the dog, you worship the dog as god. God is in that dog. He is the dog. This should be your idea. He is all and in all. We are allowed to worship. Stand in that reverent attitude to the whole universe and then will come perfect non-attachment."

A King and a Sage.

King Vijayaranga Chokkalinga of Trichinopoly once presented the great sage Thâyumânavar with a costly shawl which he specially got for the purpose from Cashmere. The sage accepted the gift and blessed the king. Of course, he did not attach that valne to the shawl the king did, and one day he found a poor Pariah woman all in rags and suffering from cold and gave away the shawl to her. The poor woman feared to take it, hut Thâyumânavar urged it upon her most imploringly and made her accept it. Report at ouce reached the king that the sage had insulted him by giving away, so costly a present made with his own hands, to a dirty Pariah woman; and he, as might be expected, got exceedingly offended with the sage and ordered him to be brought to him bound hand and foot. Thâyumânavar took this treatment in the same spirit and with the same equanimity of mind as he did the shawl and when the angry king asked him, 'Where is the shawl I gave you?' he coolly replied, "I gave it to mother Akhilândeśwari (the divine mother of the vast universe). She blesses you for it". The king got at ouce ashamed of his conduct and begged the sage's pardon.

To the real sage, everything he sees, everything he hears, everything he does, is God. *Yadyatpaśyati chakshurbhyâm tattadâtmeti bhâvayeth*—whatever he sees with the eye is to him God—says the Śruti. Who in the king's eye was a Pariah woman, was in the sage's eye, none but Akhilândeśwari.

Thoughts on the Bhagavad Gita.

(*Continued from page* 128.)

We have seen what the natnre and application of the precept "Resist not Evil" are, and now let us proceed to ascertain in the light of the Vedânta what the exact meaning of the great teaching is. The commandment appears to he very simple bnt the moment we begin to apply it to practical life, we find ourselves beset with innumerable difficnlties which compel us to question if it is a good ideal or if we have made any mistake in understanding it. In the first place, it is important to observe that mere physical non-resistance is not worth the name. For instance, A being stronger than B, strikes him, but, B does not retnrn the blow though considerably mortified and goes away cursing A in his heart. Here there has heen no actual resistance, but this certainly is not what is meant by non-resistance.

It is not, however, necessary that, to exercise non-resistance, one should have the power actually to resist. If one does not hear any ill-feeling towards another who deals with him unjustly, he virtually exercises non-resistance. The real non-resisting man is he who can love his very enemies. He will be so good as to be able literally to follow the injunctions of Jesus, "whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," and "if any man will sue thee at the Law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also," and "whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." Such goodness, such humility, such heroism is exactly what is involved in the practical obedience to the great commandment, "Resist not Evil." It is one of those high ideals which are so fascinatingly grand and which yet are so difficult to be followed. Just as external renunciation may really he no renunciation at all, just as external inaction may not be real *nivritti*, so in the case of non-resistance also, mere abstaining from using force may not be non-resistance. It all depends upon the disposition, the temperament, and the mental attitude of the man. This is the first thing to be understood with regard to this great teaching.

To be non-resisting when the interests of the injured alone are involved, is comparatively an easy affair; but wbeo another's right or safety is in danger, there arise very many difficulties in the literal obedience to the commandment. For example—suppose my neighbour's house is heing pillaged by robbers; I observe them in the wicked act; I might not very much care if I were deprived of my own property and might take no steps against those who rob me; but how am I to act under the above-mentioned circumstances? Am I to resist the evil or close my eyes and keep quiet? To take, yet, another instance—suppose a woman is being outraged by a villain before my very eyes and she cries to me for protection. What am I to do? Shall I think, "Christ has said, 'Resist not evil," and go away minding my own business? These are difficult questions to be sure. Count Tolstoi takes a similar instance. but, unfortunately, skips over the difficulty. He says "I see that a man I know to be a ruffian is pursuing a yonng girl. I have a gnn in my hand—I kill the ruffian and save the girl. But the death or the wounding of the ruffian has positively taken place, while what would have happened if this had not been, I cannot know. And what an immense mass of evil must result and, indeed, does result from allowing men to assume the right of anticipating what may happen. Ninety-nine *per cent* of the evil in the world is fonnded on this reasoning—from the inquisition to dynamite bombs and execntions or punishments of tens of thousands of political criminals." The doctrine of non-resistance, as tanght by Christ, is not—"kill not a man nor even wound him," but "resist not evil." Tolstoi unfortunately takes extreme instance of killing or seriously wounding the evil doer. But resistance is possible without doing either. Would the Count have literally followed Christ, had he saved the girl by merely beating the ruffian in the supposed case, instead of killing or wounding him.

Nor do the difficulties end here. The word 'resist' is very general and might well include in it, opposing evil by threats, abuse and the like. If so, the very teacher, who commanded others to resist from evil, would have to be exempted from a necessity to act up to his teaching, for, he uses language towards the Pharisees which certainly does not err on the side of kindness. "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees", exclaims Jesus, "Hypocrites!

Ye serpents! Ye generation of Vipers! how can ye escape damnation of hell?"—language which though occuring again and again surprises us not a little, especially in the mouth of the very teacher who taught," whosoever shall say to his brother *Raca*, shall be in danger of the Council, but whosoever shall say, thou fool! shall be in danger of hell fire".

The above are some of the difficulties which beset the practical application to life of the commandment of non-resistance. If its literal meaning be enforced, Jesus himself would appear to have sinned against it. Count Tolstoi, though he has written volumes upon this doctrine, does not help us in the solution of our difficulties, nor do the Christian writers appear to throw any light on them. Now let us turn to the Vedânta and see if it can help us. From the standpoint of a Vedântin or for that matter of a truly good man, there is in the world nothing which may really be regarded as evil. The story of Dharmaputra who, when sent out by Krishna to find out a handful of wicked men, returned without being able to find even one, is familiar to all. Evil and good are really different readings of the same thing. What appears to be evil for one is good for another, and what is good for one is bad for another. As Swâmi Vivekânanda says, "Life is neither good nor evil. It is according to different states of mind in which we look at the world. The most practical man would neither call it good nor evil. Fire by itself is neither good nor evil; when it keeps us warm, we say, how beautiful is fire; when it burns our finger, we blame the fire; still, it is neither good nor bad; as we use it, it produces that feeling of good or bad, and so does this world." "Among frauds," says Śri-Krishna, "I am game and of all things glorious I am the glory." (Gîtâ X. 36.) "I am Myself misery, and Myself happiness" says the sage (Maitreya Upa. III). Viewed in this light, there is really neither good nor evil, even from a lower standpoint; good and evil are but the obverse and reverse of the same coin. There is nothing that is absolutely good nor is there anything that is absolutely evil. Everything in the world has two sides, it is Janus-headed as it were. In everything, good and evil are so cunningly mixed that at no time is it possible to single out the one from the other. "The divine effort," says Emerson, "is never relaxed, the carrion in the sun will convert itself to grass and flower; and man, though in brothels, jails or in gibbets is on his way to all that is good and true". Such being the nature of evil, the precept, resist not evil, practically means, do not abuse nor commit any act of violence against any man with the idea of resisting evil; for, there is nothing that is really evil in the world. We have no right to think that any man is an evil-doer and proceed to chastise him with that impression. "Judge not that ye be not judged". This is exactly what Christ should have meant when he said "Resist not evil". It is really one of the grandest precepts that ever were addressed to mankind. It means that everything in the world is divine, not merely in the sense that everything rests on divine sanction but everything in the world is God. Says the Châṇdogya Upanishad, "All the world is God." "All this world is Nârâyana," says the Nârâyana Upanishad. Says the Yâgnavalkya Upanishad, "Since God is in everything, one should worship the horse, the Chandala (a man of low caste), the cow, the ass, and other things, prostrating before them like a tree fallen on earth." In a world which is every inch of it a manifestation of the Deity, where naught exists outside God, "what is there which can be regarded as evil?" How grand therefore is the precept 'Resist not evil'. Christ says "Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you that ye resist not evil." It is a false idea to think that evil exists in the world and that as if there is no God to remedy it, the burden of resisting and overcoming it rests on our shoulders. The sage says, "I am all that is, there is nothing besides me. I am the witness of all the world, nothing could happen except at my bidding. I am the murderer and the murdered, the robber and the robbed, the offender and the offended." Thus seeing himself everywhere, how could he fight himself against himself.

If this be the correct interpretation of the teaching, it may be asked, how it helps us in the solution of our difficulty. If everything be ourself, true, complete non-resistance is secured: but how are we to act in the cases we supposed, as for instance, that of the girl who being outraged seeks our protection. The girl and the ruffian are both our own Self and how are we to act in the present case. The Vedântin's reply is, 'Do what duty bids, apart from all other considerations.' 'Do not go and resist the offender with the idea that he is an evil-doer or anything of that sort. You are placed in a particular position by God. and therefore do his bidding to the best of your power and leave off all other considerations. According to the Vedânta, the sage, the perfected man is in reality God himself and in the phenomenal plane he is the instrument of God. Whatever he does, he knows to be really the doing of God. He is free from all responsibility, for, his egoism is dead. He is no longer an individual separate from God. God speaks and does through him. He therefore does at all times what the situations he happens to be placed in require, and there the matter ends. In the case supposed, since the girl solicits his protection he will readily give it and defend her to the best of his power, whether he succeeds or fails will be nothing to him nor would he care to abuse the offender by calling him a wicked man. Here is the highest non-resistance.

A classical example of non-resistance in the truest sense of the word is found in that wonderful book—the Râmâyana. Even after the first day's battle when Râvana stood vanquished on the field, his head hung down for shame, Râmâ said, "Râvana, you have fought like a hero, but your fight is useless. This very instant, I can put an end to your life if I choose, but I shall not choose. I have given you a number of opportunities and shall yet give you one more, consider if it will not be good for you to deliver over poor Śîtâ to me, consider well and act. If you heed my advice you will be prosperous; otherwise, I shall be obliged to put an end to your life." Such coolness, such kindness and love for the worst of enemies, these are the marks of non-resistance. Even in a cause where his dearest Śîtâ was concerned, Rama fought not for selfish purposes nor with any wrath or indignation towards his enemy, but for duty's sake. He was placed in a situation in which he was obliged to act as he did, and not with the slightest idea of resisting evil.

The intelligent inquirer will, at this stage, certainly not fail to ask how will this be possible. The slightest things upset us and moral indignation the man of conscience is unable to control. The answer is, so long as there is the idea of evil, moral indignation is perfectly natural and quite in place; but, when one rises to the grand conception of the divinity of the universe, evil ceases for him and with it moral indignation. Doing what the situation requires and that not with any sense of egoism, but, doing as at the bidding of God, this will take the place of moral indignation and the like.

The sage who acts in this way with his mind firmly fixed in the truth of himself being the Brahman, is not responsible for what he does, for, it is not he that really acts; for him, as the Gîtâ says, there is inaction (akarma) even in action, even acting he does not act (IV. 17, 27). The great Rishi Śuka once felt a doubt whether it is possible to live an active life in the world and yet be a real sage. For the solution of this doubt he was directed to go to Janaka the great Râja-Rishi. Janaka answered Śuka's question in a practical way. He ordered one of the criminals who were being tried in his court just then, to carry on his head a flat vessel filled with water without letting fall a single drop on the penalty of losing his head. He was guarded on both sides by soldiers with drawn swords who were commanded to chop off his head the moment a drop of water was spilt. His hands were tightly bound with fetters and he was to go round the court in a grand procession preceded by beautiful dancing girls, dancing in the most fantastic fashion. There were diverse kinds of musical instruments, gaily playing, athletes performing wonderful feats with the applause of the whole court, and he was followed by several bands of men all trying their best to divert his attention from the vessel on his head and make him turn round. The criminal, however, was all attentive to the vessel on his head and he saw nothing but the bands of soldiers who stood round him with drawn swords. Thus he succeeded in going round the court without spilling a drop of water. Janaka, as soon as the experiment was over, looked at Śuka's face, and he said. "My doubt is now all cleared. Your mind is so entirely with the Paramâtman as this man's was with the vessel on his head and though you are ruling a kingdom you have no touch with the world. O holy sage, I adore thee as my master," and took leave. Now what Janaka did is exactly what Krishna asks Arjuna to do. Just as that Royal Rishi was punishing criminals, making wars and ruling kingdoms, so is Arjuna advised to fight with his mind, firmly fixed upon God and leaving all other considerations. Krishna's advice then is instead of being opposed to the teaching 'resist not evil' is really the truest interpretation of it. To do what the situation requires without the limited ideas of good and evil—this is what is meant by non-resistance and this is what Arjuna was advised to practise.

(To be continued).

True Greatness or Vasudeva Sastry.

BY T. C. NATARAJAN.

CHAPTER VIII.

MORE WONDERS.

The news spread in the street that a great Siddha Purusha had descended direct from heaven in broad day light and entering Deputy Collector Narayana Iyer's house, had performed great miracles and was just then staying as a guest of the great Dewan Bahadur. In a few moments a large and eager crowd gathered of its own accord opposite to Mr. Narayana Iyer's house and all the air was filled with stories of Siddhas, Mahâtmas, Yogis, Rishis and so on. Within the house, an informal council of which the Dewan Bahadur was the self-chosen President, was seriously discussing about the possibility or otherwise of miracles and several were the opinions submitted, which, considering their real worth, I very much regret, I am obliged to withold for want of space. The most important of them all was that of the Deputy Collector which for the enlightenment of my readers I shall quote, 'Miracles are by the very nature of things impossible, but there is no denying the fact that some men do perform miracles, though in the case of the Mahâtman upstairs, he was not very sure if he was also a miracle-worker as certainly he must be, considering all the circumstances. Even among Englishmen, some say that miracles are possible, others, that they are not, though, for his own part, he would think (as in the many disputes he had settled in the course of his long and much approved service as a high revenue official), that the truth lies just between the two sides.' After this able, thoughtful and impartial summing up, he looked round for applause never so well-earned; his audience understanding his wishes, though not his speech, gave him what he wanted, with many deafening cries of 'True, true, first class, that is it, that is it' and so on; but their blank faces gave the lie to their words and showed that they were not quite able to understand the golden mean between possible and impossible. Their impertinent brains said to them 'Miracles should either be possible or impossible, how could they be both possible and impossible at the same time?'; and one of the councillors evidently not advanced in the arts of the courtier actually put the question at which there burst forth in the assembly a number of loud and angry hisses like those of serpents when provoked and the President himself encouraged by these hisses scornfully said, 'Do you think I do not know so much?' though greatly confounded within himself as to how such a union of contraries could be possible. Just then, fortunately for him, a pundit who was by came to his rescue. He coolly said, 'Such a thing has been said in our very Srutis. It may be both possible and impossible; in that case it is called *anirvachanîyam*' and quoted a text in support of his statement. What exactly this learned pundit meant, I have not been able to make out, but it seems to me he was right if he meant that just as the world is and is not, in other words, only appears to be so, miracles also are and are not possible, *i.e.*, they only appear to be possible, in other words, are clever frauds. Whatever he might have meant, the discussion came to an end because the postman who came in just at the right moment handed over a long cover to the Deputy Collector after duly 'salaaming' him. Narayana Iyer opening it found that he had been promoted one grade. Just then there came to his mind the words of his mysterious guest 'Good news comes to you to day' and he shouted for very joy and said 'Did I not say miracles are certainly possible. So indeed they are. As the great Siddha Purusha said I have been all on a sudden promoted. Mighty are his doings.' At once the whole audience became eloquent over this miracle and a person was despatched upstairs to see if the Yogi had come out and he was strictly commanded not to make the slightest noise when going up or any way disturb the Mahâtman. The man went up, but just then the serpent of the Yogi was crawling outside the room occupied by him. Seeing it, the poor man who was mortally afraid of serpents, ran downstairs precipitately; but being ashamed to tell the truth he coined a tale for the eager audience below. He informed them, his heart beating loud enough to be heard by the whole assembly, that the room in which the Siddhapurusha was, was filled with a strange celestial light and that as he peeped through the key-hole he found the Yogi's body floating in the air three feet above the ground and that all his limbs lay separate from one another, head one side, hands

another, feet another, and so on like the several parts of a machine disjointed for purposes of cleaning. The wonder of the audience knew no bounds. As they thus stood wondering, they heard the noise of a bell loudly ringing and as it came from the upstairs they all proceeded there in a body. The room of the Yogi stood open; he himself was standing ringing a silver bell in his hand in the act of making pûja to a golden image four feet high, which was decorated with bracelets, necklaces, earrings and so forth, all of gold, diamond and rubies and dazzling to behold. It stood in a flower shed very ornamental and surrounded with lights of various colors. The pûja vessels were all of silver and there were kept in huge silver baskets flowers and fruits of various kinds. As Narayana Iyer and others went up they were confounded with wonder. The mysterious Yogi commanded Narayana Iyer to call in all and accordingly he went down and asked all the people who stood outside in the road to come up. At once a huge crowd rushed up, and though the hall upstairs was very spacious, there was hardly standing room for all. The Yogi then solemnly worshipped the goddess, with *Dhûpa* and *Dîpa* and ordered the fruits and flowers to be distributed among all the people. Then, the room was closed and the crowd was ordered to disperse. Narayana Iyer took leave from office that day. A grand entertainment was given to the Yogi and in the evening he came down and took his seat outside on the pial with his serpent playing over his shoulders. Immediately, the whole of the Madura population began to assemble in front of Narayana Iyer's house.

While such grand things were going on here, a scene far different occurred at Dindigul. 'Dear father,' said Lakshmi, addressing Vasudeva Sastry who was trying to console her "Why did you prevent me from committing suicide. I cannot endure this life. All the philosophy you have taught me from my childhood does not sustain me now. When you advise me, I get consoled; but the next moment my grief returns with added force like water rushing out from a breach in a big tank." Vasudeva Sastry with a very kind look said 'child compose yourself, do not give way to grief,' but she continued, "Were they not great heroes, father, who killed themselves either by leaping into the funeral pyre of their husbands or by some other means, unwilling to live after their husbands' death? Have you not taught me, father, that for a virtuous woman her husband is the real God and did I not look upon my dear, poor—?" and burst out into tears. Her whole body shook with grief and tears rolled down from her eyes in torrents. Her father bending over her with affection wiped her tears with his cloth and spoke very kind words, urging her to compose herself. Interrupting him, she continued, 'I am surely a great sinner, father; though trained by you from my childhood to live up to the ideal of chastity, to be like Sâvitri and Sîtâ, I did not do so: otherwise this great calamity would not have befallen me. Did not Sâvitri rescue her husband from the very hands of Yama? I am a sinner." 'Dear child,' said Vasudeva Sastry, 'I was watching you most carefully in your happy married life and though Purâna might not record your fame, I can assure you, you even outdid Sâvitri in your devotion to your husband. He himself told me how much he learnt from you and your worship of him elevated both of you. You need not fear, my child. You have performed a sacrifice the equal of which there is none on earth and you have now begun another which is still more difficult and still more meritorious. Your heart naturally inclines to virtue and delights more in virtue than in anything else. I saw that, even when you were a child and I knew that you would be a great woman though none might sing your praise. 'Father, father,' cried Lakshmi, 'you are too generous in your estimate of me. I am a sinner; far from virtuous: otherwise, God would not have visited me with such a punishment.' 'Grieve not, my child,' said Vasudeva Sastry, 'grieve not, for past sins we suffer, it is true; but God is kind even when he is cruel: our very punishments are blessings in disguise. If you endure this calamity with calm resignation you will have achieved a feat the like of which there is not in all the worlds'.

'Ah, how difficult it is, father, how very difficult to endure, how could I for one moment bear the grief.'

"You can endure. You have the power, my girl, you are not like other women. From your infancy, to endure was your delight. My darling, I remember how it was one of your favorite exercises while you were but a girl of 5 years to set a number of children to provoke you and vow not to get angry, do whatever they might. They would worry you in all possible ways and do all sorts of mischief, but you would never get angry. The power to suffer is your chief merit and it is for that you are so dear to me. I am sorry I am obliged to leave you for a few days, but I shall soon return."

"Father, stay not away for more than four or five days, at the most not more than a week. I sadly want you no Settle all your business and come away soon."

"Fear not, my girl: I shall soon return. Forget not that God is everywhere and he always hears you. This is my advice to you; endure, endure, and when you are not able to endure, remember this truth. Thousand times better than an ordinary man is a rishi; thousand times better than a rishi is a woman who worships her husband during his life-time as God; and a thousand times better than such a woman is she who worships her husband as God even after his death."

Hardly had Vasudeva Sastry concluded, when in rushed Annammal and pouncing upon her daughter like an eagle on its prey, took her in her arms and pressing her to her bosom, set up a tremendous wailing. After a few minutes she set her down and beat her breasts in her sight and said 'we are going and if you cannot check your grief go and fall into a well. I would rather wish you were burnt to ashes than see you, with my motherly eyes, in this wretched state.' So saying, she bade her husband take his bag and start to the train. He accordingly took his bag and addressing Lakshmi said, 'Remember my words.' Then both of them left the house for the train, which they reached just in time. A few hours more and they were at Madura.

Selections.

PEACE.

It is not in Seeking,
It is not in endless strivings,
The quest is found;
Be still, and listen! be still and listen
To The Silence all around.

Not for thy crying,
Not for thy loud beseeching,
Will Peace draw near;
Rest with palms folded; rest with eyelids fallen
Lo Peace is here.

EDWARD R. SILL.