

PRABODHA BHARATA

OR

Awakened India

इच्छित जाग्रत प्राण वरान्निबोधत ।

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CONTENTS :

Sri Ramakrishna's Teachings	19
Lectures of Swami Vivekananda :				
A Study of the Sankhya Philosophy	20
Epistles of Swami Vivekananda—VI	...	...	...	22
Stray Thoughts on Education, <i>Fairplay</i>	...	...	...	25
Homage to Swami Vivekananda	...	...	...	28
The Madras Hindu Association	...	...	...	29
Review : Aspects of the Vedanta	...	...	...	30
Correspondence :				
New York Vedanta Society	...	...	...	34
Bagbazar Vivekananda Society	...	...	...	35
News and Notes	...	...	...	36
Ramakrishna Home of Service Report	ii
Ramakrishna Sevashrama Report	ii

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Prabuddha Bharata

Arise! Awake! and stop not till the goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

BHAKTI—XII

As the child beseeches its mother with importunities for toys and pice, weeping and teasing her, so he who knows God to be his nearest and dearest, his own, and who like an innocent child weeps inwardly with earnestness to see Him, is rewarded at last with the vision divine. God can no longer remain hidden from such an earnest and importunate seeker after Him.

IF you fill an earthen vessel with water and put it away upon a shelf, the water in it will dry up in a few days ; but its contents will suffer no diminution as long as it is kept immersed in water. Even so is the case with man's love to the Lord. Fill and enrich your heart with the love of God for a time and then give it to other things, taking it away from Him, you will very soon discover your heart has lost the priceless jewel and become poor indeed.

How sweet is the simplicity of the child! He prefers a doll to the riches and the wealth of the world. So is the faithful devotee. No one else can set aside all wealth and all honour, and take up God alone.

The Bhakta, as a rule, does not long for Brahma-jnana, the realisation of the Impersonal, but remains content with realising the divine Person alone—my divine Mother or any of Her infinite forms of glory including the divine incarnations Sri Krishna, Chaitanya Deva, &c., the visible revelations of God. He is anxious that the whole of his *aham* should not be effaced in Samadhi. He would fain have sufficient individuality (*aham*) left to enjoy the vision divine as a Person. He would fain taste the sugar instead of becoming sugar.

Q. WHY is there no end to the emotions flowing out of a devotee's heart?

A. When grain is measured out of the granary of a rich corn merchant, one man goes on measuring while others keep up the supply. Similarly the secret of the inexhaustible store of a true Bhakta's sentiments is that God inspires him, whereas the wise man who draws his inspiration from books, like the petty shopkeeper, gets his thoughts soon exhausted.

LECTURES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A STUDY OF THE SANKHYA PHILOSOPHY

(Concluded from page 6)

WHAT makes Nature change? We see that up to this everything, all Prakriti, is *jada*, insentient. It is all compound and insentient. Wherever there is law it is proof that the region of its play is insentient. Mind, intelligence, will, and everything else are insentient. But they are all reflecting the sentiency, the "chit" of some being who is beyond all this, whom the Sankhya philosophers call 'Purusha.' The Purusha is the unwitting cause of all the changes in the universe. That is to say, this Purusha, taking Him in the universal sense, is the God of the universe. It is said the will of the Lord created the universe. It is very good as a common daily expression, but we see it cannot be true. How could it be will? Will is the third or fourth manifestation in Nature. Many things exist before it, and *what created them?* Will is a compound and everything that is a compound, is a product of Nature. Will therefore could not create Nature. So, to say the will of the Lord created the universe is meaningless. Our will only covers a little portion of self-consciousness, and moves our brain. It is not will that is working your body or that is working the universe. This body is being moved by a power of which will is only a manifestation in one part. Likewise in the universe there is will, but that

is only one part of the universe. The whole of the universe is not guided by will; that is why we cannot explain it by the will theory. Suppose I take the body and take it for granted that it is will moving it, then when I find I cannot work it at will, I begin to fret and fume. It is my fault, because I had no right to take the will theory for granted. In the same way if I take the universe and think it is will that moves it and find things which do not coincide, it is my fault. So the Purusha is not will; neither can it be intelligence, because intelligence itself is a compound. There cannot be any intelligence without some sort of matter corresponding to the brain. Wherever there is intelligence, there must be something akin to that matter which we call brain, which becomes lumped up into a particular form, and serves the purpose of the brain. Wherever there is intelligence, there must be that matter in some form or other. Thus intelligence itself is a compound. What then is this Purusha? It is neither intelligence nor will, but it is the cause of all these. It is its presence that sets them all going and combining. It does not mix with Nature; it is not intelligence, or mahat, but the Self, the pure, is Purusha. "I am the witness, and through my witnessing Nature is producing all that is sentient and all that is insentient."

What is this sentiency in Nature? The basis of sentiency is in the Purusha, it is the nature of Purusha. It is that which cannot be said, but which is the cause of all that we call knowledge. Purusha is not consciousness, because consciousness is a compound, but whatever is light and good in consciousness belongs to Purusha. Purusha is not conscious, but whatever is light in intelligence belongs to Purusha. Sentiency is in the Purusha, but the Purusha is not intelligent, not knowing. The Chit in the Purusha plus Prakriti is what we see around us. Whatever is pleasure and happiness and light in the universe belongs to Purusha, but is a compound, because it is Purusha plus Prakriti. "Wherever there is any happiness, wherever there is any bliss, there is a spark of that immortality, which is God." Purusha is the great attraction of the universe, untouched by and unconnected with the universe, yet it attracts the whole universe. You see a man going after gold, because behind it is a spark of the Purusha, mixed up with a good deal of dirt. When a man goes after children or a woman after a husband, what is the attracting power? A spark of Purusha behind them. It is there, only mixed up with dirt. Nothing else can attract. "In this world of insentiency the Purusha alone is sentient." This is the Purusha of the Sankhya. As such it necessarily follows that the Purusha must be omnipresent. That which is not omnipresent must be limited. All limitations are caused; that which is caused, must have beginning and end. If the Purusha is limited, it will die, will not be final, will not be free, but will have some cause. Therefore it is omni-

present. According to Kapila there are many Purushas, not one; an infinite number of them; you and I have each of us one, and so has every one; an infinite number of circles, each one infinite, running through this universe. It is neither mind nor matter; the reflex from it is all that we know. We are sure if it is omnipresent it has neither death nor birth. Nature is casting her shadow upon it, the shadow of birth and death, but it is by its nature pure. So far we have found Sankhya wonderful.

Next we will have to take up the proofs against it. So far the analysis is perfect, the psychology incontrovertible. The division of the senses into organs and instruments, finding out that they are not simple, but compound; dividing egoism into sense and matter, and finding that this is also material and that mahat is also a state of matter, and finally finding the Purusha; so far there is no objection to it. But if we ask the Sankhya the question "Who created Nature?" the Sankhya says these two are uncreate and omnipresent, the Purusha and the Prakriti, and that of this Purusha there is an infinite number. We shall have to controvert these propositions, and find a better solution and by so doing we shall land into Advaitism. Our first doubt will be how can there be *two* infinities. Then our argument will be that the Sankhya is not a perfect generalisation, and that we have not found in it a perfect solution. And then we shall see how the Vedantists grope out of all these difficulties and reach a perfect solution, and yet all the glory really belongs to the Sankhya. It is very easy to give a finishing touch to a building when it is constructed.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(Continued from page 87, Vol. VIII)

VI.

(Translated from the 'Udbodhana')

DEOGHAR, VAIDYANATH
c/o Babu Priyanath Mukerji,
23rd Dec., 1900.

Dear—,

I am very glad to receive your letter. What you have understood is right. "The Lord whose nature is unspeakable love", that this characteristic of God mentioned by Narada is manifest and admitted on all hands is the firm conviction of my life. The aggregate of many individuals is called Samashti (the whole), and each individual is called Vyashti (a part). You and I—each is Vyasti, society is Samashti. You, I, an animal, a bird, a worm, an insect, a tree, a creeper, the earth, a planet, a star—each is Vyashti, while this universe is Samashti, which is called Virat, Hiranyagarbha or Ishwara in Vedanta, and Brahmâ, Vishnu, Devi etc., in the Puranas. Whether or not Vyashti has individual freedom, and if it has, what should be its measure, whether or not Vyashti should completely sacrifice its own will, its own happiness for Samashti,—are the perennial problems before every society. Society everywhere is busy finding the solution of these problems. In modern Western society these loom large. The doctrine which demands the sacrifice of individual freedom to social supremacy is called

Socialism, while that which advocates the cause of the individual is called Individualism.

Our motherland is a glowing example of the results and consequences of the eternal subjection of the individual to society and forced self-sacrifice by dint of institution and discipline. In this country men are born according to shastric injunctions, they eat and drink by rule throughout life, they go through marriage and kindred functions in the same way; in short, they even die according to shastric injunctions. This hard discipline, with the exception of one great good point, is fraught with evil. The good point is that men can do one or two things easily and well, having practised them every day through generations. The delicious rice and curry which a cook of this country prepares with the aid of three lumps of earth and a few sticks can be had nowhere else. With the simple mechanism of an antedeluvian loom worth Re. 1 and the feet put in a pit, it is possible to make kincobs worth Rs. 20 a yard in this country alone. A torn mat, an earthen lamp and that fed by castor oil,—with the aid of materials as these, wonderful savants are produced in this country

alone. An all-forbearing attachment to an ugly and deformed wife and a lifelong devotion to a worthless and villainous husband are possible in this country alone. Thus far the bright side.

But all these are done by people led like lifeless machines; there is no mental activity, no unfoldment of the heart, no vibration of life, no flux of hope; there is no strong stimulation of the will, no experience of keen pleasure nor the contact of intense sorrow; there is no stir of inventive genius, no desire for novelty, no interest for new things. Clouds never pass away from this mind, the radiant picture of the morning sun never charms this heart. It never even occurs to the mind if there is any better state than this; where it does, it cannot convince; in the event of conviction, effort is lacking; and even where there is effort, lack of enthusiasm kills it out.

If living by rule alone ensures excellence, if it be virtue to strictly follow the customs handed down through generations, say then, who is more virtuous than a tree, who is a greater devotee, a holier saint than a railway train? Who has ever seen a piece of stone to transgress a natural law? Who has ever known cattle to commit sin?

The huge steamer, the mighty railway engine—they are non-intelligent, they move, turn and run, but they are without intelligence. And yonder tiny worm which moved away from the railway line to save its life, why is it intelligent? There is no manifestation of will in the machine, the machine never wishes to transgress law; the worm wants to oppose law, rises against law whether it succeeds or not; therefore it is intelligent. Happi-

ness is greater, jiva is higher, in proportion as this will is more successfully manifest. The will of God is perfectly fruitful, therefore He is the highest.

What is education? Is it book-learning? No. Is it diverse knowledge? Not even that. The training by which the current and expression of will are brought under control and become fruitful, is called education. Now consider, is that education, which resulting in a continuous checking of the will by force through generations has now wellnigh killed it, under whose sway—why mention new ideas—even the old ones are disappearing one by one, is that education which is slowly making man a machine? It is more blessed, in my opinion, to go wrong impelled by one's freewill and intelligence than to be good as an automaton. Again, can that be called a society which is formed by an aggregate of men who are like lumps of clay, like lifeless machines, like heaped up pebbles? How can such society fare well? Were good possible, then instead of being slaves for hundreds of years we would have been the greatest nation on earth, and this soil of India, instead of being a mine of stupidity, would have been the eternal fountain-head of learning.

Is not self-sacrifice, then, a virtue? Is it not the one virtuous deed to sacrifice the happiness of one, the welfare of one for the sake of many? Exactly, but as the Bengali adage goes, "Can beauty be manufactured by rubbing and scrubbing? Can love be generated by effort and compulsion?" What glory in the renunciation of an eternal beggar? What virtue in the sense-control of one devoid of sense-power? What again is the self-

sacrifice of one devoid of idea, devoid of heart, devoid of ambition and devoid of the conception of society? What expression of devotedness to husband by forcing a widow to commit suttee? Why make people do virtuous deeds by teaching superstitions? I tell you, liberate, undo the shackles of people as much as you can. Can dirt be washed by dirt? Can bondage be removed by bondage? Where is the instance? When you would be able to sacrifice all desire for happiness for the sake of society, then you would be the Buddha, then you would be free; that is far off. Again, do you think the way to it lies through oppression? "Oh, what examples of self-denial are our widows! Is another such custom possible! Oh, how sweet is child-marriage! Can it be otherwise than love between husband and wife in such marriage!"—is the whine going round nowadays. But as to the males, the masters of the situation, there is no need of denial for them. Is there a virtue higher than serving others? But the same does not apply to Brahmans—you others do it! The truth is, that in this country parents and relatives can ruthlessly sacrifice the best interests of their children and others for their own selfish ends, to save themselves a compromise in society, and the teaching of generations rendering the mind callous has made it perfectly easy. The brave alone can deny self. The coward, afraid of the lash, with one hand wipes his eyes and gives with the other. What avail such gifts? It is a far cry to love universal. The young plant should be hedged in and taken care of. One can hope to gradually attain to universal love, if one can learn to love one object unselfishly. If devotion to one

particular Ishtadeva is attained, devotion to the universal Virata is gradually possible.

Therefore, when one has been able to deny self for an individual, one should talk of self-sacrifice for the sake of society, not before. Actions with desire lead to actions without desire. Is the renunciation of desire possible, if it did not exist in the beginning? And what could it mean? Can light have any meaning if there is no darkness?

Worship with desire, with attachment comes first. Commence with the worship of the little, then the greater will come of itself.

Be not anxious. It is against the big tree that the great wind strikes. "Poking a fire makes it burn better; a snake struck on the head raises its hood" and so on. When there comes affliction in the heart, the storm of sorrow blows all around, and it seems light will be seen no more, when hope and courage are almost gone, it is then in the midst of this great spiritual tempest the light of Brahman within gleams. Brought up in the lap of luxury, never shedding a drop of tear, who has ever become great, has ever unfolded the Brahman within? Why do you fear to weep? Weep. Weeping clears the eyes and brings about intuition, then the vision of diversity, man, animal, tree slowly melting away, makes room for infinite realization of Brahman. Then, "Verily, seeing the same God equally existent everywhere, he does not injure self by self and so goes to the supreme goal." (Gita, XIII, 28.)

Ever your well-wisher,

VIVEKANANDA

STRAY THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION

The diffusion of these silent teachers, books, through the whole community is to work greater effects than artillery, machinery, and legislation. The culture which it is to spread while an unspeakable good to the individual, is also to become the stability of the nation.

—*Channing.*

AN acquaintance with the wider life of books is a ready passport to the thoughts of great minds, and one of the richest expedients against narrowing influences; in that way promoting the truest interests of mankind being instrumental in making us honestly perform the obligations of our different positions. Education is salutary and valuable in so far as we make it a source of happiness and practical application to the demands of everyday life. Through it sympathy is aroused for we become more cognisant of the universal current of life. We see from another point of view, and so are regardful of other lives, and it is well that this sense of kinship should be engendered, for sympathy breathes unity. It is also a liberating agent, for it makes possible to turn frequently from the mass of trivialities that harass and perplex us to investigate a greater world of thought, stimulating us to increased use of the higher faculties and increased direction of our feelings and ideals towards wise instead of foolish things, elevating in the place of degrading objects and contemplations — in this way diverting the mind from surroundings and limitations by which we fancy we are shackled. There is less time for irritable moods, jealous imaginations and vain schemes, which too often engage the idle mind.

“How to live,” writes Herbert Spencer, “that is the essential question for us. Not how

to live in the mere material sense only, but in the widest sense. The general problem which comprehends every special problem is—the right ruling of conduct in all directions under all circumstances. In what way to treat the body: in what way to treat the mind: in what way to manage our affairs: in what way to bring up a family: in what way to behave as a citizen: in what way to utilize those sources of happiness which Nature supplies—how to use all our faculties to the greatest advantage of ourselves and others—how to live completely? And this being the great thing needful for us to learn is, by consequence, the great thing which education has to teach. To prepare us for complete living is the function which education has to discharge, and the only rational mode of judging of an educational course is to judge in what degree it discharges such function.”

Education helps the world onward by the spiritualizing of character and by the moralising of life. Its action is towards the enlargement of our individual self by participation in the broader life of humanity. Its penetrative power brings to light secret charms, and reveals to the mind many beauties which remain concealed to the eye of ignorance: it points out how to unfold mind and body: it means the expansion of head, heart and hand. It is excellent inasmuch as it secures to the recipient a truer apprehension of life, a more complete development.

By education that comparison with others is made possible which encourages the spirit of healthy emulation, enabling one

to acquire thereby a more correct appraisal of one's own abilities and qualifications and a larger knowledge of one's duties and responsibilities. By education the inexperienced mature into the self-reliant, fitly trained and well qualified to fill their positions in life. Education gives free scope for gaining experiences with thoroughness and not slavish adherence and thus ennoble the character. It discovers the necessity for concentration and cultivating observation and reasoning faculties.

"Where," says John Stuart Mill, "not the person's own character but the traditions and customs of other people are the rule of conduct, there is wanting one of the principal ingredients of human happiness, and quite the chief ingredient of individual and social progress.....Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing.....As if a child's mind could be made to order, and is a receptacle into which ideas are to be put and there grow up after the mother's ideal. A person should be free to do as he likes in his own concerns: but he ought not to be free to do as he likes in acting for another, under the pretext that the affairs of the other are his own affairs.To bring a child into existence without a fair prospect of being able to, not only provide food for its body, but instruction and training for the mind, is a moral crime both against the unfortunate offspring and against society. To bestow a life which may be either a curse or a blessing—unless the being on whom it is to be bestowed will have at least the ordinary chances of a desirable existence, is a crime against that being."

EDUCATION OF INDIAN WOMEN

A florist cultivates a plant for the sake of its flower: and regards the roots and leaves as of value, chiefly because they are instrumental in producing the flower. But while, as an ultimate product, the flower is the thing to which everything else is subordinate, the florist has learnt that the root and leaves are intrinsically of greater importance, because on them the evolution of the flower depends. He bestows every care in rearing a healthy plant: and knows it would be folly if, in his anxiety to obtain the flower, he were to neglect the plant.

— *H. Spencer.*

We would draw the attention of all who are interested in promoting the welfare of India, to the problem of the education of our women, a subject which must no longer be ignored—a subject which strangely enough has not received the attention or been treated in the spirit demanded by its paramount importance. Truly it has been said, "A nation whose women are uneducated, let its men have all possible culture, still goes into the world's battle with only one arm." Perhaps the lack of interest hitherto in this matter is due to the fact that no society can move further or faster than to the extent to which it is impelled by the strong pressure of public opinion. With the tardy and still uncertain growth of a sense of the importance of education, is rising a dim perception that our women should be taught. We hear that the fathers and husbands of the girls do not wish them to be educated. Undoubtedly a few kind and good men condemn the idea and in their hostility to it, have predicted that it will be the parent of evils. But such is certainly not the case with the majority, who desire their women folk restored to the status of the ancient times.

The greatest obstacle to the education question is the pernicious and antiquated notion that it is necessary to marry our girls

at a very early age—a custom which is much more serious and injurious to the well-being of the community than is generally believed. We hold most strongly that this marriage system is the chief hindrance to educational advancement, for just at the spring-time of the human mind, when girls would benefit most from instruction, marriage interposes, and instead of progress, their studies are brought to an abrupt conclusion. These are not the conditions to produce a race of men able to hold their own in modern life. We should resolutely and courageously deal with the source of a weakness that is sapping our life forces, creating a general slackness of moral fibre and affecting the physique of our people to an alarming extent. A reform in this direction will certainly meet with every kind of obstruction and with endless objections, founded upon the dislocation of the existing family arrangements. In spite of this, there are many who realise the immensity of the evil and sympathise with any attempt to stem it: and even if society is inconvenienced in the matter, it should strive to bear it for the sake of the coming generations. It has permitted a large number of its members to be bred up in ignorance, and society can only blame itself for the consequences.

In the lives of our women and the limitations under which they are living—in those little autocracies within democracies, which are bounded by zenana walls—there is absolute need, if we would combat the evils of early marriage, to provide a counter-attraction and satisfy the intellectual instincts of the girls in pleasant and helpful ways. Nature has provided our girls with good mental powers and receptivity, but these qualities are atrophied through lack of knowledge. Men are captivated by the proficiency and dainty cookery of women, but why should not their reason and intellect be

charmed by the association of cultured and appreciative wives? “O man, consider woman as the partner and companion, not merely of your joys and sorrows, but of your thoughts, your aspirations, your studies, and your endeavours after social amelioration. Be ye the two human wings that lift the soul towards the ideal we are destined to attain” (Mazzini). We honour and esteem men who give their lives for their country, but it must be remembered that our young mothers bear a weightier share of trouble and anxiety, who by their unremitting ministrations and care train up the future men of the Empire, and it is the *intelligent* mother who can more correctly diagnose the tendencies and potentialities of her children. “There is no hand so gentle as the woman’s hand, no eye so observant, no foot so soft, no ear so wakeful, no head more unselfishly thoughtful, no heart more unceasingly loving, no life more devoted than woman’s.” The mother has a tender sway and determining influence over her child; but it is a finer force which can appeal to the intellectual resources of her offspring, kindling into consciousness fresh glowing thoughts, and instigating and energizing the will in the plan of right action, bringing to it an impress of increased power. At the heart and centre of the family is the mother, loved and recognised as the dominating inspiration, but if the mother is profoundly ignorant of life, how can she teach others how to live? Therefore adequate and well-devised training should be given to the mother, and all exercises which serve to develop the body and cultivate the character should not be omitted. Perhaps the most deplorable signs of ignorance are in those families where the traditions of domestic tyranny are in the blood. Owing to these the children are cramped and thwarted, and the married girls grow up in an atmosphere of subjugation which produces

permanent timidity. In the discipline of home there lies no opportunity of education, no chance of freedom.

Any failure in the powers of the bread-winners means more suffering and heartache to the weary wife at home, who adds up her few rupees, and tries to stretch the capacity of their buying value. To the glory of our Indian woman be it said, that she makes strenuous efforts to meet the trouble by a severe simplicity of living, comforts are dispensed with and bare necessities reduced. Various are the brave economies practised by silent, heroic Indian women, that they may discharge their numerous obligations, and in thousands of households, the philosophy of patience and hard endurance is learned, in bearing these ceaseless struggles.

It is scarcely necessary to add that the large number of widows and the few girls who remain unmarried will alike be benefited by education which would have the effect of increasing employment and in so doing less difficulty would be found in procuring the slender means of subsistence. Heretofore under stress of circumstances, women have been heavily handicapped in the race for life.

It will thus be seen that a lasting boon will be conferred by education, not immediately appreciable perhaps, but still there. We have no doubt that in a few years, there will be a practical realisation of much present prophecy, which will bring our women to a fuller maturity of the woman that is to be—a greater efficiency and competency in the affairs of life.

We must obtain an honourable reception for women teachers, by establishing for our girls the right to study. Our desire would be to retain all the best features of the home-training, and at the same time to strike a new vein in matters of culture.

The subject involves a careful study of details, and it is upon the way in which true details are grasped and handled that success or failure depends. Let us end with a hope that a new era is commencing, and that the Indian women will take their proper place in the march of intellect where the acquisition of knowledge will no longer be stigmatised as a fallacy, and lack of cultivation will in no case be commended as a virtue.

FAIRPLAY

HOMAGE TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

An esteemed correspondent writes:

The birthday festival of the Swami Vivekananda was held for the second time at Belur Math on the 10th of January last. The weather was unusually warm and fine, and the crowd of visitors enjoyed the freedom of the gardens and grounds of the Math for a number of hours. A large party of ladies from Almora was present.

At midday there was a lecture by Sister Nivedita, and at four o'clock more

than two thousand poor were fed. The most attractive and significant feature of the day's proceedings on both occasions on which the festival has been held, was the great number of students—members of the Vivekananda Society and inmates of the Memorial Boarding-House—who busied themselves in serving the food and in clearing away the remains of the feast. There was a marked enthusiasm and steadiness about the services of these boys which were most gratifying.

It was evident that they identified themselves completely with the idea of the day and held with the Popes of Rome that 'servant of the servants of God' is the proudest title of man.

Thus we may well hope that amongst those who come of the spiritual lineage of the Swami Vivekananda, the old forces of piety and devotion are about to be gathered up into an outburst of energy and manly activity, which shall hurl itself upon the problems of our day and place, with strength and efficiency, leaving India, even in a single generation, many degrees bettered and restored. It is certain that in such a task there is no strength like that of the man who feels himself to be carrying out a trust laid upon him by one holier than himself.

In quoting a passage from one of the hitherto unpublished lectures of Swami Vivekananda which are being published in *Prabuddha Bharata* and which will before long come out in book form, our esteemed contemporary of the London 'Light' observes:

"The 'Prabuddha Bharata' is never tired of doing homage to the late Swami Vivekananda, and reminding us of his teachings. In a late number it prints one of his lectures on his favourite topic, the spiritual identity or union of God and Man. We have always thought that the Swami's teachings all turned upon this immense simplicity."

Every civilization has its genius and its exponents. For instance, 'imperialism' is the genius of the modern Western civilization with its high priests in England the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes and Mr. J. Chamberlain. The 'spiritual identity'

of the Infinite and the Finite is the genius of Indian civilization and the late Swami Vivekananda its modern exponent, the man whose ideal was the raising of the whole world to the status of the Brahman—the embodiment of matter conquered by spirit; whose solution of the Indian problem was the fusion of the two great systems, Hinduism and Mahometanism, 'Vedanta brain and Islam body'; a man who lived and died for his ideals. And what, according to him, was to achieve them? The lever of the 'immense simplicity' of giving man back his inalienable right, *Spirituality*, by liberation, by liberating the forces kept down and turned awry by the selfishness of classes and individuals, by the refined forms of slavery of modern times. For these teachings, reiteration is not the process, but inburning. And the homage to such a prophet? Should it not be perennial and worldwide?

THE MADRAS HINDU ASSOCIATION

WE welcome the new Hindu Association of Madras. It has started under every favourable auspice. Its promoters are men of capacity and experience. Its aims are what they should be. The work before it is great and sure to call forth what is best in its leaders. Now that the intellectual part of it, definition of object, elucidation of method and other preliminaries, is so satisfactorily finished, let the Association embark upon deeds, so that twelve months hence it may justify its existence by giving the world something more than ideas and wishes

REVIEW

ASPECTS OF THE VEDANTA *

A symposium of eight papers (reprints and lectures) on Vedanta by Pandit Sitanath Tattvabhushan, the late Mr. N. Vythinatha Aiyar, M. A., Prof. M. Rangachariyar M. A., Swami Saradananda, Swami Vivekananda and the late Prof. Max Muller, published by the enterprising firm of Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.

A worthy compilation. Though disagreement on some points is unavoidable, exigency of space forbids anything like an exhaustive treatment of the papers. Pt. Tattabhushan in "The Vedanta in Outline" has an interesting remark on Christianity: "As to Christianity, appearances point to a not very distant fusion of the most liberal forms of this faith with the most advanced and reformed forms of Vedantism,"—appearances not confined to Europe and America but seen also in India "in the growing interest of certain Christian converts in the study of the Vedanta and in the attempt made in certain quarters to establish a newly conceived Christian theology on the basis of the Vedanta Philosophy. There is nothing to prevent the success of such an attempt."

We are afraid we cannot call his paper "The Vedantic Doctrine of Future Life" happy. It is excellent to introduce

science into religion. But one cannot be too careful how one reads it into religious speculations. The absurdity some enthusiasts, bent upon explaining Pauranic mythology by science, have been led to ought to serve as a warning to adventurers in similar fields. The following are fine: "If therefore, there is a moral order in the universe, if rational life has a purpose, that purpose cannot be anything higher than moral progress,—the attainment of perfection by rational beings; and such a purpose requires the perpetuation of the conscious life of individuals." "If in mature life all formations, whether intellectual or moral, demand a history, an explanation in the form of a series of previous actions, and all differences a difference of history, does not the complexity and variety of endowments with which our present life begins, demand a similar explanation,—a similar history projected into the unknown past?"

In adducing reasons for the study of the Vedanta, in "The Vedanta—Some Reasons for its Study," Mr. Aiyar asks the reader to go back to the ancient sages of India for a solution of metaphysical problems, because they "have brought to bear upon these questions an acuteness and strength of intellect which is surprising in itself and is almost unequalled even by the fore-

* Vide advertisement.

most of modern minds" and their thoughts "have lost none of their wisdom and weight because of their antiquity." In this connection the remarks of Prof. Max Muller in his "Veda and Vedanta" are worth quoting, "I admit that it requires patience, discrimination and a certain amount of self-denial before we can discover the grains of solid gold in the dark mines of Eastern Philosophy. It is far easier and far more amusing for shallow critics to point out what is absurd and ridiculous in the religion and philosophy of the ancient world than for the earnest student to discover truth and wisdom under strange disguises." Faith demanded of the student of Vedanta is, according to Mr. Aiyar, no blind faith but a spirit of meek reverence which alone leads up to knowledge. "The Vedanta ignores the phenomenal, not because the phenomenal is unimportant but because it is beyond the special sphere of investigation which it marks out for itself." The paper "The Ethics of the Vedanta" is inspired by the *Isha-Upanishad*. The explanation of the doctrine of Karma is apropos.

Prof. Rangachariyar's paper "The Vedanta Religion" is an outline of the *Dvaita*, *Vishishtadvaita* and *Advaita* systems regarded as so many views of the relation between the Finite and the Infinite, "which views may be characterised as (1) mechanical, (2) organic and (3) monistic. The first view holds both the Finite and the Infinite to be real and conceives the relation between them to be more or less akin to that between an engine and its maker who is also its driver....The second view also holds both the Finite and the Infinite to be real, but fuses

them together into a single organic whole by conceiving the relation between them to be like that between an organism and its life or 'vital force'.....The third view holds the Infinite to be the only reality, and conceives the Finite to be merely an illusory reflection or representation thereof." "Forms and symbols and dogmas are not at all essential to the true Vedantic Religion. But it does not despise them, seeing that many of us cannot do without them, even when they are not of the best kind."

"The Vedanta—Its Theory and Practice" is a lecture delivered in America by Swami Saradananda. We give below some of its salient points. Religion and Philosophy always went hand in hand in India. "And religion, in order to appeal to man as a whole, should not only appeal to his heart but to his intellect also." The universe is one connected whole and the division of it into the external and the internal is an arbitrary one. Science starting with the external is approaching the same goal reached by the Indian sages through the analysis of the internal. The change of one species into another is the result of the struggle of the Divine within to manifest Itself better and better, till the highest state transcending consciousness is attained,—not by losing individuality but developing it into the perfect and real one. Creation is as much eternal as the Creator. The Vedantic unity of all existence is the true basis of ethics, because then by injuring or loving others we injure or love ourselves. Progress is not from error to truth but from lower to higher truths. So Vedanta condemns none. It looks upon the different religions

as so many paths leading sooner or later to the one and same goal of all religions.

We now come to our Swamiji's speech "The Vedanta for the World" delivered at Kumbakonam, Madras, on his return in 1897 from the Chicago Parliament of Religions. "I have seen a little of the world" said he, "travelling among the races of the West and the East; and everywhere I find among nations one great ideal, which forms the backbone, so to speak, of that race.....This, our motherland, has religion and religion alone for its basis, for its backbone, for the bedrock upon which the whole building of its life has been based.....For good or evil our vitality is concentrated in our religion." Has it been an evil? "Aye, it is a curious fact that, while nations after nations have come upon the stage of the world, played their parts vigourously for a few moments and died almost without leaving a mark or a ripple on the ocean of time, here we are, living, as it were, an eternal life." Why? Because it is the strength of the spirit, not of the muscle, that survives. "Can you give such a religion up without the rousing of the same energy in reaction?" No, it is impossible for India to give up her religion. "You can only work under the law of least resistance, and this religious line is the line of least resistance in India."

India had, nay, yet has to play her part in the spiritualization of the civilization of the world. The West is looking to her for the very spiritual food and drink they hunger and thirst for. It is the Vedanta alone that can become the universal religion. Other religions are built round

the person of their founders, upon the historic authenticity of whose life rests the fabric of such religions. If that rock of authenticity be shaken, the whole building tumbles down. Again "it is vain to try to gather all the peoples of the world around a single personality. It is difficult to make them gather together even around eternal and universal principles. If it ever becomes possible to bring the largest portion of humanity to one way of thinking in regard to religion, mark you, it must be always through principles and not through persons." But, "just as our God is an impersonal and yet a personal God, so is our religion a most intensely impersonal one, a religion based upon principles, and yet it has an infinite scope for the play of persons." The other claim of Vedanta upon the attention of the world is its wonderful rationalism and harmony with the results of modern scientific investigations. In Vedanta we get the grandest ideal of universal toleration. Its oneness of all existence is the rationale of all ethics.

"Aye," he continued, "I know what grandeur, what oceans of love, what infinite, ecstatic blessings and joy there are in the dualistic love theories of worship and religion. I know it all. But this is not the time with us to weep even in joy; we have had weeping enough; no more is this the time for us to become soft. This softness has been on us till we are dead; we have become like masses of cotton. What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and the secrets of the universe, and will

accomplish their purpose even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face in every fashion. That is what we want, and that can only be created, established and strengthened by understanding and realising the ideal of the *Advaita*.Yea, let every man and woman and child, without respect of caste or birth or weakness or strength, hear and know that behind the strong and the weak, behind the high and the low, behind every one, there is that Infinite Soul assuring the infinite possibility and the infinite capacity of all to become great and good.....Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come, and everything that is excellent will come when this sleeping Soul is roused to self-conscious activity."

As regards the vexed questions of caste and social reform, "I have nothing to do *directly* with your castes or with social reformation. Live in any caste you like, but that is no reason why you should hate another caste or another man. It is love and love alone that I preach." "Our ideal is the Brahman of spiritual culture and renunciation, in whom worldliness is altogether absent and true wisdom is abundantly present," —the Brahman with whom, our Shastras say, the whole world will be peopled in the coming *Satya-yuga*. "Therefore our solution of the caste question is not degrading those who are already high up, is not running amuck through food and drink, is not jumping out of our own limits in order to have more enjoyment; but it comes by every one of us fulfilling the dictates of our *Vedantic*

religion, by our attaining spirituality, and by our becoming the ideal Brahman." "I am no preacher of any momentary social reform. I only ask you to work to realize more and more the Vedantic ideal of the solidarity of man and his inborn divine nature, to go forward and to complete the practical realization of the scheme of human progress that has been laid out in the most perfect order by our ancestors", which is the attainment by all, "from the highest man to the lowest *Pariah*", of the ideal Brahmanhood. Supply this basic principle and particulars will grow and adjust of themselves. That must be effected through "growth, expansion, development on national lines." True, great many things have to be taken, many lessons to be learnt from other nations; but "inconsiderate imitations of Western means and methods of work will not do for India."

Listen to the concluding words: "Close your lips and let your hearts open. Work out the salvation of this land and of the whole world, each of you thinking that the entire burden is on your shoulders. Carry the light and the life of the *Vedanta* to every door and rouse up the divinity that is hidden within every soul. Then, whatever may be the measure of your success, you shall have this satisfaction, that you have lived, worked, and died for a great cause. In the success of this cause, howsoever brought about, is centred the salvation of humanity here and hereafter."

The book is aptly dedicated to the memory and contains a likeness of Prof. Max Muller. It will repay perusal.

CORRESPONDENCE

NEW YORK VEDANTA SOCIETY

To the Editor, Prabuddha Bharata.

Dear Sir,

Especial interest has been attached this year to the opening of the winter classes and lectures because of the coming of another Swami to aid in the work. For the outside observer this is the most tangible proof yet given of the growth and permanency of the Vedanta movement in New York; and a strong feeling also prevails in the Society itself that the step marks a new period in its development. Few, however, beyond those who have watched the organization from the beginning can appreciate through what vicissitudes it has passed and what an inexhaustible store of determination, courage and perseverance it has needed to bring it to its present condition. People in India assume that in America all undertakings must be easy because of the country's great material resources, but they do not see that these very resources constitute a serious obstacle in any purely spiritual cause. The churches so far recognize this that with few exceptions they have adopted a policy of compromise in order to hold their congregations and receive from them the required support. A religion, on the contrary, which, like the Vedanta, attempts no compromise, but boldly preaches practical renunciation and non-attachment, must necessarily find a limited number of followers at the outset and these will inevitably be among the thinking class rather than among the rich.

The Vedanta Society has therefore

had to make its way slowly ; but this very struggle has undoubtedly meant added vigor and today every member has good reason to feel that the seed sown by the Swami Vivekananda has through the Swami Abhedananda's tireless care and devotion sprung up into a sturdy deep-rooted plant. The Reports, indeed, read at the regular business meeting held on the first of the month, showed a better financial condition, a longer membership list and a fuller corps of active workers than ever before in the history of the movement.

The attendance at the Sunday lectures has also been excellent and keen interest has been manifested in the subjects which represent a departure from those usually treated. In order to clear up the confusion existing in most Western minds concerning the different religions and religious teachers of the East and their relation to Vedanta, the Swami Abhedananda through November and December is giving the following course :

November

DUALISTIC VEDANTA, THE BHAKTI-YOGA; DEVOTION AND LOVE; KRISHNA, THE HINDU CHRIST, AND HIS TEACHINGS; WORSHIP OF KRISHNA IN INDIA; WORSHIP OF BUDDHA.

December

LAMAISM IN TIBET; TEACHINGS OF BUDDHA AND VEDANTA; IDOL WORSHIP AMONG HINDUS AND CHRISTIANS; WORSHIP OF CHRIST AND CHRISTMAS.

The Swami Nirmalananda arrived on last Wednesday after a continuous passage from Bombay to New York by way of Naples. He has already won the sympathy of all those who have met him and every one is confident that he will

prove an invaluable addition to the work in this country. The Swami Abhedananda has also returned from his five months in Europe, full of new power and strength and all things point to a season exceptionally rich in results.

L. G.

New York, 27th Novr. 1903.

BAGBAZAR VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY

To the Editor, Prabuddha Bharata.
Sir,

A little more than a year ago, some of the enterprising students of this quarter of the town formed themselves into a Society under the guidance and superintendence of the Swami Saradananda of the Ramakrishna Mission. This Society goes under the name and title of "THE BAGBAZAR VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY." Sister Nivedita and other well-known persons are associated with this movement of students and it is earnestly hoped that sooner or later all the leaders of our society will stand by these young men and extend to them a helping hand.

The object of the Society is religious, but it is that sort of practical religion which brings out that manhood in men, for which India was so famous during the time of the Mahabharata and of which we see the revival, in the present time, in the glorious lives of Sri Ramakrishna and the Swami Vivekananda. The object therefore is to implant among the members that spirit of practical Vedanta and train them to practise it in their everyday life by the great privilege of loving and serving others and communicating this spirit to the coming generation.

The members of the Society are mostly students of schools and colleges.

WORK DONE

- (a) A meeting room has been secured and a small library started for the use of the members.
- (b) Weekly classes on the Gita and other Scriptures are held.
- (c) A gymnasium for the members has been established.
- (d) Distribution of rice to the poor.
- (e) Cleansing and disinfecting three hundred and fifty huts of a poor bustee and sixteen private houses of poor gentlemen during the last plague time. The funds for this purpose were contributed by one of our members who is really a pillar of the Society. The work was continued for more than a month and was done entirely by the members themselves under the superintendence of Sister Nivedita. Nine sweepers were employed for this work. The Society acknowledges with hearty thanks the invaluable help rendered to it by Messrs. Butto Krishna Paul & Co. and the Calcutta Municipality by supplying it with Carbolic Acid, Phenyle and other necessary things.
- (f) Distribution of medicine to the poor. Several hundred persons have been served in this way.
- (g) Establishment of a night school for those who cannot afford to go to school. Books and other necessaries are distributed free among the students. Twenty boys have already been enrolled.

SOURCES OF HELP

1. Weekly collection of rice given in the Society's begging bowls by the families of the neighbourhood.

2. Donations by kind friends and patrons.

3. Subscriptions raised among the members themselves.

The growth of the work in so short a time is the best proof that the Society meets an urgent demand. But any extension of work necessitates a corresponding extension of funds. The members will spare no pains to do what they can to serve men and women looking upon them as *Narayana* and *Devi* incarnate. But for the funds, they look to those in whose heart the Mother ever resides as gentle Mercy and as the Power to do good through the medium of charity.

SATIS CHANDRA ROY CHOUDHURY,
for the Secretary.

53, Bosepara Lane,
Bagbazar, Calcutta,
7th February, 1904.

NEWS AND NOTES

IT is supposed that the average depth of sand in the deserts of Africa is from 40ft. to 80ft.

THE wise man knows that we retain spiritual qualities only as we give them away.—*Elbert Hubbard.*

OWING to the clearness of the air, conversation in the Arctic regions can be carried on quite easily by persons two miles apart.

THE remarkable echo at Eagle's Nest, on the banks of Killarney, Ireland, repeats a bugle call 109 times, each clear and distinct.

ONLY one-third of the world's population use bread as a daily article of food. Nearly one-half of the people of the world subsist chiefly on rice.

A GRAMME of radium is the most marvellous thing on the face of the earth. The energy it will give out before it is entirely dissipated would raise 500 tons one mile high in the air.

METALS get tired like living beings. Telegraph wires are better conductors on Monday than on Saturday on account of their Sunday rest, and a rest of three weeks adds 10 per cent to the conductivity of a wire.

SWAMI Sivananda acknowledges with thanks the receipt of Rs. 50 from a friend and Rs. 25 from Dr. Basudeo Sahay, as contributions towards the maintenance of the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Benares.

WITH the assistance of the latest machines, a piece of leather can be transformed into a pair of boots in thirty-four minutes, in which time it passes through the hands of sixty-three people and through fifteen machines.

IT is announced that the site of twelve acres in South London near Camberwell Green for the new King's College Hospital, valued at £60,000 is the gift of an anonymous donor. "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

IT is only by personal experience that we know, only through contest that we grow strong, only through contact with

passion, hatred and selfishness that we learn by contrast the beauty of tenderness, and unselfish devotion.—*Horatio W. Dresser.*

WE have been asked to announce the formation of a Vivekananda Society at Chidambaram, Madras, with the object of studying the Hindu Religion. M. R. Ry. T. N. Desikachariar has been elected the President and M. R. Ry. S. Sadasiva Aiyar the Secretary.

THE making of shoes for dogs has now developed into quite a big industry, and is specially flourishing in Labrador. The dogs attached to sledges travel at great speed over the rough ice, and some protection for the feet is necessary. The shoes are made of sealskin.

DANGEROUS SELF-ANALYSIS

A centipede was happy quite
Until a toad in fun
Said 'pray which leg goes after which?'
That worked her mind to such a pitch
She lay distracted in a ditch
Considering how to run.

—*'Out of the Silence.'*

AT the annual ploughing match, open to all England, organized by the North Kent Agricultural Association, two of the 118 ploughs were drawn by motors, and were said to have done as good work as any horse-drawn ploughs, and in much quicker time. It is claimed that a motor can plough six acres a day.

AT the conference of the Rontgen Rays Society, Philadelphia, Dr. Henry K. Pancoase, Pennsylvania University, called

attention to one remarkable effect of the X Rays upon Negroes. In every case, the part subjected to the rays had turned white, and after a year or more the skin had remained like that of a white man.

IN the Colorado desert they have rainstorms during which not a single drop of water touches the earth. The rain can be seen falling from the clouds high above the desert, but when the water reaches the strata of high, dry air beneath the clouds it is entirely absorbed before falling half the distance to the ground.

THE value of hairsprings when finished and placed in watches is enormous in proportion to the material from which they are made. A ton of gold is worth about £125,583. A ton of steel made up into hairsprings when in watches is worth about £1,576,258—more than twelve and a half times the value of pure gold.

CURIOUS ceremonies are witnessed in Siam when one of the sacred white elephants dies. It is given a funeral grander than that accorded to princes of Royal blood. Buddhist priests officiate, and thousands of devout Siamese men and women follow the deceased animal to the grave. Jewels and offerings representing some thousands of pounds are buried with the elephant.

THE Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the Vivekananda Society, Colombo, Ceylon;

the Vivekananda Town Hall, Dharma-puri, Madras; Sri Ramakrishna Mutt, Madras; the Ramakrishna Mission, Bangalore, Mysore; the Vivekananda Society, Calcutta and the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Benares. Feeding the poor formed the general feature of the ceremony. We beg to be excused for our inability to publish all the correspondence for want of space.

THE seventy-first Birthday Anniversary of Bhagavana Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated on the 21st February at the Belur Math, Bengal and the Ramakrishna Mutt, Castle Kernan, Triplicane, Madras. The programme for the occasion at Madras was :

1. Pujā and Bhajanam 7. A.M. to 10 A.M.
2. Entertaining friends
and the poor, 10,000 10 „ to 3 P.M.
3. Harikathā ... 3 P.M. to 5 „
4. An Address upon
'Sri Ramakrishna
and his teachings.' 5 P.M. to 7 P.M.
5. Arātrikam and Dis-
tribution of Prasada. 7 „ to 7-30 „

THERE exists a curious natural bridge near Point Arena, Mendocino County, California. The ceaseless action of the waves has cut through the solid rock of the cliffs and formed a kind of inland lake, leaving a mighty mass of rock between it and the ocean. The natural arches are four in number and low boats can pass through them when the sea is calm. The archway is called the "Bridge of Sighs" from the peculiar sobbing noise the tide makes when running in from the Pacific Ocean and passing through the rocky portals.

2-1

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