

# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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VOL. XXX] SEPTEMBER, 1926.

No. 9

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES

27th January, 1921.

The Swami said : “In mind is everything. Therefore ‘act with the consent of the mind.’

“ ‘Woman is like unto a blade of grass to a Brahma-charin. So is death to a hero, Shastras to a knower of Brahman, and the world to one who is free from desires.’ ‘Like unto a blade of grass,’ that is to say, insignificant, worthless. But it is better to look upon woman as mother. The Shastras are not binding on one who has realised the Self,—he is above all limitations.”

“Swamiji used to say that even a bad deed, if it is to be done at all, must be done manfully, that will greatly minimise its evil. There was a man who had committed fifty-two crimes. Once he found himself called upon to do another crime for the benefit of a neighbour. Such is the effect of unselfish action that this last crime saved him from the dire effects of the past ones.”

A student came seeking his advice as to the desirability of his joining the Non-co-operation movement. The Swami said to him: "Be fixed in one thing. Do not waver. 'Do not stand on two boats'."

*28th January, 1921.*

Many of the Brahmacharins would be initiated into Sannyasa in a few days. The atmosphere was tense with the expectation of that great event. The talk therefore naturally turned on this and the Swami observed: "One must be ready to sacrifice even life to maintain one's monastic vows. Such determination is a necessary qualification of Sannyasa. The Master used to say that he alone is fit to be a monk who can fall down without struggle from the top of a palmyra tree."\*

The Swami then narrated an authentic story of a monk. "He was a very spirited man—the Sadhu. He was once invited by a Seth to his house. When the Sadhu went there, the tricky Seth somehow managed to shut him in a room with his (the Seth's) young wife. Finding himself helpless and endangered, the Sadhu prayed to God, 'O Paramatman, why hast Thou thus endangered my vow which I have so long maintained unsoiled?' No sooner had he finished his prayer than he felt an urgent call of nature. The woman, unwilling to let him out, directed him to an adjoining room.

"Then he felt an overpowering mood coming on him. And in that mood, he undressed and smeared himself all over with his excreta and came back to the woman. She was struck with horror at the sight and cried aloud to have the door opened, and when it was done, she fled out of the room and the Sadhu also went out unmolested and washed himself.

"Thus does the Lord save His earnest devotees. I travelled widely and long in the Punjab, but never did

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\* That is to say, the monk must give up all thoughts of himself in absolute self-surrender to God.



I meet with any such trouble. While wandering in the Limdi state, Swamiji was detained by a band of *Vijamârgis*\* in one of their houses. A boy happened to come there. Swamiji wrote of his danger on a potsherd with a piece of charcoal and sent it through him to the Prince of Limdi. The Prince at once sent his men and had him rescued."

D— had gone mad. The Swami was anxious about him and said: "I prayed to the Master to graciously bring him round as one who has taken shelter at his feet. But will he grant my prayer?"

*1st February, 1921.*

N— read out the last four chapters of the Katha Upanishad, which the Swami followed with extensive comments.

When N— read, "One must apprehend Him in the concept 'He is' and also in His essential principle, but when he hath grasped Him as the *Is*, then the essential of Him dawneth upon a man," the Swami told an anecdote of the Master. "A man one day came to Sri Ramakrishna and sought his instructions about the means of God-realisation. Sri Ramakrishna said: 'There is a tank in our part of the country called *Hâldâr-Pukur*, in which one or another always catches fish. He sits there with the fishing rod in his hand. By and by a fish comes to the bait and disturbs the water. Then the man feels that a fish has come, fish is. This makes him patient and enthusiastic, and he waits on till at last he actually hooks and drags it up to the ground. Similar is the realisation of God.' After long and strenuous Sadhana one is convinced in one's inmost heart of the existence of God. Then one comes to know Him better and more intimately.

"The Upanishads lay strong and repeated emphasis on steadiness."

The eagerly looked-for ceremony of Sannyasa had

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\* An obscure sect indulging in questionable practices in the name of religion.

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 taken place yesterday. And after the ceremony, L— had read out the first two chapters of the Katha Upanishad as also that portion of the Brihadâraṇyaka, in which is recorded the renunciation of Yâjñavalkya. The Swami said in reference to it that when they had their Sannyasa, Swamiji also had taken them into a grove at Baranagore and read to them that particular section of the Brihadâraṇyaka Upanishad.

The Swami recited from an invocation : “ ‘My soul is Thyself, and my intelligence is Thy Divine consort. The vital forces are Thy companions and the body is Thy home. Communion with the phenomenal world is Thy worship and sleep is the realising of Samadhi. When my legs walk, they really go round Thee. All my speech is Thy invocation and all my work Thy worship.’ ” He also recited a Bengali song of which the purport was that everything is Brahman and the burden “O my mind, worship the Mother !”

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### BHAGAVAN SRI KRISHNA

The Lord descends on the earth in darkness, rain and storm. The world sleeps dead-like. Rains fall, the lightning flashes and the thunder roars. Horrid dreams oppress the peace of the good and the evil revel in uncouth orgies. The saintly are shut up in dungeons to patient, solitary prayers. But the Lord sees all and listens to the prayers rising from contrite hearts. He bides his time, and then, unexpectedly, foiling human calculations, he descends to the earth—he, the supreme bliss and peace of the world.

Even so it happened on a certain night in the dim past in a prison cell in the city of Mathura. That night the heavens broke down in thunder-claps and torrents of rain ; the winds howled and the lightning flashed luridly. The Jamuna rose in flood, and the gloomy pall of an indescribable pain lay heavy on the heart of the wicked



Kamsa. But in the cell, Devaki and Vasudeva waited trembling in hope and agony. Their hearts were sore within them fearing the fate their new-born child would inevitably meet at Kamsa's hands. This pious couple had known as had all men of Mathura, that the Lord would be born as their eighth child. In hope and despair, joy and agony, they had been looking forward to this supreme event. The hour was nigh and only a miracle could save even the Divine child from the fatal hands of their persecutor.

Then—Oh the ecstasy of it—when the child was at last born, the souls of the long-suffering parents swooned in delight and an infinite consolation lay like a balm on their lacerated hearts. The powers of men are naught before the will of the Lord. The chains fell off the ankles of Vasudeva. The heavy doors swung outwards of their own accord before him ; and the ever-awake guards and soldiers lay senseless in heavy slumbers. But how to ford the flooded river? Is it not a jackal walking only knee-deep across the waters? A mighty serpent held its spread hood against rains over the father and the Divine child. Arriving on the other bank, the anxious father found the village of the innocent and unsophisticated cowherds sleeping too deeply to know the change of babies. Slowly he laid his child in the arms of the sleeping Yashoda and hurried back with her new-born baby by the way he had come to the dungeons of Kamsa, and the doors closed of themselves.

And Kamsa learnt that the Lord was born and thrived safe beyond his reach. And the Divine child grew in love and beauty and became the idol, the very soul, of the cowherd settlement.

It is always thus the Lord comes among men. "When religion decays and irreligion prevails," then is he born among the very wicked themselves. For the proud and the wicked are also the inheritors of the best culture of the land ; and though they occasionally debase themselves by its abuse, they also rise and lead mankind by its powers. And the Lord who is also man, is the soul and mouth-

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piece of the nation's many-featured life. But though out of the degraded best he comes, he dwells and grows among only the meek, the innocent and pure. The wicked proud seek to destroy his rising power. But eventually he eludes their machinations and thrives on the loving service of the neglected and the pure. And with the passing of days their pride is humbled to the dust and the righteous generations rise on its remains.

But are these—the coming of the Lord and his succour—only symbolically true or are they also historical? Often the voice of doubt whispers, “Did God truly come and live amongst men? Should we believe the miracles that are ascribed to him?” May be the imagination of the faithful has embellished the core of fact, adding new features to the original story. But miracles, or such as are called miracles, are not impossible of happening. Who has gauged the powers of God? Who has ever sounded the depths of even human possibilities? We do not wonder at the accustomed,—we call them *natural*. But how little we know of even the natural! We see scarcely below the surface. Whenever therefore the unaccustomed face us, we stare at them in awe and call them miracles. Little is known to us of the truths and workings of the Inner Being of which the expression is our world. But our ignorance of it cannot necessarily stifle its functioning. It works on unperceived, and sometimes bursts into our narrow vision bedecked with the strange light of the unknown.

God is not so far off from men as we blindly think, nor is he a passive witness of the play of life. He is unceasing in his ministrations to the world of his creation and hugs it in his bosom as his other self. What wonder then that he would show himself forth in forms dear and familiar to man? So he comes and dwells amongst us. A few recognise him, some feel his transcendental charms and others his power. History bears repeated testimony to such Divine interference in the process of human affairs, unaccountable by empirical laws, so profound, elusive and superhuman it seems!



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But even if the stories of Incarnations be unhistorical, they are not therefore less *real*. The question of historicity has been often unnecessarily emphasised in relation to the Divine men. *The truth and reality of spiritual things do not depend on their being historical ; but on their perceptibility in the superconscious vision.* History is concerned with the sensuous and the temporal only. We see men and the world. But that is no proof of their *spiritual value*. To be considered *spiritually* true and real, they must be perceivable otherwise than through the senses, that is, in that plane of consciousness where abides the Eternal. So to judge the truth and reality of the Incarnations, the *only* point to be decided is whether they are realisable by the superconscious mind, and not whether they lived and died like any of us, historical beings. Are the gods and angels non-existent and unreal because they are not historical and were never born as earthly beings? They have been perceived in all ages and countries, not by the physical eye but by the exalted spirit. They are denizens of higher and finer worlds and are revealed to the clarified vision.

Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, they all live similarly in the heart of the Eternal and are the "eternal forms" of God. From age to age they have stepped into the process of human life as prophets and Incarnations. No Hindu ever thinks Goddess Kali to be unreal because she did not walk the earth clothed in the corporeal vesture. Even so Krishna is real, whether he was born or not of Devaki and Vasudeva, or lived or not among the cowherds.

The Avataras have thus two distinct aspects, the historical and the spiritual. Objectively, the historical aspect seems more important and real. But in spiritual valuation, the supersensuous aspect alone concerns us. For one may be intensely historical, but if he is unrealisable by the superconscious mind, he is spiritually *nothing*. But the Incarnations and their *lilâ* (performances) have been and are seen superconsciously by countless devotees. *Therefore the question of historicity has nothing to do*

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*with religion.* Have the saints seen the visions of the crucified Christ? No matter whether he was born as man or not. Have the *Bhaktas* seen the *Gopilila* in their supersensuous visions? Who cares then whether Krishna is historical or not?

But it will be said: "There are incontestable proofs that what the faithful look upon as the *lilâ* of the Incarnations belong all to this world. There may be sometimes a core of facts, but to it have been added the lavish imaginations of the devotees. Ancient and contemporary traditions have been transfused into them, and also subsequent events. This is how the Avataras are built up." It must be admitted that the contentions are apparently real. For instance, the life of Sri Krishna as described and believed by the orthodox is an aggregate of miracles and incongruities. His birth itself savours of the impossible. The childhood is studded over with miracles. He is made to indulge in adult emotions when he was still a young lad. There is a strange resemblance between his exploits and those of Herakles of Greece, so much so that Megasthenes reporting about the year 300 B. C. on India to Seleukos Nikator states that "Herakles is worshipped at Mathura and Cliscbothra." There is also a unique similarity noticeable between the infancies of Krishna and Christ. The *Gopilila* is only a transformation of the ancient spring festival. Facts, traditions and imagination have thus combined in disregard of all canons of reality and chronology to create the baffling personality of Sri Krishna, indeterminate, supernormal. The story of the Christ also is equally vague and indeterminate. Higher criticism would deny his historicity *in toto*.

This analysis and interpretation of the historian are justified by his point of view. But the version of the faithful—that the story of the Incarnation is derived from superconscious knowledge—is also true. We cannot deny either of them,—the truth of the historical researches as well as of the *lila* having been actually realised by seers.



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How to explain this strange parallelism? How happens it that unrelated and often distant events of history allied with traditions and imagination unconsciously reproduce an integral spiritual reality? Two explanations can be offered. The one is that the historian's version alone is real and the so-called superconscious visions are products of enlivened imagination. The devotee believing in the truth of the traditional story, dwells constantly on it with the concentrated ardour of his soul; and the consequence is the objectification of the subjective ideas. But this explanation is scarcely tenable in face of certain important considerations. First, the visions have often come unsolicited and unthought-of, without any effort of the mind. Secondly, creatures of imagination can by no means be more real than their creator. In visions however, the Divine personalities appear infinitely more real and powerful than the perceiver. Thirdly, the scheme of the outer and the inner universe does not so depend on the individual mind that it can by mere will transform it. But mystic visions are found to actually produce such a fundamental change. Not only is one blessed with such visions transformed for ever, but the world also is transformed and spiritualised for him.

The second explanation suggests that the truth is the other way about. It is not that imagination makes evanescent events immortal. But because the events already exist in the heart of God in their fullness and perfection, therefore do we perceive them revealed in the process of time. All things already exist in the Cosmic Mind. They are struggling to manifest themselves through time and space. Hence they appear crude, imperfect and distorted. They are more suggestions of the realities than the realities themselves. The universe is the wreckage of the Infinite on the shores of the finite. Whenever the soul of man piercing through the disfiguring and blinding veil reaches the mind of God, these eternal ideas—the forms and *lilās* of God are revealed to him in their pristine effulgence. It is thus that the Divine forms came to the knowledge of men. In this quest of the soul,

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environments are often helpful and furnish the original impetus. Events and traditions hold out their subtle suggestions. Contemporary knowledge and realities are too unsatisfactory and fill the mind with the eager longing for the unknown and the unconquered. The air is thick with the fragrance of wistful expectation. *All these are as it were the broken outlines of a hovering revelation.* Then the eager soul speeds on the wings of inspiration, flits into the bosom of God and finds itself bathed in the glory of the eternal vision. We may well imagine that such an event prefaced the revelation of the Christ on earth. Contemporary events, hopes and fears and accumulated traditions, all hinted at this truth at the back of them and were tense with the approaching revelation. The Christ was already reflected and pre-figured in the events and minds of men and dimly perceivable even as the mother feels the growing child in her womb. The eternal was becoming the temporal. Then one, filled with the agony and hope of the whole race, sought for and was vouchsafed the vision of the Christ and his *lilâ* ; and he saw the broken made whole, the dim clear and the vague real.

Who can measure the steps of the Eternal as he reveals himself through time? Here one, there another, with a gap of perhaps centuries between,—thus he leaves his footprints on the pathway of time, dimly and unperceived. Thus they grow and grow till at last they burst forth in their full significance in the superconscious perception of a fortunate soul. This is how the temporal and the eternal are inter-related. Sometimes the revelations are made absolutely on the spiritual plane, as in the instance of Christ. The Christ perhaps never lived as a man, but revealed himself to a pure heart in the depths of ecstasy. At other times, they have a historical counterpart, as in the instance of Rama or Krishna. But the fulness of these realities and truths was never on the plane of the sensible, but always on the plane of the supersensible. Therefore the problems of the historian have never signified anything to the devotees. Are there not hosts of



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 saints and sages to bear witness to the truth of their reality? Enough if I can see myself and my universe melt into the eternal light and love of my Beloved. Who cares for the disquisitions of the learned?

And who can better steal the heart of man than the Beloved cowherd? Of him it has been said that other Incarnations are but parts of the Lord, whereas Krishna is the Lord himself. It is through the heart that man is related to the world, men and God. These yearnings of the heart, the love-relations, can be subsumed under five heads, generally termed in the *Bhakti-Shâstras* as the *Pancha-bhâvas*, viz., *Shānta* (peaceful love), *Dāsyā* (service), *Sakhya* (friendship), *Vātsalya* (parental affection) and *Madhura* (Sweetest i.e. conjugal love). It is considered that all love-emotions of whatever shade or degree, must fall under one or another of these five root-emotions. And every man according to his temperament realises God as the perfection and fulfilment of one of these root-emotions. From this it follows that so far as humanity is concerned, the Personal God is the perfection of these five love-ideals. This provides a standard wherewith to judge the relative greatness of his incarnations. We may say one representing a greater number of these perfections is superior to the others. From this point of view, Sri Krishna is decidedly the greatest incarnation of God. In Christ is represented the ideals of *Shānta* and *Dāsyā*. In Rama, *Shānta*, *Dāsyā*, *Sakhya* and *Vātsalya*. But in Krishna, all the five are manifested fully. The world has seen the greatest expression of love in and through him. He is the beloved Ideal of men as well as women, of children as well as grown-up men. The versatility of his character is marvellous. "He is the most wonderful Sannyasin and the most wonderful householder in one ; he had the most wonderful amount of *Rājasa* power and was at the same time living in the midst of the most wonderful renunciation." He was the perfect embodiment of his own teachings in the Gita. All the four *Yogas* find their culmination in him. A great philosopher and religious teacher, a mighty hero and statesman, a

powerful leader of hosts and maker of kings,—he was yet the beloved of the unsophisticated cowherds of Brindavan. How wonderful is *Gopililā* ! This is the very crown of his transcendental glory. “The purest love is only in Brindavan, and none else than the *Gopas* and the *Gopis* know it.” Aye, theirs was the true love. Our love is always tinged with the consciousness of the power and fear of God. There is always an element of self-consciousness in it. But the *Gopis* know nothing of the power of majesty of Krishna. “The only thing they cared to understand of Krishna was that he was Infinite Love, that was all.” “I do not want wealth, nor many people, nor do I want learning ; no, not even do I want to go to heaven. Let me be born again and again, but Lord, grant me this, that I may have love for thee, and that for love’s sake.” Such indeed was their love for him. “Who can understand the throes of love of the *Gopis*—the very ideal of love, love that wants nothing, love that does not care for anything in this world, or the world to come? .....They hated every adjective that was applied to Krishna ; they did not care to know that he was the Lord of creation, they did not care to know that he was almighty, they did not care to know that he was omnipotent..... Even the Gita, the great philosophy of religion, has nothing in it to compare with that ecstatic madness of love.”

Aye, that is the one goal for the human soul, that infinite ocean of love in which it must lose itself for ever. Even now the flute is playing its ravishing strains. Still your heart, the flute will madden you by its song. Even now by the blue stream of the Jamuna, he stands illuminating the fragrant groves by his divine effulgence. Clarify your vision, that world will open before you. For verily, our own heart is the eternal Brindavan, and he the eternal shepherd playing in it his soul-ravishing strains. May he, the Full Moon of Gokool, graciously grant us his soul-emancipating vision !

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# YOU ASK ME WHY . . .

BY NINA MACDONALD.

You ask me why mine eyes are glad.  
With joyful heart I tell you.

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Listen—

I go keep a tryst with my Beloved.  
Each morn when Dawn comes softly winging o'er the  
world ;  
When birds from nest and leafy bower  
With gladsome carols greet the new-born light ;  
When comes the soft awakening of grass and flower  
and tree . . .  
'Tis then I rise and swiftly go to keep sweet tryst with  
Him—my Lord.  
And when Day has drawn the veil of evening close, and  
softly gone to rest ;  
When Night—the merciful, the beneficent one—takes the  
tired world in her embrace  
And, over cares and joys alike draws her soft, enfolding  
mantle, sleep, . . .  
Then again do I come treading gently, reverently, the  
path that leads to joy—and . . . Him.

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Where is He?

Oh, very, very near and yet . . so far.  
To win to Him I must leave all.  
All thought of self must fall away ;  
All outward forms be lost to view.  
Where I keep my tryst with Him  
There shines no sun, nor moon, nor stars ;  
Naught save glowing, opalescent darkness and sound  
made visible.  
No earthly sound of mirth or strife is heard.

His name—the name of my Beloved—  
Rolls resonant in deep and endless waves.



And is He fair, you ask?  
Never was poet's dream so fair as He.  
He is the perfume of the sweetest flowers,  
Serenity of snow-clad mountains high,  
Splendor of noonday sun,  
Softness of starbeams on moonless night,  
Sparkle of wave, murmur of forest rill and calm of summer  
seas.

His is all beauty that has been, that is, or that will be.



Ah yes, mine eyes are glad—for all day long my heart  
doth sing its one sweet song:

A tryst have I—a tryst, O my Soul!—to keep with my  
Beloved.



## LESSONS OF THE PABNA RIOTS

BY SWAMI ASHOKANANDA

### I

It has pleased Providence to hold before us again the woeful spectacle of the extremely amorphous and helpless condition of the Hindu society in the horrors of the Pabna communal riots. Pabna is a district of the north Bengal with a district town of the same name. In that town in the morning of the 1st July were discovered five mutilated images of gods and goddesses near the house of a prominent citizen. This marked the beginning of the trouble. The sad spectacle drew hundreds of Hindu spectators throughout the day, and it was decided that these broken images together with other unprotected images in the town would be taken in procession and



immersed in the river. Accordingly a procession started at 6 p.m., which swelled to several thousands and by 7 it reached the bazar. There behind the rows of shops is a shed in which some Muhammadans were then saying their prayers. When the procession approached its vicinity, some of them came to protest ; a fracas took place resulting in personal injuries on both sides. The police fortunately intervened ; the procession went its way, immersed the images in the river, and terminated at about 7-30 p.m.

But the news of the collision spread into the villages and it is said that by 9 p.m. several thousand Mussalmans advanced from the neighbouring villages and poured into the town ; and mob-rule prevailed for two days thereafter during which the Hindus lived in terror within doors, and stray cases of assault on Hindus took place. The Commissioner and the Deputy Inspector-General of Police arrived at Pabna with reinforcements on July 3. Since then, it may be said, normal conditions have prevailed in the town.

But the rioting in the town was nothing compared to what happened in the villages. The rumours spread all over the district of the desecration of a mosque by the Hindus, and the Muhammadans who form a preponderant majority of the village populations, burst into fanatical flames, and all the horrors of hell were let loose on the Hindu minorities of the villages. Fanatical Mussalmans marched from village to village and town to town preaching assault on Hindus' person and property. From the 4th July attacks commenced and continued unceasing till the 8th when firm action by the authorities in sending reinforcements, arresting rowdy elements and resorting to fire began to have a quietening effect. But what happened in the meantime were ghastly in details. Markets were looted. Hindu homes were plundered and destroyed. Forcible conversion was resorted to. And men, women and children had to fly from their homes and take shelter for two or three days in forests infested by snakes, wild boars and tigers. Want of space forbids us to go into

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details. But so grim and pathetic are they that it is almost unthinkable that such horrors could be perpetrated by neighbours on neighbours and that under a capable Government. Wealthy householders were made absolute paupers in a few hours. When they returned to their pillaged homes, in some cases they had not even a cup left to drink water from. In certain instances, respectable men were dragged to Mullahs and forced to dress like Muhammadans and repeat the *kalma* and even their womenfolk were constrained to embrace Islam. There has been communalism in Bengal before, but never such a ghastly expression of it.

## II

We would fain have overlooked these unhappy incidents as a passing frenzy and an unpremeditated outburst. We would have deplored but not saddened ourselves over them and raked up their fading memories. But they are not mere incidents. They are symbolic of hidden realities. The Pabna riots reveal the precarious conditions of the Hindu society in India, its weaknesses and impending dangers which, if they are not early remedied and averted, may lead to awful catastrophes.

Certain conclusions are irresistibly forced on us. The Hindus have not given a good account of themselves in this affair. They have shown lack of physical courage. Better they had died in defence of their home and honour than submit to the humiliations of flight and conversion. It is interesting to imagine what Muhammadans would have done in identical situations—they surely would have offered a stouter resistance. The difference is largely owing to physical debility of the Hindus as also to moral anaemia, augmented and often caused by physical weakness itself.

This timidity is not all to be laid at the door of the individuals concerned. Even an Englishwoman, under extremely dangerous conditions feels herself buoyed up by the knowledge that the support of the entire nation is



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behind her back. And even her deadliest enemy will not dare to raise his hand against her. Could our brethren when thus risked feel that whatever happened they had the whole Hindu India behind them, would they not have gladly laid their lives on the thresholds of their homes before they left them to be pillaged and desecrated? But to our shame that material and moral support is lamentably lacking. The reason of it is not so superficial as cowardice as is sometimes thought. For various causes, religious, social and political, we simply have not learnt to think of ourselves as a united people. It is true that in the later stages of the Pabna riots we have shown some signs of redemption and partial sympathy for the sufferers, which is bound to have a salutary effect on the community in general. But if sympathy had been shown earlier and more conspicuously, communal ill-feeling would not have assumed such vast proportions. As it was, our apathy indirectly encouraged the rowdies and bullies. Day by day, the press has reported shameful assaults on Hindu women made almost wholly by Muhammadans. But excepting the quite inadequate attempts of the *Nâri-rakshâ Samiti*, what has the Hindu society done to redress them?

We now feel that such prolonged neglect of responsibilities has brought the society to the verge of imminent ruin. It is said that fifty years ago Hindus constituted half the entire population of the Pabna district. The ratio now of them and Muhammadans is two to eleven. In most villages, the Hindus are in a hopeless minority. Even these few are slowly decaying and dying out. Statistics show that the growth of the Muhammadan population is as rapid as the decay of the Hindus. Various reasons have been given in explanation. The most obvious is the social. The extreme rigours of the Hindu social laws tend to decrease population. There are first of all the widows. Muhammadans have not that handicap. There are the narrow limitations of marriage-alliance. This tends to debilitate us physically. Muhammadans are free of these limitations. Then the child-mortality is certainly

higher among the Hindus. Social strictness has its other evils. It not only disintegrates society, but is also extremely cruel in application. Where we are unable to protect and defend, we are ruthless in punishment. The wonderful fraternity and catholicity of the Muhammadans are in striking contrast to this. Add to these the economic poverty of the Hindus who with their costly ceremonials and conventions can scarcely feel buoyant and bold. Combined with these social and economic causes, there is also the fact of the continuous political subjection of the Hindus, which has made them extra-submissive and hyper-metaphysical. In this respect also, the Muhammadans carry a lighter burden.

But a more important cause of our decadence is our religious disintegration. Not only has religion which is the essence and the foundation of the Hindu society, disappeared into meaningless and often harmful formal intricacies, but being divided into innumerable conflicting factions, it is no longer a cementing and invigorating factor in the national life. The remedy of this does not however lie in reviving the individual sects. For even were it done, they would not serve to strengthen and unify the Hindu community. It is a fact that those sects and creeds that have simple articles of faith and a paucity of ceremonialism are generally of stronger and more enduring fibres, and manifest extraordinary social cohesiveness. Witness, for example, the Muhammadans and the Sikhs. Too much addiction to ceremonialism and nicety of doctrines render the mind narrow, weak and hyper-sensitive, impair open-hearted manhood and sinewy masculinity. The Pauranic creeds belong mostly to this category. It is true they are rich in spiritual experience and subtle play of feeling, and in these respects perhaps go ahead of the calm realisations of the Vedanta. But they, alas, abound in weakening practices, intricate rites and ceremonies of bewildering varieties, circuitous philosophies and unhealthy social implications. Therefore, though traceable in their ultimate philosophy to the Vedanta or the Upanishads, in actual practice, spirit and



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outlook, they are far removed from the life-giving and invigorating teachings of the Vedanta. Century after century, we have indulged in the weak emotionalism of the Puranas, till by now we are reduced to a kind of jelly-fish existence. On the other hand, the robust monotheism of the Muhammadans allied with a wonderful practical Vedantism of equality, fraternity and liberty runs directly counter to the corrosive intricacies of the Pauranic religions. What wonder then that the Hindus should go down before the powerful growth of the Muhammadans?

But the greatest reason perhaps of this slow death is the loss of our international function which has resulted in a general waste and disintegration of the social life. We are unconscious of the great purpose for which the Hindu nation has lived through milleniums,—the duty of Aryanisation i.e. the spiritualisation of the motives and ideals of other races and nations. This is the great task which Providence has set to the Hindu race, and by its fulfilment it has risen to glory and prosperity from age to age. As with a man so with a people. An aimless existence is slow mortification. A noble purpose calls forth all the latent powers which otherwise are wasted and frittered away. We have now no aim as a nation and are lost in oblivion with consequent stagnation and disruption of the corporate life. We cannot therefore call forth whatever power we have when occasions require, and are at the mercy of circumstances. Muhammadans, on the other hand, with their Pan-Islamic consciousness are still purposive in their collective actions. The moral is obvious.

Of all these the Pabna riots are an indication and a warning.

### III

These, however, do not explain the root-cause of the communal *quarrel*. The Hindu society may be weak and defective, but why should it therefore earn the antipathy of the Muhammadans? This surely cannot be due to

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mere difference in beliefs and customs, for points of unity are not difficult to discover. Nor is the Semitic aggressiveness inherent in Islam so rampant in India, its Indian votaries being largely converts from Hinduism and the harmonising atmosphere of India having already exercised a profound influence on it. There must be some other deep-seated cause which has kept them separate and occasionally set them by the ear. Some have suggested that there is no real ill-feeling, the whole thing being *inspired* by interested parties. This explanation confuses a symptom for the disease. For without a pre-existing animosity, no party could ever take advantage of it. The smouldering fire was there, they simply fanned it to flames and threw in a fagot now and then to make it blaze more fearfully. We are therefore of opinion that the antipathy is real and of long duration. What is it then?

India was just emerging from the chaos of the decadent Buddhism and reconstituting her social corporation when the hordes of Muhammadan invaders overran Northern India. Buddhism by its wonderful liberality had invited innumerable races of questionable culture and religious belief into the fold of the Mother-Church, causing thereby an almost complete collapse of the social structure. While reorganising it, therefore, on the ancient caste basis, the fathers of the society had to be very careful in admitting and formulating this chaotic population. A large number remained outside the pale of the new society and in its shadowy borders. Such was the critical time when Muhammadans invaded India, and all these unreclaimed people were easily converted to the aggressive faith. Their children form to-day the bulk of the Muhammadan population in India. Now, it was natural that those converts already looked down upon by the high castes of the Hindu society should now be doubly hated. They also, as often happens with renegades, entertained no charitable feelings towards their former co-religionists. That ancient quarrel was never made up by mutual assimilation and has been handed through



centuries down to the present generation. This historical antipathy is, we think, mainly at the bottom of the present communal outbursts.

Along with it there is also the further reason that Hinduism has not yet succeeded in shaking off the defensive attitude assumed on the first invasion of India by Muhammadans. For then in those unsettled social conditions, it could not help raising protective walls of prohibitive customs against the onrush of the manifestly inferior and unknown civilisation of the new-comers. That attitude the Hindus have not yet abrogated.

Besides these, there is also a political reason. Several centuries of autocratic rule is too strong a memory to be effaced in a century or two. Muhammadans belong to a fraternity who are proud to have ruled over kingdoms extending from the shores of Spain to the Malay Archipelago. Therefore the prospects of self-government have revived in their bosom the sleeping desire of again having a dominant political position in the country. Long political subjection as well as their synthetic culture and catholicity of spirit have made the Hindus much saner politically. Democratic ideas are more agreeable to them than to the Muhammadans. This explains the bitter political quarrels, the extravagant claims and the intransigent attitude of the Muhammadans.

#### IV

If our diagnosis is correct, then the remedies will not be hard to find. What we shall suggest follow naturally from it. Our suggestions are mainly for the internal adjustment of the Hindu society. We believe that the solution of the Hindu-Moslem problem lies with the Hindus in their reforming themselves into a mighty, spiritually aggressive, and assimilative body. To that end, certain sharp changes in the present outlook and behaviour are absolutely necessary. From this will follow naturally a tremendous change in its international relations. That "don't-touchism" which is the bane of the

Hindu society must be shunned also in inter-communal and international relations. Hindus indeed must no longer shut off Muhammadans (and also of course other communities) from common social relationships. But we know this change can be brought about only indirectly by an internal adjustment. Hence to reconstruct the Hindu society is not only to strengthen and save it, but also to prepare the grounds for the real national unity of India.

The first thing to be done is to adopt certain measures to put an immediate stop to the mischiefs of the rowdies. We must offer physical resistance. We must bring it home to them that they cannot any more insult us with impunity. No offensive aggression or ruthless retaliation however, but stout and steady resistance to Muhammadan offensive (be it an attack on womanhood, on religion or civic rights) even unto death. You can no more win them over by sweet reasonableness and self-surrender than check the depredations of a tiger by pious sermons. When fanaticism overpowers man, he loses his head and the sleeping tiger in him wakes up with its ancient thirst for blood and death. The wisest course then is to offer resistance, "to face the brute" in the words of Swami Vivekananda. But mind, only *resistance*, not aggression. Never must a Hindu raise his hand against any one except in self-defence. For self-defence is human, but wanton aggression is beastly. It may be this spirit of resistance will not be evoked in a day, but it is also true that without it there will be no end to our suffering. What cowardice has begotten, courage alone can destroy.

But we have seen that this spirit of resistance cannot be born without the moral support of the entire and united Hindu community. How to unify the society is therefore the next important problem. We have seen that certain disintegrating forces, social and religious, underlie the present decadence. As regards the social problems we suggest after Swami Vivekananda that as a preliminary measure, the various sub-castes should be merged into the four cardinal castes. The sub-castes are separated from each other by conventions and traditions the most



important of which are those relating to dining and matrimony. These barriers of customs were originally intended as checks against intermixture and adulteration and consequent degradation of culture through race-fusion. In fact, when culture was not evenly distributed among the different sections, such checks were a necessity. But such inequality is almost neutralised now. Interdining and intermarriage may therefore be freely allowed among the members of the same caste. This will result in enrichment of blood, physical improvement as well as greater social cohesion. Another suggestion is that all so-called low classes be raised to the status of the high class Sudras and allowed like them 'to touch the Brahman's water,' and other allied social and religious privileges. Swami Vivekananda is said to have suggested to the late Aswini Kumar Datta of Barisal that they should all be invested with 'the sacred thread.' We do not know whether we can expect so much of our co-religionists just now. But the little we have asked for, is that also excessive? If we welcome them into the respect and solicitude of the society, they may yet prove the mightiest bulwark against wanton aggressions from outside.

But it is vain to ask for social reform without inaugurating a simultaneous religious reform. All great social upheavals resulted in the past from previous spiritual upheavals. The greatest need of the time is therefore a great spiritual revolution. We have seen along what lines the changes should be introduced. The Pauranik creeds must be thoroughly permeated and transformed by the ancient religion of the Upanishads. The call of the age is for a return to their invigorating, and simple and unifying ideals, pointing ever to the infiniteness of the power and glory of the soul and its divine invincibility. All our creeds theoretically and philosophically owe allegiance to them. Now there must be a fuller and open recognition of the Vedantic doctrines and carrying them into practice. A new life then will awaken within us, a new vigour and hope, and a wonderful desire for united feeling and action in mutual love

and service. The immediate effect of this change of religious outlook will be that all narrownesses and limitations will vanish like darkness before the invading rays of the rising sun, and the mind of the nation, withdrawn from trifles, will be fixed on the broader issues of life and its nobler heights. Social reform will follow automatically.

And with that shall return the lost purposiveness of our national life,—the noble motive of the Aryanisation of humanity. We have seen how the lack of this has made it stagnant and wasteful. Swami Vivekananda used to call this India's foreign policy, and through its functioning alone, he believed, the scattered forces of the nation can be united. When therefore it will be realised and made active, the whole nation will rise up as one man in fulfilment of its great task, and the performances of the Buddhistic age will be re-enacted in a grander scale. New races and cultures will come and be absorbed into the Mother-Church and thus will be laid the foundation on which alone the mighty edifice of the Indian nationhood can be erected. We believe that religion is the only possible basis of Indian unity. That religion is not merely an alliance of creeds but a many-phased organic unity. Salvation of the Hindu community is thus the salvation of the Indian nation.

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## THE MODERN REVIEW AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY PRINCIPAL KAMAKHYA NATH MITRA, M.A.

In the August number of the current year's *Modern Review* there are two notices of Swami Vivekananda—one from a reviewer\* and the other from the editor for the readers to decide. Says the reviewer:

“Swami Vivekananda is one of the glorious band of torch-bearers of Indian religion and culture to the



far western countries. His thoughts have captured the thinking minds nearly all over the world." (p. 192)

Says the editor :

"The little interest that Swami Vivekananda's popular lectures had aroused in America soon vanished ; and as his treatment of Indian Philosophy was never intended to be scholarly, his lectures failed to satisfy the scholarly interest of the philosophers of the West and did in a way more harm than good to the cause of Indian Philosophy in the estimation of scholars and Philosophers." (pp. 235-236).

If the reviewer is right, the editor must be wrong. I think the editor is wrong beyond all justification. What prompted the editor to make the indiscreet remark God only knows, but to belittle Vivekananda who has left his impress upon history with a single stamp of his foot—Vivekananda, the idol of the nation, the only true representative of Hindu culture that ever went to the West, is an attempt which is extremely ludicrous in its unreasonableness. It is as true to say that the sun is not bright as to say that Vivekananda did harm to the cause of our philosophy.

The editor says in the first place that "the little interest that Swami Vivekananda's popular lectures had aroused in America soon vanished." Is that the verdict of history? To prove the incorrectness of the statement, to put it mildly, I shall have to quote the opinions of the great scholars, philosophers and savants of the West together with extracts from the leading papers of England and America, but that is a task from which I naturally shrink, as these quotations will fill at least one whole number of the *Modern Review*. I can but refer the editor, if he cares to know, to Chapters LXXX, LXXXIII, LXXXIV and LXXXVII of the second volume and Chapters XC and XCII of the third volume of the monumental life of Swamiji by his Eastern and Western disciples published by the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama. That the work initiated by Swami Vivekananda is rapidly spreading and the interest of the

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Americans daily increasing will appear from the fact that new Vedanta Ashramas are being constantly opened in different parts of America—a fact which can be verified by one glance at the latest report of the Ramakrishna Mission.

As for Swami's treatment of Indian philosophy, let me quote the words of the Swami himself from one of his letters :

“To put the Hindu ideas into English and then make out of dry Philosophy and intricate Mythology and queer startling Psychology, a religion which shall be easy, simple, popular and at the same time meet the requirements of the highest minds—is a task which only those can understand who have attempted it. The abstract Advaita must become living—poetic—in every day life ; out of hopelessly intricate Mythology must come concrete moral forms ; and out of bewildering Yogi-ism must come the most scientific and practical Psychology—and all this must be put into a form so that a child may grasp it. That is my life's work. The Lord only knows how far I shall succeed. To work alone we have the right, not to the fruits thereof. It is hard work, my boy, hard work !”

Any “philosophaster” may publish his dull lucubration and to parade his learning may quote like a parrot and draw up an array of technical jargon but a philosopher, in the true sense of the term, must have a vision, as Prof. William James has so well said, not a prophet's vision but still a vision ;—and as for Swami Vivekananda he was not only a philosopher but a great deal more, for he was a prophet and a philosopher rolled up in one. Those who have not read the Swami's works as a whole, those whose knowledge of the Swami is shallow, scrappy and fragmentary, may say that they find contradictions here and there, but let them study thoroughly all his speeches and writings and think for themselves and then they will see how wrong they are. The Swami was the most learned man I have ever seen but there was no ponderousness about him, no vulgar



pomposity of an academic upstart. His knowledge of all the classical systems of Indian philosophy and the philosophy of the West, ancient, mediæval and modern ; his knowledge of comparative religion, higher criticism, the historical, comparative and critical method ; his knowledge of the fundamental principles of Science and the history and literature of the world—in short, his knowledge as a whole was astonishingly wide and deep. His synthetic genius, lucid exposition and mode of presentment are matchless in the history of the world. In the words of the famous J. H. Wright, Professor of Greek in Harvard University, “here is a man who is more learned than all our learned professors put together.” Professor Wright had also said before the Swami became the hero of the Parliament of Religions : “To ask you, Swami, for your credentials is like asking the sun to state its right to shine.” Professor William James who may be regarded as the leader of the modern movement in Western philosophy has given the following estimate of Swami Vivekananda in his famous book entitled *Pragmatism* : “The paragon of all monistic systems is the Vedanta philosophy of Hindostan and the paragon of Vedantist missionaries was the late Swami Vivekananda who visited our land some years ago.” Both Prof. Deussen and Prof. Max Müller were his ardent admirers. His lectures at the Harvard University, at Oxford and in London were highly appreciated by all scholars. “Nicolas Tesla, the famous scientist, after hearing the Swami’s exposition of the Sâmkhya philosophy, admitted the superiority of its cosmogony and of its rational theories of Kalpas (Cycles), Prâna and Akâsha, to which, Mr. Tesla said, modern science might well look for the solution of cosmological problems and which he assured the Swami he could prove even mathematically.” The Swami’s lecture on the philosophy of the Vedanta in the Harvard University produced such an impression on the minds of the professors that he was offered a Chair of Eastern philosophy in that famous seat of learning. But he



could not accept this as he was a Sannyasin. Space will not permit me to quote the extremely eulogistic opinion of the Rev. C. C. Everett, D.D., L.L.D. of Harvard University as the opinion is lengthy. But why multiply examples? Was not the Parliament of Religions at Chicago itself a galaxy of the most learned scholars, philosophers and divines? As for the impression left by Swami Vivekananda in England, let me quote but one opinion—the opinion of Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal who cannot be charged with undue partiality to the achievement of the Swami. He wrote thus from London to the *Indian Mirror* of the 15th February, 1898:

“Some people in India think that very little fruit has come of the lectures that Swami Vivekananda delivered in England and that his friends and admirers exaggerate his work. But on coming here I see that he has exerted a marked influence everywhere. In many parts of England I have met with men who deeply regard and venerate Vivekananda. Though I do not belong to his sect, and though it is true that I have differences of opinion with him, I must say that Vivekananda has opened the eyes of a great many here and broadened their hearts. Owing to his teaching most people here now believe firmly that wonderful spiritual truths lie hidden in the ancient Hindu Scriptures. Not only has he brought about this feeling, but he has succeeded in establishing a golden relation between England and India. From what I quoted on ‘Vivekanandism’ from *The Dead Pulpit* by Mr. Haweis, you have clearly understood that, owing to the spread of Vivekananda’s doctrines, many hundreds of people have seceded from Christianity.”

I have quoted only an infinitesimal fraction of the high opinions expressed by the great scholars of the West on the message and work of Swami Vivekananda. The quotations make it abundantly clear that the statement of the editor of the *Modern Review* is not true, for the Swami *did* satisfy the scholarly interest of the philosophers of the West and has done more good to



the cause of Indian philosophy in the estimation of scholars and philosophers than the editor of the *Modern Review* can ever imagine.

It is true that the great Swami did not leave a systematised statement of his philosophy in book form, though his Raja-Yoga finds a place in Trübner's Oriental Series. But that is because he had no time for the undertaking. From one of his letters we know that he was seriously thinking of "writing something big on the Vedānta Philosophy," and that he was "busy collecting passages from the various Vedas bearing on the Vedānta in its three-fold aspect." But "various other matters demanded his time and attention. Besides numerous private interviews, many classes a week and constant writing and public lecturing, he was planning his work in India and giving instructions for the work to his Indian disciples and *guru-bhais*. Thus he was unable to fulfil his long-cherished desire.' He burnt the candle of his life at both ends and it burnt out soon. Why do not our arm-chair professors of philosophy express their gratitude to the Swami by expounding and interpreting his philosophy in a systematised form? Perhaps they are too proud for that. Besides what earthly good can they expect from a Sannyasin who is not even in the land of living? And, after all, is "system" so great a thing that we should make a fetish of it? System-mongers are not necessarily the greatest philosophers of the world. Neither Plato nor Kant can be said to have built up what is called a "system" now-a-days. Even Shankara's Commentaries and his various other works cannot be called a "system" in the modern sense of the term.

There was a time when in the Calcutta University there was a scholar of the calibre of Dr. Preonath Sen who concluded his thesis on the Vedānta which won for him the Premchand Roychand Studentship, by quoting Swami Vivekananda and expressing his gratitude for the services done by the Swami to the cause of our philosophy. Time was when beneath the pene-

trating gaze of the critical scholarship of Principal N. N. Ghosh who had not even a Bachelor's degree to bless his soul, all our academic bigwigs literally quailed. His admiration of the Swami was deep and sincere and when a malicious attack was made on the Swami's famous Townhall speech at Calcutta, he said in his *Indian Nation* that "the Swami was discriminate in the choice of the audience before whom he had to exhibit his pearls." Time was when the Calcutta University could boast of a Mahamahopadhyay Pundit Chandrakanta Tarkalankar. There was no plethora of "doctors" then—no log-rolling cliques or coteries, no shameless self-advertisement, no contemptible snobbery, no intolerable humbug, no unholy alliance between Hegelianism and Vedanta. Even now there is a gentleman who understands *Adwaita-Vâda* and who is a sound scholar, but he is so shy and retiring that very few hear his name. He is a college professor and has not yet been honoured with a doctorate. He is not a cork and so he does not float. Nobody dives deep to find him out. *O tempora! O mores!* Philosophy! Divine Philosophy! What things are not done in thy name!

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## SOME ARGUMENTS OF BAUDDHA PHILOSOPHY.

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA.

There are four main schools of Bauddha Philosophy, all of which are based on the single utterance of Lord Buddha: "All is momentary; all is pain; all is like itself alone; all is void." The first three points are accepted by all the schools. The Bauddhas regard the world as impermanent, as full of misery and misery alone. According to them all objects are momentary as well as "self-characterised," in other words, each is like itself alone, a comparison being absurd since there is no common characteristic between them.



On the fourth point, that is, as regards the universal void, the Bauddhas are divided. This doctrine is accepted only by the Mâdhyamikas. They hold like the Mâyavâdins that the world is an illusion. There is neither existence, destruction, birth, death or Nirvana. What is seen in the dream state is not seen in the awakened state and vice versa. In *Sushupti* there is nothing whatsoever. From this they conclude that no object is real, for if it were, it would have been cognized in all the states. Therefore they say that the ultimate principle is a void which is free from the four alternatives, reality, unreality, both reality and unreality, and neither reality nor unreality. If the first is accepted, it would show, e.g., that the activity of a potter is useless, for the pot is already existing. If the second is accepted, then also the activity of the potter is useless for it cannot produce a thing that does not exist. The last two they leave off as self-contradictory. Neither do they acknowledge the doctrine of partial existence ; for if a part is unreal, then the whole of it must be unreal. When according to these our points all ideas come to an end, a void will result. This universal void is a truth that can be realised by discrimination which will prove the momentary nature of things and the illusory nature of the senses, universality and reality.

To this it may be said that even recognising a void we have to accept an Atman who is the witness of this void, otherwise due to want of proof the void cannot be accepted. Even if it be said that like Brahman the void is eternal and self-luminous, it is only recognising the Brahman under a different name. Moreover the Nihilists regard the world as only an illusion, and so they have to accept a basis (अधिष्ठान) on which it takes place ; for what is illusion but the false knowledge of a real thing? So without a basis there can be no illusion, and void cannot be such a basis. Well, granting a Brahman, what about the external world? Is it real or unreal? The Vedantin replies that the world has a reality. For we see things, feel them and can use them. How then can we say that they have no reality? But he says that this

reality is only relative (व्यवहारिक). From the Absolute (पारमार्थिक) standpoint they have no reality. How to define them? The Vedantin therefore says that the world is neither real nor unreal. It is unspeakable (अनिर्वचनीयः) This is Sankara's philosophy which has earned him the name of प्रच्छन्नबोध or a Bauddha in disguise.

Next come the Yogâchâras who do not recognise the existence of any thing except self-subsistent cognition. According to them the act of knowledge, the object of knowledge and the result of knowledge are wholly an internal affair. "The idea of the thing is the object ; cognition so far as it is consciousness is the result of knowledge ; the cognition in so far as it is power is Manas, knowledge ; in so far as it is the abode of that power it is Pramâtri, knowing subject." It is like a river continually flowing. Vast masses of water always change places, yet we call it the same river. What is the river really? It is the series of changes. We take up the whole thing and call it the river. Similar is the case with the mind,—pure cognitions—a series of sensations, perceptions, ideas, without any substantial basis. This is the doctrine of the Yogâchâras which is better known as Kshanika Vijnânavâda. According to them the supreme goal of man is the realisation of contentless abstract thought.

The Yogâchâras therefore do not recognise any external objects. They deny their existence in this way : Does the external object arise from entity or not? You cannot say it arises from an entity, for in that case being created it cannot have a permanent existence. If it arises from a non-entity, it can never come into existence, for that which is not created cannot have any existence. Whatever exists must come from a previous existence. Moreover, if mere cognition has to arise from some external object, then how do we get the knowledge of an object seen before? The cognition is produced, and if according to this principle we have to accept the cognition of the object also, we are led to a contradiction, viz., a present cognition of a past object. Moreover, during a



dream the ideas present in our minds appear as subject and object ; so we can infer that the ideas which occur in our waking state are similarly mere ideas without any corresponding external objects. But whence do we get the variety of ideas if there are no external objects? From the impressions left by the infinite series of ideas which preceded the present ideas. In this eternal creation ideas and mental impressions follow each other as causes and effects, and this accounts for the variety of ideas.

Moreover, we are always conscious of the act of knowledge and the object of knowledge at one and the same time. Therefore the two are identical. When we are conscious of the one we are conscious of the other, and this would not happen unless they are identical. Cognition and cognised objects are really one and continuous. The external object is only a bundle of sensations, and perception is only a higher and further stage of the same. In other words, intellect has no other object except itself. There is no object of perception different from the perceiving intellect. If we consider them as different, we are landed on a difficulty. For between the intellect and a material world quite different from it, no connection can arise, and hence there can be no perception, for perception is nothing but the connection between the two. This is the main difficulty of a dualistic hypothesis.

In the West also philosophers who followed Descartes experienced the same difficulty. Descartes regards God as a substance which has an independent existence, *i.e.*, has the ground of his existence in himself, he is the cause of himself. Mind and matter are to him two created substances, *i.e.*, they depend for their existence on God. The properties of these two substances are not only different but negate each other. This being the case, the union between the two can only be a mechanical one, through the intervention of Divine assistance. Thus the ego becomes aware of the existence of matter only through an act of God. Similarly the volitions of the

soul act on the body through the intervention of God. Spinoza, however, regarded mind and matter not as substances but as attributes of the one substance, God. In other respects as between themselves, they negate each other and one cannot act on the other. But as referred to God both of them are one and the same. One and the same substance is present in each attribute. Thus the idea of a circle and an actual circle are not different. As thought it is an idea, and as matter it is a circle. All things are products of the one substance with these two attributes which are inseparable. Thus spirit and matter exist as an inseparable unity, and the difficulty of Descartes is solved. But yet we have to remember that the influence of the one on the other does not exist. They are one in the Divine substance but not in themselves as they are. But can we call such a unity a real one? Thus with Spinoza too spirit and matter stand separated from each other for all practical purposes. Real unity can be established only by denying their different natures and explaining the one by the other, mind by matter and matter by mind. The latter method was employed by Leibnitz, Berkeley and Fichte. Leibnitz establishes the identity or perfect unity of the soul and the body on the theory of pre-established harmony. Idealism in him is not yet perfect. Though material objects, space etc. are mere phenomena according to him, yet the material world is not absolutely denied by him. It was Berkeley who first denied its existence. In him idealism reached its perfection. According to him our sensations are subjective. When we feel or see external objects it is a mere error. They are actually our sensations, perceptions themselves. So what are called things, exist only in our mind. For, how could material things produce sensations and perceptions so different from their nature? Hence according to him there exists no external object, but only spirit whose nature is made of conceptions and volitions—a result similar to that arrived at by the Vijnânavâdins with more or less the same strain of reasoning.



Let us now consider the doctrines of the Yogâchâras a little more critically. According to them the Vijnâna is the Atman, but they consider it as momentary and not eternal. There is no reality besides this and all objects are mere modes of this. The Vedantin regards this Vijnâna as the Atman but to him it is eternal. Evidently the Vijnânavâdin has confounded Vijnâna with Buddhivritti (modes of the mind-stuff) and had not an eye on the Self which manifests these modes due to its power and yet is different from them. He did not take into account that the mind-stuff being subtle and clear, the Self is reflected in it, and that due to the intelligence of the Atman the mind-stuff in which it is reflected appears also to be intelligent. Thus confounding and taking the modes of the mind to be transitory the Vijnânavâdin has come to the conclusion that Vijnâna is momentary.

If Vijnâna is momentary, it has a beginning and therefore it is a product. Hence before it was created it was non-existing. Only such a thing which is non-existing could be created. An eternal thing cannot be said to be created. Now if Vijnâna was non-existing before it was created, then who was to experience its non-existence? In the absence of such an experience we cannot say that it was non-existing and consequently we cannot say it is momentary.

Moreover, if Vijnâna is not eternal, how is remembrance possible? Only what one experiences can one remember. If the experiences and memories are different, how is it possible to remember what another has experienced? If the same one exists till the moment of remembrance, then Vijnâna cannot be momentary. On the other hand it is common knowledge that the same knower persists in all different experiences. Thus when we say 'I who saw Benares am now seeing the Himalayas,' we recognise that the knower is one. We cannot even say that because the two knowers are alike, therefore such a recognition takes place. For similarity consists of three factors, the knowledge of 'this,' 'that' and 'likeness' as in 'This is like that'. In order that a

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 knowledge of these three factors may be had, the knower must exist at least for three moments, for such a knowledge cannot happen in one moment. If this is granted, then Vijnâna is not momentary. The recognition of the self-same knower cannot be due to the similarity of the two different knowers.

Coming to their doctrine which negates the external world, we find that it also cannot stand. The negation of the external world is based on the identity of the subject and object, which in its turn is based on the fact that the cognition of the subject and object is invariable and simultaneous. But then in the case of an illusion and hallucination, we have such invariable simultaneity but not identity. Moreover, if the object were identical with the ego or the perceiving intellect, we ought to experience it as such ; but as a matter of fact we experience it as something different from it. We never experience as 'I am a chair' but as 'I see a chair'. Nor can it be said that the idea appears as if it were something external due merely to illusion. For the very phrase 'as if external' shows that there must be something external in reality or else the phrase is paradoxical ; it is tantamount to saying that 'Devadatta is like the son of a barren woman.' Moreover, the illusion of duality is based by the Yogâchâras on the identity of subject and object ; and the identity of these two on the illusiveness of the duality ; this is manifestly an argument in a circle. In the cognition of a pot and a cloth the consciousness is the same but its attributes vary, which can only be due to the fact that the cloth and the pot are real external objects. Or else the consciousness being the same, the identity between it and all cognition would have reduced all objects to a non-difference. Moreover, as the consciousness always exists, the appearance of different forms of objects continually shows that those forms depend on things different from the consciousness ; for otherwise we would have had the same form continuously. The only rational explanation therefore is that external objects exist.



Accordingly the Sautrântikas and the Vaibhâshkas hold that an external world exists and that cognition takes external things for its objects, and it is not a mere internal modification. These objects impress their form on consciousness, thus giving it a definiteness. The external world has an independent existence and is not brought into existence only when it is cognised as the Yogâchâras say. The Sautrantikas, however, say that this existence is known only indirectly through inference, whereas the Vaibhâshikas say it is known by direct perception through the senses.

## REMEDIES FOR SNAKE-BITE

Nowhere else than in India does the number of deaths from snake-bite amounts to such a large figure. Newspapers and periodicals publish many advertisements of 'infallible' remedies for snake-bites, scorpion-stings etc. It is well-known that not all the praises sung over these remedies are found to be based on actual merit. Another difficulty is that these advertisements do not reach the poor and ignorant villagers who suffer most from such accidents. What we shall write here will not also reach the villagers, but as our remedies are very simple and universally available, absolutely free of cost, we would request our readers, out of purely humanitarian motives, to experiment with the remedies that we shall suggest on any cases of snake-bite etc. they might come across, and give as wide a publicity to them as possible, if their experiments prove successful.

Sometime back, news came to our Ashrama of a snake-bite in a neighbouring village. Immediately on the receipt of the news, two of the Swamis proceeded to the village and tried the following experiment. Fortunately, the villagers who knew (from instructions given to them on a previous occasion) that a tight bandage above the bitten spot would help in preventing the spread of the

poison, had taken this precaution. But as it was not taken early, the patient had become unconscious by the time the Swamis reached the place. They prepared some juice of Tulasi leaves (Basil plant, *L. Ocimum Album* or *O. Sanctum*) and also of the sheaths of a plantain stem. They rubbed the former on the top of the head, the forehead, the neck, the chest and the naval, and administered about half a tea-spoonful of the latter juice by the mouth every five or ten minutes. This remedy took effect after six or seven hours of continued application, so late, probably because the treatment commenced nearly eight hours after the snake-bite, which took place at nine in the morning. When consciousness was found slightly returning, another experiment was tried. They made a cross incision on the bitten spot. Next they took a chicken, made a similar cross incision on its anus and applied the incised anus of the chicken exactly on the bitten spot. Five such chickens were thus applied and died, one after another ; but when the sixth one was applied, it did not die and by that time the patient also regained consciousness, and an enema was given to her. The patient gradually recovered and was quite all right at the end of twenty-four hours.

The operations described above might perhaps appear to some as too full of complications. Lest the operation on the chicken should scare away any intending experimenter, we hasten to add that the application of the Tulasi juice and the application of the plantain juice *alone* have been seen to effect a complete cure. Perhaps the chicken treatment helps to eliminate the poison. In this connection we might make mention of other remedies which one of our Swamis has found successful elsewhere.

In the place of Tulasi juice the juice of the lotus-root (*Padma-Mrinal*) or of Rambas (रामवाँस), or aloe, and in the place of plantain juice the juice prepared out of the leaves of cotton plant are also used. But one thing to be remembered is that the juice of the lotus-root is applied only on the head. If none of these things is available, the Tulasi juice alone applied externally and given internally



has been found to give relief. Even when the case seems hopeless and all signs of life are disappearing, the juice of Tulasi alone rubbed all over the body has been found to revive the dying patient.

We cannot vouchsafe for the effectiveness of the other remedies, although the *Shaligram Nighantu* speaks of aloe and the lotus as destroyers of poison. By all accounts the Tulasi (which the *Nighantu* also describes as a 'killer of poison') seems to be the poison-destroyer par excellence. One of our Swamis here testifies to the wonderful efficacy he has observed in the juice of Tulasi in curing a severe type of scorpion-sting. The Tulasi plant is to be found in all parts of India, being worshipped in many a Hindu home as sacred, and it should be a very easy matter to extract the juice and experiment with it.

We shall feel obliged if our readers would take the trouble to inform us of the success of their experiments.

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## NEWS AND NOTES

### REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A writer publishes his reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda in the July-August number of the Bengali monthly *Udbodhan*, in course of which he says that he put two questions to the Swamiji while he was staying in the house of Babu Mohini Mohun Das during his sojourn at Dacca in the March of 1901. The questions and the replies given by Swamiji were:

(1) Q. What is Karma? Does it mean only sacrifices and other rituals?

A. In this Kali Yuga, Charity is the only Karma, e. g. gift of knowledge, money, food, sustenance etc. Selflessness is the crucial test of greatness. The great ones never hate anybody.

Q. What is *Swadharma*?

A. This is a difficult question indeed. By *Swadharma* is meant the dharma (duties) either according

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to one's innate nature, or according to one's caste. Astrology, when it determines the *varna* of a new-born child, does so in consideration of its inherent character. But Arjuna was asked in the Gita to do his duties in reference to his caste. In my opinion one's dharma or duties should be inferred from one's nature.

The writer was present in the two lectures that Swamiji delivered at Dacca on *What I have learnt* and *The Religion we are born in*. In course of the first lecture, the writer remembers the Swamiji to have said: "First, a human birth is necessary. Next, you should have a thirst for God and spirituality. This is admitted by all universally. Next point is peculiar to your religion, —you require a Maha-purusha—a Guru. He must be a *Brahma-vit*,—he must know God before he can make you know God, for the blind cannot lead the blind..... For the last 25 years, I have been a seeker of truth, but found only book-learning and pride of sect. At last it pleased God to join me with a Mahapurusha." He also remembers a few sentences of the second lecture: "Englishmen condemn idolatry—that is a long word and therefore must be bad. It is surely bad, the reason being—Englishmen call it so. However God-speed to these Englishmen, for they form a part of the economy of the Great Mother and they are fulfilling their mission."

He one day asked Swamiji to recount some of his unique experiences in America and Europe. Swamiji said that while in America, an heiress being attracted by his personality and great eloquence, once offered her vast fortune and herself to Swamiji "to help him in his mission of life." Swamiji thanked her heartily for this kind offer. But he said he was unable to accept it, being as he was a monk who had already dedicated his all, body, mind and soul to the one Lord of his life, Sri Ramakrishna. The writer says, this recital simply overwhelmed him. When he asked Swamiji the reason of the break-down of his health, he replied that it was that he had to work hard in America, being compelled to undertake long journeys to



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 deliver his lectures without any opportunity for proper recreation and leisure. Why did he not take care of his health which was so precious to humanity, was the next question put to him. "Then I had no thought of the body," came the reply.

The writer records one very fine incident, eloquent of Swamiji's extreme kindness and consideration. He had wanted of Swamiji to hear those songs from him which he used to sing to Sri Ramakrishna. One night a man went to the writer's house which was rather far from Swamiji's residence, and told him that Swamiji had sent for him as he was going to sing just then. When the writer went to Mohini Babu's house, he found a large assembly gathered there. Swamiji saw him from a distance and welcomed him with these Sanskrit words, "Come, come, O learned one!"

The writer also says that Swamiji told him that while he was passing through Serbia during his European travel, he met there some Hindu Marwari merchants who traded in Attar, Rose-water etc. and had gone there on land from India. They were extremely glad to see Swamiji.

The writer says that he at first did not believe in image-worship, looking upon it as a rank superstition, but that Swamiji's Chicago lectures thoroughly disabused his mind of that false notion.

### PATANJALI : HIS TIME

One of the brightest luminaries shining in the spacious firmament of our ancient history is the great Patanjali. A great Yogi, endowed with a keen scientific mind, and author of the celebrated Yoga aphorisms, he was also the writer of the renowned Mahabhasya on Panini's grammar. A medical treatise also is sometimes ascribed to him. It is unfortunate however that little is known of such a master-mind. This historical poverty is at once sad and exasperating. Our ancient fathers seem to have played a huge joke on us by bequeathing themselves to us as simple intellectual forces with no

vestige of the frail humanity about them, for which our heart yearns.

Mr. Prabhat Ch. Chakravarti contributes an article to the *Indian Historical Quarterly* on Patanjali and tries to ascertain through internal and external evidences the date of his existence. The internal evidence he bases on Patanjali's Mahabhasya. "It is difficult," he writes, "to ascertain the time of Patanjali. He is evidently the last among the 'three sages' (Trimuni) whose names are prominently mentioned in connection with the Paniniyan school of Sanskrit grammar..... The following texts of the Mahabhasya have been considered and examined by both Indian and European scholars as what point to some positive data for determining the date of Patanjali. Under the rule Pan. 3. 2. 123 the Mahabhasya has cited by way of examples इह पुष्यमित्रं याजयामः; and under the Vartika जित्पर्ययस्यैव राजाद्ययम् it has given two more instances, namely, पुष्यमित्रसभा and चन्द्रगुप्तसभा, which all tend to prove that Patanjali flourished during the reign of Pushyamitra, the founder of the Sunga dynasty.....A careful examination of the expression इह पुष्यमित्र याजयामः will make it sufficiently clear that the performance of religious rites by Pushyamitra as referred to here was an event that undoubtedly took place during the life-time of Patanjali. Now, if these passages really refer to Pushyamitra and his royal council, as many eminent scholars have unhesitatingly given their verdict, we must be prepared to believe that Patanjali was a contemporary of Pushyamitra and that he could not be placed later than 150 B.C..... That he was in touch with a great ruling chief and had intimate knowledge of the royal court is clear from many passages of the Mahabhasya. Further evidence regarding the date of Patanjali is furnished by the texts अरुणचवनः सकेतम् and अरुणचवनो माध्यमिकाम् which have been explained by distinguished scholars as an historical reference to a siege of Saketa (Oudh) and Madhyamika by the Greek King Menander. This is, so to speak, the internal evidence in regard to the time of Patanjali."



True, this is very meagre information about Patanjali. But it is by such slow and steady effort that we can fill up the great blank that our past history is to us. It is really a puzzle why our forefathers were so chary in leaving behind correct details of themselves and their times. One explanation seems possible. The cultural and traditional continuity which to ensure is the main use of history, was maintained amongst us by a strict and undisturbed preservation and continuance of *Acharya*. Through customs and conventions was handed down from generation to generation that great fund of knowledge and experience without which no generation can truly fulfil its national functions. This is, to our mind, the secret of the presence of a deep historical consciousness among Hindus in spite of their not having any chronicles properly so called. But times are changed and it is necessary that the ancient method of the continuance of *Acharya* should be supplemented by the new method of history.

#### THE FOURTH GENERAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION (1923-1924)

The Report has been lying on our table for some time past. The period under report witnessed the starting of a number of branch centres in urban as well as rural areas. The works of the Mission fall under three classes, viz. :— (1) Missionary work (preaching and publishing of literature), (2) Philanthropic work, (3) Educational work. Among the chief missionary centres we may mention the names of the Ramakrishna Math, Belur ; the Ramakrishna Math, Bagh Bazar (Calcutta) ; the Ramakrishna Adwaita Ashrama, Benares ; the Adwaita Ashrama, Mayavati ; Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Patna and Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bombay. The centres at Mayavati, Bagh Bazar and Madras publish books and monthly magazines. Lecturing tours were undertaken, during the period under review, from Belur, Mayavati and Madras centres. Some other centres also organised

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classes and held public lectures on religious subjects in their respective areas. The Bombay Ashrama has been opened in 1923 and working satisfactorily, thus removing a great want in Western India. Another institution has been started in 1924 at Shella (Khasia Hills), Assam, which has been since doing educational and propaganda work among the backward hill tribes. During the years, under review a large number of youngmen joined the Order. The Madras Math undertook in a grand scale a flood relief work in 1924 in the districts of Coimbatore, Salem, Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Malabar and some other places in the Cochin and Travancore states. The work earned unstinted praise from the public as well as Government. The propaganda work of the Patna centre may be specially noted.

The foreign centres in New York, San Francisco and Boston have been gradually proving more and more useful. Two new monks were sent to assist the San Francisco and New York works. The Boston branch has founded a peace retreat named Ananda Ashrama in California. The Swamis in America besides holding regular classes in their local centres often undertook lecturing tours in different parts of the country. Swami Paramananda in charge of Boston work published a number of books and lectures during the period. He is also continuing the publication of his monthly organ. The Ramakrishna Math at Kuala Lumpur (F. M. S.), on account of a misunderstanding between the workers and some local members and legal difficulties, has detached itself in March 1925 from the old institution. A separate organisation has been started which has already attracted the sympathy of a large section of the Hindu public.

The philanthropic institutions have got dispensaries and hospitals attached to them which they are conducting with conspicuous success and ability, and they also undertake temporary relief on occasions of public distress. Among the prominent institutions of this kind we may mention those in Benares, Kankhal, Brindavan, Rangoon, Allahabad, Dacca, Narayanganj, Bhuvaneswar, Lucknow



and Barisal. There are institutions of such kind in almost all the districts of Bengal and in other parts of India. During the years under report, the headquarters at Belur organised temporary relief in some places of Bengal, Orissa and the Punjab.

As will be seen from a perusal of the Report, the majority of our centres throughout the country have got attached to them some sort of schools for imparting secular and religious education to the masses. The Sister Nivedita Girls' School with its two branches has been working in the direction of female education. The school itself has got about 250 students on its roll. As regards its policy it has chalked out a *via media* between the orthodox method of education and the ultra-liberal type. A few Mission centres manage students' homes where university students supplement their school and college education by a home-training based on the best elements of Eastern and Western culture. The Students' Home in Madras had 125 students on its roll at the end of 1924. There is a residential High School and an Industrial School attached to it. It is most gratifying to note that a separate block for the school has been erected at a cost of nearly a lac and twenty-five thousand rupees. The Students' Home in Calcutta which is licensed by the Calcutta University as a College Students' Hostel has done admirable work. The Vidyapith at Deoghar promises a brilliant future. It has been removed to its own premises containing nearly sixty bighas of land. Besides these there are similar institutions working on a smaller scale at Sargachi, Baranagore (Calcutta), Sarisha (24 Perganas) etc.

There are several Mission Funds kept open for public contribution. The generous public may contribute to the Provident Relief Fund, the General Fund, the Poor Fund or the Fund for the upkeep of the permanent philanthropic and educational institutions. All contributions may be sent to President, Sri Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal.

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### A DECLARATION.

Swami Saradanandaji, Secretary of The Ramakrishna Mission, has sent us the following for publication :—

For sometime past, we have been receiving various queries, oral as well as written, from our friends and the outside public, regarding the relation of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society founded by the Swami Abhedananda in Calcutta and Darjeeling, with the Ramakrishna Mission which has its Headquarters at Belur, Dist. Howrah. Our information is, that sometime people wishing to help the Ramakrishna Mission have proposed to offer donations to the above institution, or co-operated with it in other ways, under the mistaken impression that it is a Branch of the Ramakrishna Mission. Moreover, complaints have reached us from some of our sympathisers who, working under the same impression, make the Ramakrishna Mission culpable for the ways and doings of the above institution. We understand that this misconception arises from the fact that the Vedanta Society bears the name of Ramakrishna and that the Swami Abhedananda is a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, a trustee of the Ramakrishna Math and an ex-Vice-President of the Mission.

As it is our bounden duty to clear up the confusion and the false notion created in the public mind, we beg to inform our countrymen, as we did once before, that the Ramakrishna Vedanta Society with its branches is an independent organisation and has absolutely no connection with the Ramakrishna Mission, which has its Headquarters at Belur, Dist. Howrah.

In this connection we should draw the attention of the public also to the fact that the Ramakrishna Sangha of Calcutta and Dakshineshwar is another independent institution which is in no way connected with the Ramakrishna Mission.

### GLASGOW INDIAN UNION

We have received the following communication from Mr. D. Chakravarti, B.Sc., Information Department,



Glasgow Indian Union, C/o, The University, Glasgow, Scotland :—

“Quite a large number of students come over to Glasgow every year to join the University or the Technical Colleges and some of them are so very hopelessly ill-informed or positively mis-informed about the state of things here, that it is really a pity to see them getting so very unpleasantly undeceived within a few days of their arrival here. In fact we have realised the difficulties of the new-comers so thoroughly well, that we have thought it necessary to give greater publicity to the existing Information Department of our Union so that the latest and the best possible information could be supplied from the spot to all those who intend to come to Glasgow to join the University or to proceed with their technical education in some other way. My department will welcome all bona-fide enquiries from any students intending to come over here and all their enquiries will meet with prompt and whole-hearted attention.”

#### RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FLOOD RELIEF WORK IN THE DISTRICT OF MIDNAPORE, (BENGAL).

There being a very heavy flood in the district of Midnapore, we have sent three batches of workers to Contai, Tamluk and Sabong for relieving the flood-stricken people. From the reports so far received, the whole of Contai, Tamluk and Sabong Thanas are under water. Most of the houses have collapsed and the rest that are standing are in a tottering condition. Hundreds of men and women are starving. Carcases and thatched huts are floating here and there. All roads and means of communications are cut off. Even boats are not available for going into the interior parts of the villages to render relief to the sufferers. Our workers have already opened centres at Contai, Dasgram and Tamluk and are proceeding towards the most interior parts of the flood-area with much difficulty. At Dasgram they have already made the first distribution of rice to the people. Rice, Chira and con-

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densed milk for infants have been sent to Tamluk and Contai. From the innumerable letters and telegrams that are pouring in we learn that the situation is most serious and that to mitigate the sufferings of the people immediate help in money and kind is urgently needed. Every moment's delay means greater misery to the people, which might even end in loss of life. We appeal to the generous public to do all their best for relieving the distress of their helpless countrymen. Contributions may be sent to the following addresses :—

1. The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math P. O.  
Dist : Howrah.
2. The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, 1, Mukherji  
Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

Sd : SARADANANDA,

*Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission.*