

# rBabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES.

*15th January, 1921.*

He was arguing with D—— in fun to prove the superiority of Bhakti over Jnâna. He quoted from *Sri Chaitanya-Charitâmrita* : “ ‘The Jnâni, ignorant of the bliss of Divine love, tastes like a crow the margosa fruits of Jnâna. But the devotee, knowing the mystery of Divine love, tastes like a cuckoo the mango-blossoms of Love.’ The margosa fruit is bitter to the taste, and being a mature product of the tree, will have no further development and soon wither away. But the mango-blossom has a glorious future before it : it will grow and ripen into a luscious fruit ; it implies progressiveness.

“Jnâna fully evolved becomes Bhakti. Practice of Knowledge leads the mind higher and higher, beyond the bounds of duality. But true Bhakti is its own end. Wherever he is, the devotee is ever full of the nectar of love and bliss Divine.

“Knowledge is necessary in the first stages of spiritual life to master the senses. Afterwards it is one continuous enjoyment of the beatific love of God.

“While travelling near Brindâvan, Swamiji had once to take shelter against rain in a deserted open building, having a single wall. On it he found these words written with charcoal: ‘Desire, thou art like a base woman. But for thee I would have become Parabrahman.’

“And how beautiful these words of Thomas à Kempis, ‘Speak, O Lord, for Thy servant heareth. Silence, all ye teachers! And silence, ye prophets! Speak Thou alone, O Lord, unto my soul!’ ”

The Swami then recited from a Bengali song: “ ‘Come, O mind, let us evade lust and other passions, and live by ourselves’. But how difficult to evade them! It is these which have made brutes of men!

“Sri Râmakrîshna had once asked a Pandit to discourse on some scriptural topic. The Pandit went on for more than an hour expounding the doctrine of *Triputi-bheda* (breaking up of the triad of knowledge). At the end, Sri Râmakrîshna remarked, ‘Nicely indeed you have spoken. But all I know is that I have my Mother and I am Her son.’ ”

18th January, 1921.

To-day the main topic of conversation was Hindi as the all-India language. The Swami said that on his way back from America, he had a Japanese colonel as a fellow-passenger in the steamer, who knew only his mother-tongue and German. It was the opinion of Swami Vivekananda, so said the Swami, that Raja Ram-mohun Roy, by his advocacy of English as against Sanskrit, had set back the progress of India by sixty years. The Swami continued: “If the common language of India is to be determined by the largest number of people speaking it, Hindi of course is that language. It took nearly a week for me to learn enough Gurmukhi to be able to read the *Granth Saheb*.”



*19th January, 1921.*

The Swami spoke of America's material prosperity, its scientific improvements, railways and original developments in architecture which according to him are fine and light in America and rather massive in England.

"Americans are favoured of Fortune and therefore endowed with many graces of head and heart. They are hospitable and not jealous. How good and kind they were to Swamiji! How nicely Dr. Wright introduced him to the authorities of the Chicago Parliament of Religions!

" 'Horace, hurry up!'—That is their way of waking up a man! The whole nation is rushing on. Have they not to compete with Europe? That however causes too many cases of nervous prostration.

"Once Swamiji and some American gentlemen on a trip to an island, had to catch a steamer at San Francisco. His companions hurried on, but Swamiji walked leisurely. They said, 'Swamiji, you must be quick, or the steamer will leave.' 'Never mind,' Swamiji replied, 'it will come again'. When they remarked at that that Indians had no idea of time, Swamiji made the neat retort, 'Yes, you live in time, we live in eternity.'

"It is not for nothing that they gave him their heartfelt devotion. They saw Spirit and Life in him. Those who had mixed with Swamiji intimately, are still his slaves. Mere intellectualism is not enough.

"I myself always received hospitality at their hands. Only three or four times I had to dine in hotels and that also on journeys."

*21st January, 1921.*

T—— asked the Swami: "Maharaj, did you come across anyone in the West, who had realised Nirvikalpa Samadhi?"

The Swami replied: "None among persons I knew or heard of. A few only are said to have attained Savikalpa Samadhi. Tennyson used to fall into trance by repeating his own name, and Wordsworth by contemplating Nature. Emerson also seems to have experi-

enced it. But none are said to have realised Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This—the realisation of the Absolute Self—is India's peculiar experience."

T——: "Did not Jesus realise it?"

Swami: "Yes, he did. Such sayings as 'I and my Father are one' indicate that. Sri Râmakrishna also spoke of him as a Divine Incarnation. Studying the Bible as a boy, my faith in the Divinity of Christ was shaken by certain passages. He cried out while on the cross, 'Father, hast Thou forsaken me?' I thought as I read this, 'How is it? Can an Avatara feel like that?' I was only thirteen years old then."

B——: "Only thirteen years?"

Swami: "Yes, only that. Having realised the Self, can one ever forget It?"

B——: "But does not the sense of duality or separation occasionally intervene?"

Swami: "Separation from whom? The Avatara himself is the Divine. Can you think yourself as separate from yourself?"

*(To be continued.)*

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## WHAT ARE THE TANTRAS?

There is a great misconception about the Tantras both in India and abroad. And it is this that accounts for all those criticisms which we find nowadays levelled against the Tantrika literature and practice in general. For instance, the philosophy and religion of the Tantras has been sweepingly termed as a blemish of the Hindus, a combination of necromancy, alchemy, jugglery and "religious feminism run mad," a system that inculcates all sorts of unearthly, mysterious and obscene rites. Volumes of such criticism may be cited, and the one object of all of them is to decry and taboo Tantrikism. But the most unfortunate part of it is that not only the



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Western Orientalists but a certain section of the people of this land also, where Tantrikism was born and evolved, thoughtlessly cast aspersions on it. That all these criticisms are generally unjust and unmerited need not be told. They are misrepresentations and show the want of sympathy and toleration as well as the wrong information from which they proceed.

The reasons for our so remarking are obvious. In the first place, the Tantras cover a vast ground, containing so many different things in them that there is every chance of mistaking the abuses of a certain section for the practices of the whole school. Secondly, the major portion of the Tantrika literature is lost owing to the ravages of time, and what is extant, being confined to handwritten manuscripts in the custody of a very limited circle of adherents, may easily acquire a mysterious look about them. Thirdly, the Tantras, being full of technical terms and enjoining esoteric practices the real significance of which can only be learnt under the strict guidance of the initiates, are liable very often to be misconstrued. All these are the disadvantages under which the Tantras labour, and it is on account of them that we hear so much against the Tantras. But for the recent indefatigable labours of Sir John Woodroffe who being somehow attracted towards the subject has made a special study of it, the Tantras, it may be said, would have remained a sealed book to many. This Western savant has unearthed many Tantrika manuscripts, translated them into English with notes and comments and presented them to the general public in print. By his wonderful grasp of the subject he has been able to bring out the rationale of the Tantrika philosophy and prove the supreme usefulness of the Tantrika ritualism. We Hindus owe a deep debt of gratitude to this scholar.

The Tantras are many and various. Roughly we may classify them into three main divisions viz., Saiva, Vaishnava and Sakta according as they uphold Siva, Vishnu and Sakti as their respective deity of worship. Or we may follow another method and divide them into

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three classes viz., monistic, qualified non-dualistic and dualistic according to their difference in metaphysical view-point. It matters little what standard of classification you take. The Saiva school has its followers in Northern India, Kashmir being its stronghold, as well as in Southern India. Of them those of Northern India are monistic, and those of Southern India qualified non-dualistic. The Vaishnava group which is qualified non-dualistic prevails mainly in the south. The Sakta section who are monistic are generally to be found in Bengal and Assam. Besides these three main groups, there are again the Soura, the Ganapatya and the Bauddha Tantrikas of whom we do not know much. All the above-mentioned divisions viz., Saiva, Vaishnava and Sakta, have certain principles and practices in common. Primarily, they all conceive of God as a Supreme Personality, having a double aspect in one of which He is transcendental while in the other He is or becomes the universe projecting out of Himself all names and forms. Secondly, they all consider the universe thus brought into being not as an illusion and a fictitious superimposition of a false principle, but as a true emanation from God, evolved successively from subtle to gross. Next, they all point to one goal, and this they designate as Enjoyment-Liberation (Bhukti-Mukti), the realisation of which is the *summum bonum* of life. Finally, they all recognise the importance of devotion in spiritual life and are liberal enough to make provision for all castes and both sexes. The practices common to all the groups are also many, and they may be noted here briefly. They are the construction and consecration of temples and images, the use of emblems, figures, mystic syllables and holy texts, the specific gestures and postures, the psycho-physical processes of awakening the static energy in the human body called the serpent power, the dissolution of the categories, the observance of sacraments and a host of other things.

Those who are acquainted with the state of the present-day religious life of our country must say that



Tantrikism has become our part and parcel. The influence of the Tantras can be felt everywhere. The Tantrika Deities occupy under different names a distinct place in our pantheon, and the origin of many of our religious rites may be traced to the Tantras. But we must confess that we know little of the Tantras—their historical bearings in our individual and collective life as well as their theoretical and practical implications. Is it not a matter of regret? The Tantras are the Agama Sastras, the fundamentals of which in the form of a mass of floating ideas date as far back as several hundred years before Christ. Of course, the Tantrika works as they exist to-day are later productions, and we say so judging from the style of their language, the method of the treatment of their subjects and such other evidences. Tantrikism has consequently undergone a long process of evolution assimilating many new things from different quarters. But the original source of their inspiration was that repository of eternal wisdom, the Vedas. Like all other orthodox Indian scriptures and schools of philosophy they recognise the supreme authority of the Vedas and try to interpret and amplify the truths contained therein. It may be said that they are a practical application of some of the ultimate principles of the Upanishads, the Jnanakanda portion of the Vedas, reinforced with an elaborate but most effective system of rituals so arranged and manipulated as to make them suitable for all types of aspirants, leading all gradually to the highest Ideal. But there are so many ignorant notions and talks as to the exact relationship between the Tantras and the Vedas that it would be proper if we dilate on it a little. Sir John Woodroffe, for instance, speaks of one Brahmo author who remarked that the relation between the Tantras and the Upanishads was “as far removed as that between hell and heaven.” Comments on remarks like this are not necessary. They simply prove the enormity of our ignorance.

The points of agreement and similarity between the Tantras and the Vedas are quite numerous. We shall notice here only a few ones, and they will be quite



enough to establish our assertion. First, the identity of the individual soul and the Absolute Consciousness, the final conclusion of the Upanishadic seers, is recognised by many of the Tantras belonging to the Sakta and Saiva groups. For example, a Sakta Sadhaka who must be monistic in his outlook begins his day by meditating: "I am the Creative Power. I am the Male Principle who is beyond grief. I am Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, the One who is eternally free." At noon while seated for worship and performing the Bhuta-Suddhi which means the dissolution of the categories, he tries to merge his individuality and become one with the Absolute finally declaring: "I am She." This pregnant sentence of three words is nothing but a counterpart of the Upanishadic utterance: "I am He." In the evening after finishing the day's observances he again tries to realise his oneness with the Absolute. Do not all these indicate a clear note of Vedantic monism in the Sakta Tantras? Secondly, the conception of the Creative Principle whom they call Sakti, the eternal partner of the Ultimate Reality, is also derived from the Vedas. Look at the famous Devi-Sukta occurring in the Rigveda, which runs: "I am the Sovereign Queen, the Chief of all the objects of worship. I am the One whose all-pervading self the gods manifest, whose birthplace is in the midst of causal waters, who breathing forth gives form to all created worlds and yet extends beyond. How vast am I!" The Tantras developed this idea of the Creative Principle, the Universal Mother, existing originally in germs in the Vedas and made a philosophy out of it. Thirdly, the doctrines of Karma, of the three bodies, causal, subtle and gross, and of the three states of waking, dream and sound sleep, in their individual and collective aspects, which are some of the fundamentals of the Vedantic metaphysics, psychology and ethics, have been accepted by the Tantras. Yoga in all its forms, Mantra, Hatha, Laya and Jnana, as well as the Vedic rites of sacrifice (Homa) and the ten sacraments (Sanskaras) have been recognised by the Tantras. Even the ill-fated



doctrines of the worship with five-fold objects (Pancha-tattva Upasana) and of magic are not altogether innovations in the Tantras, and may be traced to have their origin in the Vedas.

The famous six systems of Indian philosophy which draw their inspiration from the Vedas indicate the various types of original philosophic research in India. Though the Tantras are not in agreement with all of them, they recognise their place, for it occurs in one of the Tantras that Siva says: "The six systems of philosophy are the six limbs of Kula (the Enlightened One) and parts of his body." We shall show how the Sakta Tantras, the third group of the main divisions, are a synthesis between the pure monism of Uttaramimamsa or Vedanta as interpreted by Sankara and the dualism of the Sankhyas.

All the three systems, the Maya-vada of Sankara, the Purusha-Prakriti-vada of the Sankhyas and the Sakti-vada, agree as to the general nature of the Absolute, the Formless Consciousness, and posit along with it a Finitising Principle called Maya, Prakriti and Sakti respectively. The Sankhyas are, as we have said, dualistic, for they admit the reality of two independent entities viz., Purusha, the Formless Principle, and Prakriti, the Formative Principle, the former being infinite in number and the latter one. Sankara's Vedanta does not discard these two categories but resolves them into one which is Brahman. The dualistic position of the Sankhyas, as it is, cannot be maintained however much you may stretch your logic and argue. The plurality of the Purushas, each an Absolute, and the independent reality of Prakriti are doctrines whose fallaciousness is too apparent to need any elaboration here. Sankara shows that Purusha is one though it appears as many, being encased in material body and mind under the veiling influence of Maya. Besides, he proves that Prakriti, the Finitising Principle, cannot be independent and separate, for in liberation it vanishes for the liberated Purusha, though existing for those who appear to be in bondage. Sankara, an ultra-monist, upholds the illusory character of the universe and

allows it only a relative reality, Brahman alone being truly real. For, has it not been said again and again by Sankara and his school who maintain Maya-vada like him : "Brahman alone is true and the world false"? Here comes in the Sáкта philosophy and raises a protest against the Maya-vada Vedanta and effects a synthesis between the dualism of the Sankhyas and the pure monism of Sankara. Sakti is Power manifesting itself under various forms, conscious and unconscious, and this world is a play-ground of Sakti. Now Sakti or Power implies one that possesses that Power, and the two are not separate but one and the same. Sakti, Maya or Prakriti on the one hand and Siva, Brahman or Purusha on the other denote two aspects of the same Reality. One cannot exist without the other. The serpent, whether it sits quiet coiled or runs about in a zigzag course is the self-same serpent. The phenomenal universe and its noumenal background are both equally real. According to Sankara Brahman contains no trace or seed of objectivity, and our so-called experience of duality and manifoldness is a figment of the Collective Ignorance, the very notion of creation being fictitious. But what is this entity of Collective Ignorance, what is its nature? It is, as Sankara says, an inscrutable Power, neither real nor unreal. Is this a satisfactory explanation? The Sáкта Tantras do not thus evade the question but seek to explain it by making the ultimate Reality a unity of apparently two Principles, Formless and Formative, Static and Kinetic. In this way, it may be said, they are an advance upon the ultra-monism of Sankara.

The scope of this article will not allow us to go into the details of the philosophy of the Tantras beyond a short outline as sketched above. Like all other schools of Indian philosophy and religion the value of the Tantras lies in their extreme practicableness. Philosophy and religion are not worth their name if they cannot be materialised in life. The Tantras have therefore evolved a system of rituals that is through and through practical. Let an aspirant see for himself whether it is so or not



One special feature of the Tantrika Sadhana, we may note here, is that it takes man where he stands, with all his foibles and failings and gives him a push forward, and herein is contained its beauty and grandeur. It is not onesided, other-worldly and ascetic ; it is all-comprehensive in its outlook. Consequently the supreme state of blessedness has been described by it as Enjoyment-Liberation (Bhukti-Mukti). The Tantras are not against a man who cannot kill outright his baser animal instincts but ask him to spiritualise them and thus uplift him slowly and gradually. Besides, the rituals in which the Tantras abound, though they may not be necessary for the highly developed souls, are useful to those who require external helps at the outset. The Tantrika Sadhana begins with the more or less anthropomorphic image and its material service reproducing the ways of our daily life, but it does not stop there. It passes through emblems, figures and mental worship of the point of light, till at last the individual consciousness being merged in the Universal Consciousness there is the realisation of the final union of Siva and Sakti. Like Vedanta the Tantras look upon man as Divine. Man is a microcosm (a universe in miniature). Whatever exists in the outer universe exists in him also. All the categories and worlds are within him, and so are Siva and Sakti. By the practice of Kundali-Yoga, an important part of the Tantrika Sadhana, the individual man must rouse the sleeping energy within him and make it pass from its abode, Muladhara, through the different centres or planes of consciousness till at last at the thousand-petaled Sahasrara there is a complete dissolution of the categories and worlds leading him to the realisation of the Final Beatitude. This Kundali-Yoga like Patanjali's Raja-Yoga is extremely scientific and open to practical demonstration in one's life, and can be successfully practised like the latter under the guidance of an able teacher.

The Tantrika Sadhana is indeed a glorious acquisition in the spiritual history of the world. Its elaborate rituals

and paraphernalia of worship have their counterparts in the Catholic Christian Church of the West. Swami Vivekananda while preaching Vedanta in Europe noticed this fact and aptly remarked: "The Catholics are the Saktas in practice." Sir John Woodroffe is also of the same opinion, and in his *Shakti and Shakta*, he has nicely brought out some interesting analogies. Thus, he says, like the Tantrikas the Catholic Church has its sacraments, congregational and private worship with bell, light and incense, images, devotional rites such as *novenas* and the like, the threefold *angelus* at morn, noon and evening, the telling of beads, the wearing of scapulars, medals etc., pilgrimage, fasting, abstinence and mortification, renunciation, meditation, union of mystical theology (Samadhi) and such others. Who knows that the Catholic Church has not been influenced by the Tantras, for the religion of the Tantras, as we have said, is one of the oldest? Besides, Sir John thinks that some of the modern religious or semi-religious works on *New Thought*, *Will Power*, *Vitalism*, *Creative Thought*, *Mental Therapeutics*, *Secret of Achievement*, etc., must have been written by people who have somehow or other come under the influence of Tantrika literature and practice, higher and lower. How far this is true we do not know. But this is certain that almost every human being, in so far as he wants power, physical, intellectual, moral or spiritual, is within the domain of Sakti, the Creative Energy, and unless and until She is propitiated there is no chance of his attaining the desired end. Whether we seek health, strength and beauty, material prosperity, intellectual proficiency, or moral and spiritual excellence, we must acknowledge our allegiance to Her and try to please Her. And the Tantras, specially the Sakta Tantras, uphold the worship of God as the Power Reality who is at the root of the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe.

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"THEE I LOVE IN ALL."

BY SWAMI PARAMANANDA.

Thee I love in all, and all I love for Thee.  
Youth and old, rich and poor,  
The birds that sing, and birds that cry,  
Faces that shine, and faces in gloom :  
In all I love Thee, and for Thee I love them all.  
I adore Thee in flowers, I adore Thee in trees,—and in  
grass that grows so low.  
I lift my head in worship to gaze on Thee in  
sapphire sky.  
As I stand on the river bank and behold Thy silver gleam  
on moonlit night  
My heart heaves with delight.  
I sing Thy praise with the glory of dawn,  
And I chant Thy supplication at the quiet of setting sun.  
I love those that dance with joy,  
And I love those that are crushed by sorrow.  
For Thee I love them all, and Thee I love in all.  
Above and below and on all sides hast Thou encircled me.  
It is Thy love I give Thee,  
As the altar-flower gives its fragrance at Thy feet.  
Art Thou not its fragrance and its life?  
Art Thou not its beauty and its soul?  
Like unto that flower I lie at Thy feet  
And offer Thee Thine own gift : my love and my life.

# SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND THE WORLD-PROBLEM.

BY SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA.

We are passing through a period of transition. A chapter in the history of human progress and civilisation has come to a close, and we are about to begin a new one. The last two centuries have witnessed the dead-

liest of fights between science and her arch-enemy religion. Religions had all along looked down upon all secular knowledge and refused to be justified by the aid of secular knowledge before this fight began. The results of such a fight have been far-reaching. The disinterested love of truth without any regard for the consequences it may have on our faiths and beliefs, which actuated the scientific minds of two centuries ago, has brought about the complete victory of science over religion. Reason has taken the supreme place in man's life, and he finds it difficult to believe in anything simply because such and such scriptures ask him to do so. Anything whose existence cannot be proved by reason or by the direct perception of the senses is thrown out as a superstition. The truth of everything is based on the positive data of experience through the senses. Though these tests of knowledge were sufficient to bring about a revolution in the scientific world, yet they were quite inefficient in the realm of the Self, the entry into which can be attained only through self-control, sacrifice and self-abnegation. The scientific mind on account of its outgoing tendency could not attain to that serene calmness, in which alone the truth, the knowledge of the Self, is reflected. This has made the scientific West materialistic in her outlook of life, and she has built her society on a new basis—that of enjoyment, and in this direction she has with her indomitable energy attained a degree of success undreamt of in the past ages. But unfortunately it has made her selfish and egoistic, and she thinks that by dint of her superior merits she has attained a stage in civilisation which has not been achieved by any nation up to now, though the criterion of civilisation is fixed by herself after her own ideals. This attitude has made her look down upon other nations outside the pale of this scientific influence as barbarians.

Though science has overthrown religion completely as a "superstition which is becoming less indispensable to society, though in the past, especially in the child-



hood of races it might have been a valuable element of civilisation," it is yet dumb before the problems of the modern world. It has undermined all religious faiths on the ground that they are not based on reason, but has nothing positive to offer in exchange, which would be a motive-power for the progress of humanity in the future. Science has done much in the field of art, trade, manufactures, means of communication and other practical appliances, but it has failed to bring happiness and peace to a greater part of humanity. It has only increased "the extent and intensity of man's wants with its concomitant physical and moral degradation." The natural instinct of man to possess things and enjoy them has outgrown all limits so as to become a menace to society, leading to wars of the kind we have recently witnessed. The condition of the masses, the backbone of all nations, is quite pitiable. They have ceased to be men and have almost come down to the level of beasts. They toil whole day so that a few may grow rich, they themselves getting only a bare sustenance often insufficient to keep the wolf from their doors. Wealth which is not equally distributed is always a curse.

Activity and the race for possession which have built up the Western nations have been pushed to such an extremity that they have now become impediments to living freely and nobly. Supreme discontent and unhappiness is reigning in the West at present. Social life has got unbalanced and lost all stability. Suicides arising from failure, despair and misery are ever on the increase. Family life is getting disintegrated, and divorces have become only too common. A glance through a particular class of literature of modern times both in the East as well as in the West gives a clear picture of the subconscious working of the minds of the people. Man's instincts are represented as all-compelling, and his strength lies not in controlling but in giving free vent to his passions. In other words, it is idealising what is apparently real instead of trying to

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hold up any ideal to society. Surely that is not the way to progress.

The effect of such a civilisation on the rest of the world in these days of easy communication cannot be treated lightly. The East has been gradually changing her ideal for that of the West. In India her conquest by the English helped only to open her gates to the free thought and materialism of the West. She has lost faith in her Rishis and the ideals held out by them, getting imbued with the agnostic thought and philosophy of the West. Such a sudden change can only end in losing both, failing to grasp the new and losing what we have already. India has thus broken loose from her moorings and is drifting, leading a hypocritical, aimless life despised by all nations.

What little is left of religion after such a defeat at the hands of science is mainly a formal belief in dogmas and tenets. Even here there is much narrow-mindedness and intolerance. In Europe and America the State had for long exercised its influence on the faith of its subjects, and it was only political expediency that finally brought them the religious liberty they are enjoying and not conviction. In America even to this day free thought is seriously handicapped in most of the universities. Though tolerance is legally granted, yet society is bigoted, enforcing serious disabilities on people holding unorthodox views. Even in India, whose one theme has been to evolve the Vedic doctrine—"There exists but One, though sages call It differently," her Eternal Religion, the grand synthesis of all spiritual ideals, is broken up into conflicting sects at tug of war with each other. The essence of religion is forgotten, and the people are holding to external formalities as religion. Such is the condition of the world to-day, and not much different was it at the advent of Sri Ramakrishna into this world. Nature abhors vacuum. To fill up the spiritual vacuum in this world, to satisfy the great want felt all over the



world, came this great spiritual force in the personality of Sri Ramakrishna.

In such a world as painted above did Sri Ramakrishna proclaim in a trumpet voice—"Hear, ye children of immortal bliss! I have found the Ancient One—the Divine Mother, who is beyond all darkness and delusion, knowing whom alone you shall be saved from death and misery." "Different religions are different paths leading to the same goal. So help, and do not fight. Let assimilation and not destruction be your motto. Harmony and peace and not dissension!" To the question, "Sir, have you seen God?" came quick the answer uttered with all the conviction and sincerity that could be expected—"Yes, I see Him as I see you, only in a much intenser sense." The dark clouds of agnosticism and doubt seemed to melt before these statements. It was quite natural; for, to this man religion was not a mere dogma or theory but a reality that could be felt or sensed if you like to say so, just like anything of this world. This man in his younger days was seized with the idea whether God exists and could be seen. Day after day he would weep and say—"Mother, is it true that Thou existest, or is it all poetry? Is there such a reality as the Blissful Mother? Do Thou manifest the Self in me, Thou Mother of the Universe!" As a result of such deep faith and earnest prayers the Divine Mother revealed Herself unto this yearning soul. Still this man was not educated in the modern sense of the term. Early in life he had realised that all secular learning was meant merely for advancing material comforts, and had refused to go to school resolving to devote himself solely to the pursuit of spiritual knowledge. His life is a challenge to the modern intellectualism. It has shown that learning is not essential, and that the Truth flashes in the pure mind. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Yet against his intellect some made desperate attempts only to be vanquished. "They felt themselves in his presence to be dealing with forces that they could not gauge, drawing on wisdom which they were unable to fathom."

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It is an accepted fact requiring no proof in these days that intellect is the prime factor in the progress of humanity—a result mainly based probably on the achievements gained by the human intellect in this scientific age. But an examination of this accepted common notion would lead to contradictions and discrepancies, and we shall be forced to come to the conclusion that the intellect, though it plays an important part in the progress of humanity, is yet subordinate to certain other forces which contribute directly to progress, and that when these forces are exhausted progress comes to an end, and henceforth mere intellectualism works out the decay and disintegration of society. Every thoughtful man would come to this conclusion if he should only study the society of these days. Man is a social being, and his progress as such always lies in his self-sacrifice for the good of others. Hence nations which have the best ethical training have always arrived at and have attained the highest point in civilisation. Mere intellectualism invariably leads to selfishness in the absence of the controlling force of religion.

Another knotty point on which the life of Sri Ramakrishna throws a flood of light is the relative claims of faith and reason. Sri Ramakrishna never asked any one to accept everything on faith but insisted that everything must be reasoned out, for, the first test of true teaching is that it should not contradict reason. The proof of religion depends on the truth of the constitution of man. So also is reason, and therefore they cannot contradict each other. Yet he points out that reason is limited and confined to the world of the senses. There is another instrument of knowledge which is called inspiration and which is beyond the intellect. Man when he gets inspired goes beyond the sense-plane and comes face to face with facts which he could not have reasoned out. He sees things which men attached to the senses do not see nor yet understand. This is the field of religion. All scientific knowledge is based on data of experience, facts which we have perceived, without which we cannot



reason out any truth. Similarly the science of religion must also be based on such data, and not on vain arguments which cannot lead us to anything. So Sri Ramakrishna who asks every one to utilise his reason asks in the same breath to have faith also, by which he means that we should not give ourselves up to vain argumentation which will not help us to realise God. But the extreme case of believing every bit of nonsense in the name of religion he thought was quite degrading. "Prophets have the right to say that they have known facts which every one can attain to and verify if they follow suit." This attitude of his is sure to bring about a fellow-feeling between the two types of religious expression which now go under the popular name of religion and science. Both of them are fundamentals of human nature and so cannot be antagonistic. We often find in scientific men a kind of religious reverence. It is the growth of one at the cost of the other that often causes disharmony. If only both of them would make concessions and sacrifice the non-essentials that have accumulated round each, there would be harmony once more, and each would be the better for it. What is science but a search after God, the Infinite in the external world? Yet the external is only a part of the universe, and in it we cannot find the Truth which will explain all phenomena. We have to take the internal world also, and when we proceed in this direction science becomes religion.

*(To be continued)*

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## THE CRY OF AGONY.\*

BY BRAHMACHARI KUMARA CHAITANYA.

“Like a child sent with a fluttering light  
To feel his way along a gusty night,  
Man walks the world ;  
Again and yet again  
The lamp shall be by fits of  
Passion slain ;  
But shall not He  
Who sent him from the door  
Re-light the lamp  
Once more and yet once more?”

### I

To us of little vision, this life is a reality. Yea, sometimes a very grim one. It was the cold weather of 1924 in one of the biggest coalfields of Hazaribagh, Behar. We were two. He—a medical practitioner, and I a beggar. Smallpox had broken out. We were out inspecting a few segregated quarantine huts. We saw a number of poor coal-diggers, wretched, almost nude. Some among them were crying aloud out of sore sufferings and woes they could not stand. Some were down on death-bed with the last groan of agony on their lips before the tragedy would end. ‘You sanctioned so much ration, Sir,’ they said to their dear Doctor, ‘but the middle men, a cruel lot, have denied most of it to us.’

Was it a living instance of sucking the life-blood of the masses and waxing fat on it? Who can tell?

Some eight thousands of them were gathered together in the same field for a mess of bread—grown up in dirt and filth we cannot conceive of,—for it surpassed the wretched picture usually associated with the slums of our urban life,—putting on the scantiest raiment amidst the raging cold of that hilly district, getting weekly wages on

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\* Paper read at the Ramakrishna Math and Mission Convention, Belur, on the 5th April, 1926.



Sundays, spending everything the next day in wine and enjoyment, absolutely without education,—mere preys to a system of commercialised vice which an all-assertive industrial civilisation had set up,—altogether a pitiable sight epitomised! A glimpse of 'Darkest Bhâratavarsha'—our submerged masses! One felt it was almost a sacrilege to talk to them of a spiritual integration of things we are so much in need of.

Palæo-Indologists' India and our own familiar land are quite different tales. We know modern alchemy exhibited its amazing miracle when it produced the brightest colours out of coal-tar, formerly put aside as a worthless refuse stuff. We sigh for a greater human artist that can make honourable men of us,—a sunken lot, altogether haunted and hopeless. Pliny the Elder, as a spirited citizen of the Eternal City, lamented the drain of Roman gold into India. But *we* know to-day how the process has undergone a complete change.

The present writer looked at them for days and months together. Then he retired—ultimately to become merely moody and thoughtful over it.—What was he? He looked at himself,—young in age, but definitely lacking in the amount of physical stamina which could carry him through, with of course other shortcomings,—yet an aspirant of the highest Truth!

If we look at the youth of India, we have to hope against hope. His extra-Indian compeers possess a decided superiority over him, inasmuch as they have a healthier, brighter and better outlook of life on the very face of it. While folly of follies, we are *dreaming* to build a future Indian nationhood on the solid foundation of a wide-spread illiteracy! We live in the reign of disease, death and poverty, not knowing when our serfdom would end. Before our very eyes we see and most of all *feel* our degeneracy and degradation.

## II

What is the way out? No external party is to be blamed. We ourselves are the greatest culprits.

A house divided against itself cannot stand. From the days of Sudâsa and the Battle of Ten Kings in the Rig-Veda, the very dawn of Indo-Aryan civilisation, to Porus, prominent in the eventful episode of Alexander's expedition in the Punjab, to Prithviraj-Jaychandra before the hegemony of the Pathans, to the mutually quarrelling Marathas in the 18th century,—right up to Mirzafar in the memorable days of Lord Clive,—all through it is a history of political disunion and disruption writ large—uniformly repeating itself.

We glibly talk of India's message to the world. A band of us is rightly rousing itself to carry and spread it broadcast all over the world. Well and good. But let us approach it to-day from a different point of view and set our own house in order, first and foremost. But where is that troop of enthusiasts, who would face the stronghold of antagonists in the land of Ind and hold aloft the Ideal of Creative Altruism, as living contradictions to the learned plea that it is a mere antiquated, unsuitable, anachronistic piece of Mediævalism?

### III

From our own world of intense individual struggle we look up to the dual personality of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. We go deeper to discover not two really, but the same Book of Life with a double unfoldment.

In the now famous discourse upon his Master the Swami thus charges us all in the end :

“Men and women of to-day, if there be among you any pure fresh flower, let it be laid on the alter of God !”

Indeed, the Master's life was a blazing fire of Divine Love and Ecstasy. An approach to it, howsoever critical and analytic, convinces us all that a super-conscious, transcendent realisation is the only thing worth fighting for. Blessed are they that can seek after the Kingdom of Heaven and with a soldier's unflinching courage and unquenchable zeal fight their way on inch by inch in the quest of the Holy Grail along a path which the Vedas



declare to be difficult to tread like the sharp edge of a razor !

Let us here sound a note of caution. In our extra-critical scientific attempt to humanise Sri Ramakrishna—a cry recently raised—we must not totally blind ourselves to the transcendent realisations in which his mind almost always moved and which necessarily formed *the* essential factor of his personality. If we are sincere enough, his life acts as a challenge to us—a sort of dynamite sure to shatter and pulverise the apparently solid rock of our lives, replete with worldly progress and achievements, with hankerings of the flesh rampant in all.

But the researches of the medical materialism of our own day are trying their utmost to interpret spiritual aspirations in terms of physical ailment. A St. Theresa of blessed memory is perhaps pronounced to be attacked with duodenal catarrh or something akin to it. To people of this school a St. Paul or a St. Francis, incidentally every spiritual aspirant, is a mere anti-social misanthrope, a diseased maniac with brain-fag, an unbalanced, effeminate, sentimental enthusiast ! What wonder that Sri Ramakrishna was called a madman by a Bengalee of light and leading ?

To such we reverentially offer the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, yet another couple of Indian Supermen of the last century. Let them give up the transcendental outlook if they so like and weigh these personalities in the balance first as men of character, from a plain, ordinary point of view. For once the highest and best conceptions of sanity and perfect manliness can be set up as the standard of judgment.

For us whose minds cannot move beyond the sense-plane, what is the special message of Sri Ramakrishna ?

We *talk* of morality, for we know bitterly the want of it. But he was a moral man *par excellence*, unapproachable,—purity personified. For he came to fulfil what was said by the sages of old : वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठाता । His inner knowledge alone is well established, who has his senses under control.

His love of truth is yet another feature to be noted. To be truthful was an instinct with him. Hardly shall we find another man of word like him, and the common Hindi adage was most forcibly fulfilled in him—*Mard ki bāt hāthi kā dānt*—a man's word is verily like the tusk of an elephant ; when it has once come out there is no more retraction.

When we consider his breadth of vision, his openness and toleration, we are bound to say that in a sense (not of course academic) he was perhaps the best type of an educated man we can conceive of, although he had not much of literacy. A rare teacher, too, who could minister unto all according to their respective needs and capacities. Although himself a Sannyasin, he never said 'Give up' to everybody. This aspect of his life is best appreciated with reference to his original contributions to the philosophy and religion of India, incidentally of the world. Attuned to the scientific age which had already come in, his approach to the eternal verities of life, however, was definitely not from the side of intellect, not merely theoretical. Although the greatest intellects have tried to show from the ancient scriptures that he came to fulfil by his life what had been said ages ago. Metaphysics and science sing his glory to-day. But he was a shrewd practical man. By an intense Sadhana prolonged for more than a decade he personally realised the truth *through every path* and substantiated what had been declared of old in the Vedic texts—एकं सद्भिर्वा बहुधा वदन्ति—Truth is one, sages call it variously. But his testimony was unique.

In the early religious history of India and of the world the truth of only one path at a time (so far as its practical carrying out in life was concerned) was declared by respective teachers—such as the worship of Varuna in the early Rig-Vedic age, of Indra and other deities later on, Jainism of Pârsva and Mahâvira, Aryadhamma of Buddhagotama, Saivism, Vaishnavism, Saktism and other minor Paurânika cults, theistic teachings of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, our own monistic, dualistic and



qualified monistic schemes of life—and so on. It was left for Sri Ramakrishna and the Swami to unite all “in the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World.” For Christianity and Islam also claimed the Master’s attention. In him the old order and the new melted and became one. In the culture-history of humanity he stands as the beginning of the New—that which is yet TO BE. In the realm of Self-culture and higher thought it was his privilege to synthesise what has so long remained dissociated. A perusal of his life is in itself a liberal education. It is sure to mete out a shattering blow to our innate dogmatism, bigotry, intolerance and narrow conventionalism.

The Swami Vivekananda, his chief apostle, elaborated the same theme and gave a complete Vedantic scheme, on the solid basis of which civic society could be built and evolved, so that according to our fitness we can work out our salvation through an intense spiritual discipline, or labours in the domains of art and literature, trade and commerce, science and social service. Religion is not something strange, quixotic, fit for the cloister, but an essential factor in our workaday life. The Master and his Elect have proved for good that character alone is the one sure standard which can measure our inner advancement. How we are fearless and ready to sacrifice the less for the greater, free and sincere to live, die and hope for the ignorant, the down-trodden, the distressed,—these are some of the salient, decisive factors—our positive qualities.

Like the Father, the Son was a synthesis of the eternal polarities of life,—intensely idealistic, scrupulously pragmatic. Dynamic activity, Rajas, and the intense rest, the calmness of Sattva, could be found in him side by side. He made it clear that a scientific acumen and a religious aspiration are never contradictory. But ultimately the heart must rule, intuition should be made supreme. Specialists, it is said, in different branches of study stood amazed at his general grasp in their respective fields, just as athletes wondered at that

symmetric, Hellenic type of ideal physical beauty that he represented. Yet all was subordinated to the one spiritual theme, the dominant key-note of that musical, transcendent life of Samâdhi.

Amidst all our downfall ought not an example like this to be our 'friend, philosopher and guide'?

The Swami was perhaps the strongest contradiction of that popular misconception that too much stress on spirituality has marred all our worldly activities. It is a historical blunder to suppose that we are bound to lag behind in respect of worldly attainments if we stick to our supreme ideal of Renunciation. The Vedic literature convinces us that though dominantly religious, we never lagged behind in any of the domains of worldly progress,—our achievements in positive, exact science, trade and industry, art, agriculture and literature were not of a mean order. The Maurya and Gupta ages, and the age of Harshavardhan were glorious chapters in the culture-history of India,—both secular and spiritual.

#### IV

To conclude with a personal note. Our individual lives reveal too many disparities and insufficiencies when we confront these dual fountain-heads of holiness and self-denial. But what does revive our hope? 'It is not what man *does*, but what he *will do*.'

Perhaps yet another stronger reason. We who have taken refuge in Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, not of course in any dogmatic, denominational sense, are verily children of Immortality, for the ideas and ideals represented by them cannot die.

Thank our stars,—had we been Spartan children the nation would perhaps have compelled us to be devoured by vultures, the grossest way for the fittest of former days to survive! What harm if our strength fails and we have to succumb, to make room for the stronger, more vigorous, and more gifted Soldiers of Liberty to come and take up their banner and fight to a finish? Mere camp-



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 followers and laggards that we are, let us depart with these words of the Romantic Poet on our lips—

“All that I could never be,  
 All that was not in me,  
 Is yet there—in His hands  
 Who planned the perfect whole !”

—Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda—indeed a perfect whole !

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## IN MEMORIAM.

BY SWAMI NIKHILANANDA.

The Ramakrishna Mission is distinctly poorer to-day by the passing away of its two old members in quick succession. Swami Subhananda, Charu Babu of the Benares Home of Service, and Swami Sachhidananda, generally known as Budo-Baba, breathed their last on the 16th and the 22nd April respectively.

The circumstances under which the former melancholy event took place are really tragic. While bathing in the Gangetic canal near the Kankhal Sevashrama, he was accidentally carried away by the strong current. Subsequently the body was discovered nearly a mile down the canal. All efforts failed to restore him to life. He was fifty-five years old at the time of his death.

The name of Swami Subhananda is inseparably connected with the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Benares. As a matter of fact, he was one of the two pioneer workers who brought the institution into existence. Before his eyes and under his active guidance, the Home has reached its present state of development when it is not only recognised as the most prominent philanthropic centre of the Ramakrishna Mission but also as one of the pioneer institutions of its kind in the whole

country. His life connected with the Home for the last quarter of a century was one of consecration and sacrifice, and he devoted his entire energy to the cause, having his sole reward in the satisfaction of seeing a work done from purely disinterested motives.

Swami Subhananda, formerly known as Charu Chandra Das, came of a respectable Kayastha family of Ichhapura, a village in the Twenty-four Perganas. He was a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna and his illustrious disciple as early as 1897. He came to Benares a couple of years later with his parents, and there he became a prominent figure in a small circle of friends who intended to devote their life to the ideal of the Seva work at that time so brilliantly put before the country by Swami Vivekananda. They organised a small brotherhood, called "Poor Men's Relief Association." The small seed sown so unostentatiously subsequently grew into the mighty tree of the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service. One of his co-workers found an old woman, starving and ailing, by the roadside, and picked her up. He begged a four anna piece and therewith began to nurse her. This is the humble beginning of the work. Later on Swami Vivekananda from whom Charu Babu received his initiation, changed the name of the institution into the Ramakrishna Home of Service, the word "Mission" having been added afterwards. Needless to say, Swami Subhananda played the part of the hero through all the stages and phases of its growth. Unruffled alike by weal and woe, Swami Subhananda, the ideal Karma-Yogin, stuck to his post. He was instrumental in drawing many young men to the cause of service and fired their imagination to consecrate their lives for the suffering poor and sick Narayanas. His perseverance, tenacity and indefatigable energy were really marvellous. And in the midst of multifarious works he always made time for regular meditation and study. His frugal and simple life was a source of inspiration to all who came in contact with him. He worked with clock-like regularity. He maintained his austere and methodical habit up to the



last days of his life. Though the most prominent worker of the Sevashrama, he never made himself burden upon the institution but always paid his expenses which were very small. He made an extensive pilgrimage in the country, and for the last five years since his initiation into Sannyasa in 1921 by Swami Brahmananda, he devoted his life mainly to religious exercises, retiring from active participation in the Sevashrama duties. One noticeable feature of his life, which is the secret of Karma-Yoga, was that he used to concentrate his entire energy on the work in which he was engaged for the time being. With his passing away, the Ramakrishna Mission has lost one of its ideal workers and the Benares Home of Service its friend, philosopher and guide.

Swami Subhananda is no more in his physical body, but his noble life will, for a long time, remain as a bright example before the workers of the Mission, and his memory will always be cherished with love and devotion.

Swami Sachchidananda entered into Mahasamadhi in the Benares Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at the ripe old age of eighty-six. He had been long suffering from a protracted attack of asthma to which he ultimately succumbed. The last moments before his passing away were wonderfully calm and serene.

Prasanna Kumar Gupta, for that was his original name, severed his connection with his family at the age of twelve under the assumed name of Dinanath and mainly served as a contractor at Puri and other places. Though he at times earned plenty of money he never spent it on his personal comforts. Imbued with religious tendencies from early age, he led the life of a bachelor, and from about forty-fifth year of his life he began to feel a strong disgust for worldly attachments. From that time he eschewed many comforts of life and strictly lived on vegetarian diet, cooking a very frugal meal with his own hands. Thus leading an ascetic life for six years he derived no solace and at last resolved to come over to Benares which is always frequented by the Sadhus and

Mahatmas, in search of a spiritual teacher. Leaving the entire charge of his property to a friend, he came to Benares and saw some religious persons who could not however fulfil his desires. At last he came in contact with some disciples of Sri Ramakrishna where they had been some disciples of Sri Ramakrishna at Benares where they had been then practising Tapasya. He received admission into the Order of Monks from Swami Saradananda. The main feature of his religious life was that of an itinerary monk, and he travelled almost all over India, mostly on foot alone or in company with some disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. Austere and ascetic, he for many years observed vows of not touching coin, taking medicine and using any vehicle during his itineracy. On foot he travelled from the Gangotri in the Himalayas to the Ganga-Sagar, the sacred confluence of the Ganges with the Bay of Bengal. He joined the Ramakrishna Order while Swami Vivekananda had been preaching in the West and afterwards visited Khetri and some other Native States with Swamiji.

Soon after Swamiji's return from the West, he became interested in the Math work, and he took an active part in the construction works of the Belur Math, the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama, and the Benares Home of Service. He acted as the manager of the Belur Math for a number of years. He also acted in 1903 as the superintendent of the Boarding House started under the auspices of the Vivekananda Society of Calcutta. He retired from active work in about 1910 and finally came over to Benares in 1916 where he stayed continually up to the last day of his life. He was a very prominent personality in the Benares Sevashrama, and many devotees, male and female, used to visit him daily to all of whom he was a source of inspiration. He has left very interesting records of his life, which may be placed before the public in course of time.

With his passing away we have lost the oldest living member of the Ramakrishna Order and a man of varied experience who was an un-ending store-



house of stories and anecdotes, with which he used to regale us whenever we had a chance of meeting him at Benares. May his soul rest in peace!

## AN INTERVIEW WITH SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

Our readers may have read the reminiscences of Sri Ramakrishna as recorded by the great Bengali patriot, Aswini Kumar Datta, and published by ourselves in the February issue of 1924. Towards the end, he observes that his second meeting with Swami Vivekananda came about at Almora after the latter's first return from America. Details of that meeting were recently published in *Barisal*, a Bengali weekly, from which we cull the following.

It was some time in May or June in 1897. Swamiji was staying at Almora with Capt. and Mrs. Sevier as their guest. Aswini Babu also came to that town in course of travel. He was one day apprised by his local cook of the presence of a strange Bengali Sadhu in the town, speaking English, riding horses and moving altogether in a lordly style. He had learnt from the papers that Swamiji was then staying at Almora, and therefore had no difficulty in identifying the strange Sadhu as the warrior-monk Vivekananda. Aswini Babu went out to meet the "Hindu Warrior." Nobody could give him the address of "Swami Vivekananda". But when he enquired about the "Bengali Sadhu," a passer-by wonderingly said, "You mean the rider Sadhu? There he is coming on horseback! That is his house, Sir." Aswini Babu saw from a distance that as soon as the ochre-robed Sannyasin reached the bungalow-gate, an English gentleman came and led the horse to the door, where Swamiji dismounted and went in.

A while after, Aswini Babu went in and enquired

at the door, "Is Naren Datta here?" A young monk answered in disgust, "No, Sir, there is no Naren Datta here. He died long ago. There is only Swami Vivekananda." But Aswini Babu said he did not want Swami Vivekananda, but Paramahansa Dev's Narendra. This conversation reached the Swami's ears, and he sent for the disciple and enquired what the matter was. The young monk said, "A gentleman is enquiring about Narendra Datta,—Paramahansa's Narendra. I told him that he is dead long ago, but he might see Swami Vivekananda." The Swami exclaimed, "Oh what have you done! Just show him in." Aswini Babu was accordingly called in and found the Swami seated on an easy chair. On seeing Aswini Babu, Swamiji stood up and greeted him cordially. Aswini Babu said, "The Master had once asked me to speak to his dear Narendra. But Narendra could not speak with me much on that occasion. Fourteen years have passed by. I meet him again. The Master's words cannot be in vain." Swamiji sincerely regretted for not having been able to talk long with him on the first occasion. This astonished Aswini Babu, for he had scarcely expected that Swamiji would remember him and a few minutes' conversation held so long ago. Swamiji's memory astounded him.

When Aswini Babu addressed him as "Swamiji," he interrupted him, saying, "How is that? When did I become a 'Swami' to you? I am still the same Narendra. The name by which I used to be called by the Master is yet to me a priceless treasure. Call me by that name."

Aswini Babu: "You have travelled over the world and inspired millions of hearts with spirituality. Can you tell me which way lies India's salvation?"

Swami: "I have nothing more to tell you than what you heard from the Master,—that religion is the very essence of our being, and all reforms must come through it to be acceptable to the masses. To do otherwise is as improbable as pushing the Ganges back to its source in the Himalayas and making it flow in a new channel."



A: "But have you no faith in what the Congress is doing?"

S: "No, I have not. But, of course, something is better than nothing, and it is good to push the sleeping nation from all sides to wake it up. Can you tell me what the Congress has been doing for the masses? Do you think merely passing a few resolutions will bring you freedom? I have no faith in that. The masses must be awakened first. Let them have full meals, and they will work out their own salvation. If the Congress does anything for them, it has my sympathy. The virtues of Englishmen should also be assimilated."

A: "Is it any particular creed you mean by religion?"

S: "Did the Master preach any particular creed? But he has spoken of the Vedanta as an all-comprehensive and synthetic religion. I also therefore preach it. But the essence of my religion is strength. The religion that does not infuse strength into the heart, is no religion to me, be it of the Upanishads, the Gita or the Bhâgavatam. Strength is religion, and nothing is greater than strength."

A: "Please tell me what I should do."

S: "I understand you are engaged in some educational works. That is real work. A great power is working in you, and the gift of knowledge is a great gift. But see that a man-making education spreads among the masses. The next thing is the building up of character. Make your students' character as strong as the thunderbolt. Of the bones of the Bengali youths shall be made the thunderbolt that shall destroy India's thralldom. Can you give me a few fit boys? A nice shake I can give to the world then.

"And wherever you hear the Radha-Krishna songs going on, whip right and left. The whole nation is going to rack and ruin! People having no self-control indulging in such songs! Even the slightest impurity is a great hindrance to the conception of these high ideals. Is it a joke? We have long sung and danced,—no harm

if there is a lull for a time. In the meanwhile let the country wax strong.

“And go to the untouchables, the cobblers, the sweepers and others of their kind, and tell them, ‘You are the soul of the nation, and in you lies infinite energy which can revolutionise the world. Stand up shaking off the shackles, and the whole world shall wonder at you.’ Go and found schools among them, and invest them with the ‘sacred thread’.”

Finding Swamiji’s breakfast ready, Aswini Babu rose to take leave. But before going, he asked Swamiji, “Is it true that when the Madras Brahmins called you a Sudra having no right to preach the Vedas, you said, ‘If I am a Sudra, ye the Brahmins of Madras are the Pariah of the Pariahs’?”

S: “Yes.”

A: “Was it becoming of you, a religious teacher and a man of self-control, to retort like that?”

S: “Who says so? I never said I was right. The impudence of these people made me lose my temper, and the words came out. What could I do? But I do not justify them.”

At this, Aswini Babu embraced Swamiji, and said, “To-day you rise higher in my estimation. Now I realise how you could be a world-conqueror and why the Master loved you so much!”

## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 188.)

अन्नं च भैक्ष्यसंपन्नं भुञ्जानस्य सरित्तटे ॥

मूत्रयन्ति च पापिष्ठाः घृणन्त्यस्य च मूर्धनि ॥

यतवाचं वाचयन्ति ताडयन्ति न वक्ति चेत् ॥ ३६ ॥

36. When he was eating on a river-side the food he had collected by begging, the rascals defiled it abominably and spat on his head. He was observing silence,



but they made him speak, and threatened him if he did not do so.

तर्जयन्त्यपरे वाग्भिः स्तेनोऽयमिति वादिनः ॥

बध्नन्ति रज्ज्वा तं केचिद्बध्यतां बध्यतामिति ॥ ३७ ॥

37. Others rated him with harsh words, saying, "This man is a thief." Some bound him with a rope, and some said, "Kill him! Kill him!"

क्षिपन्त्येकेऽवजानन्त एष धर्मध्वजः शठः ॥

क्षीणवित्त इमां वृत्तिमग्रहीत्स्वजनोज्झितः ॥ ३८ ॥

38. Some taunted him insultingly, saying, "He is a sharper who has put on a mask of religion. Having lost his wealth and being discarded by his kinsmen, he has taken to this profession."

अहो एष महासारो धृतिमान्गिरिाडिव ॥

मौनेन साधयत्यर्थं बकवद्दृढनिश्चयः ॥ ३९ ॥

39. "Oh, he is exceptionally strong, and as steady as the Himalayas! He is firm in resolution like a heron<sup>1</sup> and seeks to gain his object by observing silence!"

[1 *Like a heron*—Just as a heron waits silently on the margin of a lake to catch the unwary fish.]

इत्येके विहसन्त्येनमेके दुर्वर्तयन्ति च ॥

तं बबन्धुर्निरुधुर्यथा क्रीडनकं द्विजम् ॥ ४० ॥

40. Thus did some ridicule him. Others treated him shamefully, and some bound and confined him as they do a plaything such as a bird.

एवं स भौतिकं दुःखं दैविकं दैहिकं च यत् ॥

भोक्तव्यमात्मनो दिष्टं प्राप्तं प्राप्तमबुध्यत ॥ ४१ ॥

41. Thus, whatever troubles befell him—whether<sup>1</sup> they sprang from the animal kingdom, natural phenomena, or bodily ailments—he thought they were predestined and therefore must be silently borne.

[1 *Whether &c.*—These are the three usual divisions of human ills.]

परिभूत इमां गाथामगायत नराधमैः ॥

पातयद्भिः स्वधर्मस्थो धृतिमास्थाय सात्त्विकीम् ॥ ४२ ॥

42. Even though insulted by rascals who sought to lead him astray, he clung to his path of duty by practising the pure form<sup>1</sup> of steadiness, and sang this song :

[1 *Pure form &c.*—Vide Gita XVIII. 33.]

द्विज उवाच ॥

नायं जनो मे सुखदुःखहेतुर्न देवतात्मा ग्रहकर्मकालाः ॥

मनः परं कारणमामनन्ति संसारचक्रं परिवर्तयेद्यत् ॥ ४३ ॥

The Brahmana said :

43. Neither<sup>1</sup> is this body<sup>2</sup> the cause of my pleasure or pain, nor the Atman, nor the gods, nor the planets, nor work, nor Time. The only cause of pleasure and pain, the Srutis<sup>3</sup> declare, is the mind, which sets in motion<sup>4</sup> this cycle of transmigration.

[1 *Neither &c.*—All these items will be taken up one by one in verses 51.—56.

2 *Body*—From the derivative meaning of the word, 'that which is produced.' So also in verses 51 and 54.

3 *Srutis*—e.g. Brihadaranyaka III. ix. 20—"Through the mind alone one sees, through the mind one hears," etc.

4 *Sets in motion &c.*—The next verse explains how.]

मनो गुणान्वै सृजते बलीयस्ततश्च कर्माणि विलक्षणानि ॥

शुक्लानि कृष्णान्यथ लोहितानि तेभ्यः सवर्णाः सृतयो भवन्ति ॥

44. It is the formidable mind which creates desire<sup>1</sup> and the like ; thence proceed varieties of work such as Sattvika, Rajasika and Tamasika ; and these lead to births of a type<sup>2</sup> which is in accordance with them.

[1 *Desire &c.*—for sense-objects.

2 *Type &c.*—Good works producing angelic bodies, bad works animal (or still worse) bodies. and mixed works human bodies.]

अनीह आत्मा मनसा समीहता हिरण्ययो मत्सख उद्विचष्टे ॥

मनः स्वलिङ्गं परिगृह्य कामाञ्जुषन्निबद्धो गुणसङ्गतोऽसौ ॥ ४५ ॥

45. The inactive, resplendent<sup>1</sup> Self, the Friend<sup>2</sup> of the Jiva, looks on<sup>3</sup> from above while the mind works. The Jiva, however, identifying itself with the mind—which presents the world to it—is connected with works, which



belong to the mind, and in the act of enjoying sense-objects comes to be bound.

[The idea is this: The real Self never transmigrates. It is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. It is only the apparent self, the Jiva, which through Nescience connects itself with the mind and goes from one body to another.

<sup>1</sup> *Resplendent*—because It is Knowledge Absolute.

<sup>2</sup> *Friend &c.*—Because the two are identical.

<sup>3</sup> *Looks on &c.*—as mere Witness, without being attached.]

दानं स्वधर्मो नियमो यमश्च श्रुतं च कर्माणि च सद्ब्रतानि ॥

सर्वे मनोनिग्रहलक्षणान्ताः परो हि योगो मनसः समाधिः ॥४६॥

46. Charity, the performance of one's duty, the observance of vows, general and particular, the hearing of the scriptures, meritorious acts and all other works—all these culminate in the control of the mind. The control of the mind is the highest Yoga.

[So one must control the mind first—this is the purport of the verses 46—47.]

समाहितं यस्य मनः प्रशान्तं दानादिभिः किं वद तस्य कृत्यम् ॥

असंयतं यस्य मनो विनश्यद्दानादिभिश्चेदपरं किमेभिः ॥ ४७ ॥

47. Say, of what use are charity<sup>1</sup> and the rest to one whose mind is controlled and pacified? Of what use, again, are this charity and the rest to one whose mind is restless or lapsing into dullness?

<sup>1</sup> *Charity &c.*—referred to in the previous Sloka.]

मनोवशेऽन्ये ह्यभवं स्म देवा मनश्च नान्यस्य वशं समेति ॥

भीष्मो हि देवः सहसः सहीयान्युज्ज्याद्वशे तं स हि देवदेवः ॥

48. The other Gods<sup>1</sup> are under the sway of the mind, but the mind never comes under the sway of any one else. This is a terrible<sup>2</sup> God, stronger than the strongest, and he is the God of Gods<sup>3</sup> who can control the mind.

[<sup>1</sup> Gods—may also mean the organs (Indriyas). So also in verse 52.

<sup>2</sup> *Terrible*—even to the Yogis.

<sup>3</sup> *God of gods*—the phrase may also mean 'the master of all the organs.'

The Sloka (except the last foot) is a close reproduction of a verse of the Sruti.]

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

(ENGLISH)

THE THREE MYSTIC PATHS.—Published by the Shrine of Wisdom, Lincoln House, Acacia Road, Acton, London, W. 3. Pp. 32+32+40. Price, 4s. 6d.

The present work is a combination of three booklets dealing respectively with the Path of Devotion, the Path of Knowledge and the Path of Union by Good Works. They apparently correspond to our paths of Bhakti, Jnana and Karma, but except in the last and that partially, the identity does not go very far. The first booklet dwells on such topics as Prayer, Meditation, Contemplation, Practice of the Presence of God and Worship. The second is mainly based on the philosophy of Hermes-Trismegistus of Egypt, whose teachings find the best expression through the Platonic and Neoplatonic philosophers. The subject-matter of the third is indicated by its name. We confess, we find the treatment sketchy, as is perhaps inevitable within such limited space, and also not quite clear and well-reasoned. The get-up is excellent.

SUBCONSCIOUS MIND AND ITS CONTROL.—A Lecture by Swami Prabhavananda. Published by the Vedanta Society of Portland, 616 Kraemer Building, Second and Washington Streets, Portland, Oregon, U. S. A. Pp. 16. Price not mentioned.

This nicely got-up booklet deals with the subject in a lucid and comprehensive way and is bound to prove helpful to all who are interested in the problem.

GNOSTICISM.—By Mary W. Barrie, M.A. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India. Pp. 114. Price, Wrappers, Re. 1/4, Cloth, Rs. 2/-.

The book under notice contains the substance of lectures delivered in the Brahmavidya Ashrama, Adyar, Madras, and covers such subjects as The geographical home and historical background of Gnosticism, Character-



istics of the Babylonian, Jewish, Egyptian and Grecian civilisations, The esoteric schools of the pre-Christian Gnostic period, Classification of the Gnostic sects, Life in four typical Gnostic Communities, The Gnostic Scriptures, etc. The book is full of information and will amply repay perusal. It is furnished with an appendix containing diagrams and summaries, index and bibliography.

THE HOLY LIFE OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR BHAGAWAN SHRI-KRISHNA, PART III.—By S. N. K. Bijurkar, B.A., Comdapoor, South Kanara District, S. India. Price, As. -/12/-.

The name indicates the matter of the book. But to be useful, it ought to have been written with greater discrimination.

THE SIMPLE WAY OF LAO TSZE.—Published by the Shrine of Wisdom, Lincoln House, Acacia Road, Acton, London, W. 3. Pp. 56. Price 3s.

“At the same time as Pythagoras was unfolding to his disciples the Pythagoric Path to God, and as Buddha was expounding the Dharma, or Law in India, there was a third Venerable Master teaching the same Truth in China. He was Lao Tsze, and his teaching is called ‘Tao-Teh King’. Lao Tsze was born in the year 604 B.C. The Teaching of Lao Tsze, though so ancient, is still quite new, and even modern.” The present brochure is a free translation of the original, and is well worth perusal. Nicely done, and beautifully printed.

THE INDIAN COLONY OF CHAMPA.—By Prof. Phanindranath Basu, M.A., of the Visvabharati, Santiniketan. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 162. Price, Cloth, Rs. 2/-.

It is not generally known that our ancestors had also conquered and colonised the distant land of Champa, the southern portion of Annam in Further India. Prof. Basu’s small book, published as the twelfth of the Asian Library series, furnishes a short but interesting tale of that glorious episode of Indian history. The Kingdom of Champa

flourished from the 2nd to the 14th century, being ruled by as many as twelve dynasties. The founder, as far as has been ascertained (mainly by French savants), was Sri Mára, hailing probably from the Andhradesha. He and his fellow-colonists were all Hindus, and under them and their successors, the whole land was Hinduised in culture and religion,—an achievement of which India has every cause to be proud. The book is nicely got-up and is furnished with an appendix and bibliography. Every lover of India will be profited by its perusal.

TEMPLES, CHURCHES AND MOSQUES.—By Yakub Husan. Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 208. Price, Re. 1/8.

The book under review gives a Kaleidescopic view of the world's religious architecture. The author, a Muhammedan gentleman, has travelled widely and writes generally from first-hand knowledge. "He takes us through the Chaldean to Egyptian, Greek and Roman temples, through the Buddhist and Hindu monuments to the temples of the Far East in all their variety and splendour; again to Solomon's temple and the Kaaba at Mecca, to the coming of the Messiah and the magnificent cathedrals of Mediæval Europe, to the birth of Mohamed and the mosque architecture of Egypt and Turkey and Spain; to Byzantine and Saracenic styles of architecture, and finally to the beautiful Moghul architecture of Hindustan." The book is full of illustrations and is interesting.

THE DEPRESSED CLASSES AND CHRISTIANITY.—By P. O. Philip, B.A. Published by the National Christian Council, Calcutta, and the Christian Literature Society for India, Madras, Allahabad, Rangoon and Colombo. Pp. 52. Price, As. 8.

An account of the depressed classes of our country showing the wretched condition in which they are and the services rendered by Christianity to uplift them. A perusal of the pamphlet brings home to us the fact that thousands of our countrymen are embracing Christianity



forsaking the religion of their forefathers. What are we doing to stop this process? It is high time that Hinduism should be aggressive and reclaim the down-trodden masses.

THEOSOPHY AS THE BASIC UNITY OF NATIONAL LIFE.—

By Annie Besant, J. Krishnamurti, Lady Emily Lutyens and C. Jinarajadas. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 96. Price: Cloth, Re. 1/8; Board, Re. 1/-.

The book contains a series of four lectures delivered in Bombay at the Forty-ninth Anniversary of the Theosophical Society, December, 1924. The four lectures are: The Real and the Unreal in a Nation's Life, The Citizen as a Divine Agent, Brotherhood as a Reality, The Spiritual Organisation of a Nation. The authors have sought to prove that Theosophy is the panacea for our national evils and when widely spread will bring about the desired unity in the country. Whether this dream will come true or not time alone can say.

CEYLON'S PLACE IN ASIAN CULTURE.—By S. T. Bharatha Nesan with a Preface by C. F. Andrews, M.A. Published by the author from the Bharatha Aham, Vaddukkoddai, Juffna, Ceylon.

The title itself suggests what the subject-matter of the pamphlet is. The writer, it seems, is a novice in the field.

RAMANAND TO RAM TIRATH (Lives of the Saints of Northern India including the Sikh Gurus). Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 256. Price, Re. 1/8.

The volume recounts the lives of some of the famous saints of Northern India, viz., Ramanand, Kabir, Nanak, Ravi Das, Mira Bai, Vallabhacharya, Tulasi Das, Nanak's Successors, Guru Govind Singh, Swami Virajanand, Dayanand Saraswati, and Swami Ram Tirath. Illustrations and stray teachings of the saints inserted in the book are an interesting feature.

TOWARDS DISCIPLESHIP.—By J. Krishnamurti. Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 144. Price : Cloth, Rs. 2/4 ; Board, Re. 1/8.

A series of informal talks to aspirants for discipleship. The get-up and printing of the book are good.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY, PART I.—Compiled by Swami Nirvedananda. Published by Swami Santoshananda from the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, 7 Halder Lane, Calcutta. Pp. 127. Price, As. -/12/-.

As has been mentioned in the Publisher's Note, "In order to bring the lofty ideas and ideals preached by Swami Vivekananda within the easy reach of all, the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Calcutta, has undertaken the publication of a series of cheap and handy books, each bearing on a particular subject and containing a good many brilliant passages selected from his speeches and writings classified under a number of interesting heads." The volume under review is the second book of the series. A look at the table of contents shows that the volume has been conveniently divided into two books, one dealing with religion in the sense of spiritual culture and illumination, the other with philosophy—God, soul, nature and eschatology. The plan of the book and the choice and arrangement of the topics show the skill and discrimination of the compiler. There is a portrait of the Swami as the frontispiece. We hope the book will have a good sale. The get-up and printing are good.

(BENGALI)

VEDANTA-PARICHAY (Introduction to Vedanta).—By Hirendra Nath Datta, M.A., B.L. Published by Phanibhusan Datta, 139 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Pp. 254. Price, Re. 1/4.

The writer is well-known in Bengal as a scholar and his several works written in Bengali on Hindu philosophy and religion have deservedly obtained public appreciation.



The present work only adds to his reputation. He is one of those who have been primarily responsible for popularising Vedantism in Bengal, and we are sure "Introduction to Vedanta" will serve a real purpose. It is a collection of essays read and published on different occasions, but furnishes a connected exposition of the fundamentals of Vedantism, e.g. The Nature of Brahman, Its relation to the Universe and individuals, Maya and Prakriti, The doctrine of the Infinite, etc., etc. The delineation is punctuated by profuse quotations from standard works, is lucid, charming and convincing. The book, as its name signifies, is really only an introduction to the study of Vedanta and is well-suited for the beginners. Printing and paper fine.

## NEWS AND NOTES.

### THE VEDANTA WORK IN NEW ZEALAND.

We have received an interesting letter from Clifton, Sumner, New Zealand, which we reproduce here :

"Many thanks for yours of your kind enquiries about our little Vedanta study class here.

"It is only a very small one—just a few educated women no longer very young, no longer satisfied with 'popular' Christianity and seeking for deeper truth whereby we may guide our lives. We are reading this year the articles by Swami Paramananda in the *Message of the East*, and we discuss freely—most of us being only just 'nibblers' at the matter. I who write met Swami Prakashananda in San Francisco, 1915, and bless the day that I did, for he taught me the beginnings of meditation. Later, I got into touch with Swami Prajnananda of Mayavati by letter. His mind touched mine so closely that it seems to me that he still teaches me, and it is partly because of him that I suggested to my friends that we should send part of our small offerings to you at Mayavati, especially, as we Westerners, you know, are well

aware of the need the body has of help! We send the rest to the Nivedita School in Calcutta. It does not seem to us right to take Vedanta help and teaching without any return. Yet money is all we can as a class offer, and not much of that either since we are none of us very well off, and all have others to help. I am myself a prison-worker, and they help me with money for that too as well as with their friendship, in which our religious studies form the deepest bond. We are very glad to hear that the little we send is useful. I can assure you it comes from hearts very willing to help according to their understanding and hands that love better to give than to get. But spiritually we are not very far on. I long for your prayers for these my friends."

The letter shows how the universal, synthetic ideas of Vedanta are slowly and silently spreading all over the world.

#### SWAMI PARAMANANDA'S RETURN TO AMERICA.

Swami Paramananda, President of the Vedanta Society, Boston, and founder of the Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, who had come to India in February last, again set sail for America *via* the Pacific in May. During his short stay here he visited many places and was presented with addresses of welcome in Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Dacca and other places.

His reply to the address of welcome by the citizens of Calcutta was striking. Among others he said that the root cause of the down-fall of India was that she merely offered her lip-homage to her heritage, but did not make any effort to practise it in life. He urged the audience to combine in their life the rich traditions and heritage of the past if they wanted to realise their goal. From his experience abroad, he had found that at the present time India could not keep herself isolated from the rest of the world. India must send her sons to foreign countries to study the conditions there and in a spirit of humility learn and assimilate what was best in them.



Two more Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission have accompanied Swami Paramananda for the preaching of Vedanta in the West. Of them Swami Akhilananda will most probably work with Swami Paramananda at the Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, and Swami Dayananda with Swami Prakashananda, at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco. We wish the Swamis a happy and safe voyage.

#### THE OUTLOOK FOR THE WESTERN CIVILISATION.

The greatest tragedy of the Western life is that it destroyed its ideals before it discovered any new ones. Tragedy did we say?—We are at once reminded that some of our thinkers after long sojourn in the West have declared that the decadence of the Western civilisation is a myth originated from the over-sensitive mentality of some Western writers and avidly grabbed by ourselves. They say, the West is going merrily on, in spite of the last war and all spiritual and social unrest that we hear of. We do not know if Mr. Glenn Frank, the learned editor of *The Century Magazine* of New York, is one of that over-sensitive set. But the series of articles he recently contributed to his monthly on *The Outlook for Western Civilization*, reproduced in the March and April numbers of *The Calcutta Review*, indicates that the decline of the Western civilisation is not a mere myth. The Editor bases his thesis on the modern Western literature. He first considers the literature of despair, “in which many of the most astute students of contemporary affairs express the belief that we are headed toward a new dark age.” This literature, he thinks, has been inspired by at least seven distinct fears, namely, the biological, psychological, political, economic, historical, administrative and moral fear. The writer believes that all these fears, except perhaps the historical, rest upon indisputable grounds. “I believe,” he says, “that we shall inevitably enter a new dark age, a period in which civilised values will go into decline and the race be thrust back into the

precarious existence of its primitive ancestors, unless we begin with a decent promptness to remove the legitimate grounds for these fears."

But it will be manifestly wrong to think that the situation holds out only fear and no hope. The present difficulties of the Western civilisation are really those which attend all transitions from the old to the new. Only in the present case, they have been extremely aggravated by a wilful and ruthless destruction of the inherited regulative ideal before any new ideal has clearly emerged. The spirit of science is not yet grown strong enough to take the responsibility of guiding humanity, but in its adolescence again lies the safety and salvation of the West. Mr. Frank therefore hopes that in order to survive the present crisis the Western civilisation must, at the first instance, requisition the services of a group of men who would go, with conscientious care through the findings of all the different sciences, find their net social and spiritual contributions and thrust them into the stream of common thought and make them the basis of social action. Secondly is wanted a sort of a Ringmaster of Specialists, that is to say, a catholic-minded person, an omnivorous reader who had ranged over the whole fields of knowledge, is acquainted with the great generalisations of all the experiences of mankind, "with just enough of the alloy of mountebankery in him to enable him to touch the imagination of the masses." Mr. Frank thinks that a British Premier or an American President possessing the above qualities might light the fires of renaissance in a few brief years. And thirdly religion, for every revolution is the work of a principle, of faith in the moral order. But it cannot, of course, be the old theologies. "The task of religious leadership in the new renaissance will be to help mankind use the results of modern biology, psychology, sociology and other sciences, for the enrichment, the increase, and the moral verification of life. Whatever may be the point of departure for the next renewal of Western civilisation, and from whatever source its leadership may come, I think we know where it must



look for its sources of power—to science and religion.”

Yes, the salvation of the West lies in a science which is religion and a religion which is science.

#### PRINCE DARA'S LOVE OF VEDANTA.

It may be said that Emperor Aurangzeb not only undermined the Mughal empire, but also undid all the noble efforts of his predecessors for the union of the Hindu and Muhammadan cultures and religions. He was the antithesis of his wise great-grandfather in this respect. Akbar the Great, easily the best and the greatest of Muhammadan rulers in India, saw with his far-sighted vision the impossibility of maintaining a lasting political organisation without recognising the capabilities and the important position of the Hindus in it. He further felt that a mere external union was nothing, if it was not backed by a more real union of their cultures and religions. His matrimonial alliances with the Hindus and respect and regard for their religion and culture were obviously prompted by these considerations. His son and grandson, carrying Hindu blood in their veins, followed practically, if not explicitly, the policy of Akbar. Aurangzeb set himself deliberately against all these. And in spite of his honest industry, great administrative powers, temperate habits and scrupulous dutifulness, he caused the decline of the great empire.

In these days when the thought of communal tension and the absolute necessity of communal union for the welfare of India has made us thoughtful, the noble, but tragic memory of Prince Dara, the eldest son of Shahjahan, haunts our mind. One feels that if Dara had sat on the throne of Delhi, the sad spectacles of the present times would not have been seen, and India's history would perhaps have told a more pleasant tale. For, Akbar was, in nobility of mind and breadth of outlook, the prototype of Prince Dara, and Dara's love of Hinduism was generous and pregnant with possibilities for the Indian nation as that of Akbar himself.

The new year number of *The Prabasi*, a Bengali

monthly, edited by Sjt. Ramananda Chatterji of *The Modern Review*, contains a short but interesting article from the pen of the renowned historian, Prof. Jadunath Sarkar, on Prince Dara and his study of Vedantism. The Professor says it was while Prince Dara was the Subadar of the Allahabad province that he engaged learned Pandits from Benares to translate fifty Upanishads into Persian, which he afterwards published in manuscript with a preface of his own, under the title, *The Secret of Secrets*. It is this translation which being rendered into Latin by a French soldier, reached in later days the hands of Schopenhauer and evoked from him the noble exclamation: "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life—it will be the solace of my death."

Dara was an earnest seeker of truth, and having studied without satisfaction Sufism, the Bible and other scriptures from able and renowned teachers, he found, as he confessed in his preface, the fulfilment of his heart's desire only in the Vedas, and especially in their Advaitism. He was no bigot however and had an eye for religious synthesis. For, when he discovered that Sufism and Vedantism differed only in form, he composed another treatise, significantly named *The Union of Two Seas*, in which he established the truths of Advaitism in terms of Sufism. He also used to visit Hindu Yogis and enquire of them the secrets of spiritual life. But he never went against his inherited religion, for he saw no contradiction between being a Muhammadan and believing in and respecting Hinduism.

It was an evil day when Aurangzeb incited the fanatical soldiery against his eldest brother in his avarice for the royal throne, declaring him a Kaffir, a heretic. For, on that day he undid all that the wisdom of his fathers had achieved towards the creation of a united nationhood by bringing together the two great communities. This is the greatest tragedy of Aurangzeb's rule.

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