Prabuddha Bharata

DECEMBER, 1930

Volume XXXV Number 12

"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।"

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

CHRISTIANITY IN INDIA

By Swami Vivekananda

I do not know much about missionaries in Japan and China, but I am well posted about India. The people of this country look upon India as a vast waste, with many jungles and a few civilized Englishmen. India is half as large as the United States and there are three hundred million people. Many stories are related which I have become tired of denying. The first invaders of India, the Aryans, did not try to exterminate the population of India as the Christians did when they went into a new land, but the endeavour was made to elevate persons of brutish habits. The Spaniards came to Ceylon with Christianity. The Spaniards thought that their God commanded them to kill and murder and to tear down heathen temples. The Buddhists had a tooth a foot long, which belonged to their prophet, and the Spaniards threw it into the sea, killed a few thousand persons and converted a few scores. The Portuguese came to Western India. The Hindus have a belief in the Trinity and had a temple dedicated to their sacred belief. The invaders looked at the temple and said it was a creation of the devil, and so they brought their cannon to bear upon the wonderful structure and destroyed a portion of it. But the invaders were driven out of the country by the enraged population. The early missionaries tried to get hold of land, and in their effort to secure a foothold by force, they killed many people and converted a number. Some of them became Christians to save their lives. Ninety-nine per cent of the Christians converted by the Portuguese sword were compelled to do so, and they said : "We do not believe in Christianity, but we are forced to call ourselves Christians." But Catholic Christianity soon relapsed.

The East India Company got possession of a part of India with the idea of making hay while the sun shone. They kept the missionaries away. The Hindus were the first to bid the missionaries welcome, not the Englishmen, who

were engaged in trade. I have great admiration for some of the first missionaries of the later period, who were true servants of Jesus and did not vilify the people or spread vile falsehoods about them. They were gentle, kindly men. When Englishmen became masters of India, the missionary enterprise began to become stagnant, a condition which characterizes the missionary efforts in India to-day. Dr. Long, an early missionary, stood by the people. He translated a Hindu drama describing the evils perpetrated in India by indigo-planters, and what was the result? He was placed in jail by the English. Such missionaries were of benefit to the country, but they have passed away. The Suez Canal opened up a number of evils.

Now goes the missionary, a married man, who is hampered because he is married. The missionary knows nothing about the people, he cannot speak the language, so he invariably settles in the little white colony. He is forced to do this because he is married. Were he not married, he could go among the people and sleep on the ground if necessary. So he goes to India to seek company for his wife and children. He stays among the English-speaking people. The great heart of India is to-day absolutely untouched by missionary effort. Most of the missionaries are incompetent. I have not met a single missionary who understands Sanscrit. How can a man, absolutely ignorant of the people and their traditions, get into sympathy with them? I do not mean any offence, but Christians send men as missionaries, who are not persons of ability. It is sad to see the money spent to make converts when no real results of a satisfactory nature are reached.

Those who are converted, are the few who make a sort of living by hanging round the missionaries. The converts who are not kept in service in India, cease to be converts. That is about the entire matter in a nutshell. As to the way of converting, it is absolutely absurd. The money the missionaries bring is accepted. The colleges founded by the missionaries are all right, so far as the education is concerned. But with religion it is different. The Hindu is acute; he takes the bait but he avoids the hook! It is wonderful how tolerant the people are. A missionary once said: "That is the worst of the whole business. People who are self-complacent, can never be converted."

As regards the lady missionaries, they go into certain houses, get four shillings a month, teach them something of the Bible and show them how to knit. The girls of India will never be converted. Atheism and scepticism at home is what is pushing the missionary into other lands. When I came into this country I was surprised to meet so many liberal men and women. But after the Parliament of Religions a great Presbyterian paper came out and gave me the benefit of a seething article. This the editor called enthusiasm. The missionaries do not and cannot throw off nationality—they are not broad enough—and so they accomplish nothing in the way of converting, although they may have a nice sociable time among themselves. India requires help from Christ; but not from antichrist; these men are not Christ-like. They do not act like Christ: they are married and come over and settle down comfortably and make a fair livelihood. Christ and his disciples would accomplish much good in India, just as many of the Hindu saints do, but these men are not of that sacred character. The Hindus would welcome the Christ of the Christians gladly, because his life was holy and beautiful, but they cannot and will not receive the narrow utterances of the ignorant, hypocritical or self-deceiving men.

Men are different. If they were not, the mentality of the world would be degraded. If there were not different religions, no religion would survive. The Christian requires his religion; the Hindu needs his own creed. All religions have struggled against one another for years. Those which were

founded on a book, still stand. Why could not the Christians convert the Jews? Why could they not make the Persians Christians? Why could they not convert the Mahomedans? Why cannot any impression be made upon China and Japan? Buddhism, the first missionary religion, numbers double the number of converts of any other religion, and they did not use the sword. The Mahomedans used the greatest violence. They number the least of the three great missionary religions. The Mahomedans have had their day. Every day you read of Christian nations acquiring land by bloodshed. What missionaries preach against this? Why should the most blood-thirsty nations exalt an alleged religion which is not the religion of Christ? The Jews and the Arabs were the fathers of Christianity, and how have they not been persecuted by Christians! The Christians have been weighed in the balance in India and have been found wanting. I do not mean to be unkind, but I want to show Christians how they look in other eyes. The missionaries who preach the burning pit, are regarded with horror. The Mahomedans rolled wave after wave over India waving the sword, and to-day where are they?

The farthest that all religions can see, is the existence of a spiritual entity. So no religion can teach beyond that point. In every religion there is the essential truth and the non-essential casket in which this jewel lies. Believing in the Jewish book or in the Hindu book is non-essential. Circumstances change; the receptacle is different; but the central truth remains. The essentials being the same, the educated people of every community retain the essentials. If you ask a Christian what his essentials are, he should reply: "The teachings of Lord Jesus." Much of the rest is nonsense. But the nonsensical part is right; it forms the receptacle. The shell of the oyster is not attractive, but the pearl is within it. The Hindu will never attack the life of Jesus; he reverences the Sermon on the Mount. But how many Christians know or have heard of the teachings of the Hindu holy men? They remain in a fool's paradise. Before a small fraction of the world is converted, Christianity will be divided into many creeds. That is the law of nature. Why take a single instrument from the great religious orchestra of the earth? Let the grand symphony go on. Be pure. Give up superstition and see the wonderful harmony of nature. Superstition gets the better of religion. All the religions are good, since the essentials are the same. Each man should have the perfect exercise of his individuality, but these individualities form a perfect whole. This marvellous condition is already in existence. Each creed has something to add to the wonderful structure.

I pity the Hindu who does not see the beauty in Jesus Christ's character. I pity the Christian who does not reverence the Hindu Christ. The more a man sees of himself, the less he sees of his neighbours. Those that go about converting, who are very busy saving the souls of others, in many instances forget their own souls. I was asked by a lady why the women of India were not more elevated. It is in a great degree owing to the barbarous invaders through different ages; it is partly due to the people of India themselves. But our women are any day better than the ladies of this country who are devotees of novels and balls. Where is the spirituality one would expect in a country which is so boastful of its civilization? I have not found it. "Here" and "hereafter" are words to frighten children. It is all "here." To live and move in God,—even here, even in this body! All self should go out; all superstition should be banished. Such men live in India. Where are such in this country? Your preachers speak against "dreamers." The people of this country would be better off if there were more "dreamers." If a man here followed literally the instruction of his Lord, he would be called a fanatic. There is a good deal of difference between dreaming and

the brag of the nineteenth century. The bees look for the flowers. Open the lotus! The whole world is full of God and not of sin. Let us help each other. Let us love each other. A beautiful prayer of the Buddhist is: "I bow down to all the saints; I bow down to all the prophets; I bow down to all holy men and women all over the world!"

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR,
September 30, 1897.

DEAR R.,

I received your affectionate letter and also the letter from the Math. I am leaving for the Punjab in two or three days. I have received the foreign mail. The following is my answers to Miss Noble's questions in her letter:

1. Nearly all the branches have been started, but the movement is only just the beginning.

2. Most of the monks are educated. Those that are not, are also having secular education. But above all, to do good, perfect unselfishness is absolutely necessary. To ensure that, more attention is given to spiritual exercises than to anything else.

3. Secular educators: We get mostly those who have already educated themselves. What is needed, is training them into our method and building up of character. The training is to make them obedient and fearless; and the method is to help the poor physically first and then work up to higher regions of mentality.

Arts and Industries: This part of the programme alone cannot be begun for want of funds. The simplest method to be worked upon at present is to induce Indians to use their own produce and get markets for Indian artwares etc. in other countries. This should be done by persons who are not only not middlemen themselves, but will devote the entire proceeds of this branch to the benefit of the workmen.

4. Wandering from place to place will be necessary till "people come to education". The religious character of the wandering monks will carry with it a much greater weight than otherwise.

5. All castes are open to our influence. So long the highest only have been worked upon. But since the work department is in full operation in different famine-centres, we are influencing the lower classes more and more.

6. Nearly all the Hindus approve our work, only they are not used to practical co-operation in such works.

7. Yes, from the very start we are making no distinction in our charities or other good works between the different religions of India.

Reply to Miss N. according to these hints.

VIVEKANANDA

II

MADRAS,
12th February, 1897.

DEAR R.,

I am to start next Sunday. I had to refuse invitations from Poona and other places on account of bad health. I am very much pulled down by hard work and heat.

The T—s and others wanted to intimidate me. Therefore I had to give them a bit of my mind. You know they persecuted me all the time in America because I did not join them. They wanted to begin it here. So I had to clear my position. If that displeases any of my Calcutta friends, "God help them." You need not be afraid, I do not work alone, but He is always with me. What could I do otherwise?

Yours
VIVEKANANDA

OUR MOTHERS AND SISTERS

BY THE EDITOR

The women of India are just now attracting a great deal of attention all over the world. None ever thought that they could come out so strong and splendid into the political battle and show such courage and public spirit. Well, this is seemingly one of the many paradoxes of this land of puzzles. But to those who could look deep into the inner workings of the Indian world and understand the ideas and ideals that govern our womankind, the present development has been no surprise. One point has to be noted. Our women could never have responded in the way they have done, had not the call of the nation come in the name of spiritual ideals—truth and non-violence (*Ahimsâ*). And there is not the least doubt that the qualities of mind, manifested by our mothers and sisters in the present struggle, were directly born out of the life they have so long lived in their households and the ideas and ideals they have been following. Their new feature is only an outgrowth of the same principles as operate in their home-life, and not something grown in contradistinction to them. In the following pages we shall try to discuss some of the principles that have governed the life of our women for ages, and we shall try to show their validity in face of ignorant foreign criticism. But we request our readers not to infer from our words that we wish Indian women to remain unaltered in future. Changes there would certainly be. In the present article we shall not discuss those prospective changes. We have already dwelt on them in our article on the Future of Indian Women in *Prabuddha Bharata*, September, 1927. But we must say that, generally speaking, the ideals that our women have been following, have a permanent validity. The future will see only wider applications of those ideals and changes in details, but not changes in fundamentals.

I

Life in India revolves round two main pivots—Woman and the *Sannyâsin*, and they at bottom represent the same principle. It is impossible to conceive Indian culture without the existence of the family. Nowhere perhaps does the family hold such an important position in the collective life as in India—for here the family fulfils also the function of the church—and of the family woman is the centre and the foundation.

It is patent even to a casual observer that women are pre-eminently absent

from the public life in India. It is true that with the growth of political life, this want is being partly fulfilled in some provinces. But it is still fundamentally true that women do not openly play any great part in Indian public life. In certain provinces they come out of the *purdah*, have freedom of movement like men and are without veil. But even there women are pre-eminently busy with their households: they do not meddle in public life. It thus appears that the world in India is divided into two clearly demarcated halves. In one, man alone reigns. And in the other, woman. Woman looks after the household,—man earns money, does business and fulfils the communal obligations. Her world is the family and his the outer life. This, in the Western eye, is a great disability of our women. Women are also human, they say, why then should they not function in the outside world like men? The idea of woman, as it prevails in the modern West, is that of man's equal in all respects, socially, culturally, economically, politically and conjugally. This idea has much to commend itself to the modern mind. It at least does not limit woman to certain functions only. There seems to be more reason and justice in it. But if all human questions could be solved on the basis of reason and justice alone, this modern idea could certainly be considered a decided improvement on the past position. But it is not really so. A look at the Western world would convince that woman, though her position is now quite equal to man's, has not found happiness and stability. She is unhappy. She does not find any lasting poise. By trying to become equal to man, she has lost her womanhood, her own self. She is restless and miserable. Of course it would be wrong to say that feminism has not made any lasting contribution to the welfare of woman. But she has no stability, and she has lost the graces she formerly possessed.

One important fact is often ignored in judging the position of woman in communal life. The position of woman has changed in the West, not purely under the urge of justice and reason. The greatest pressure exerted was economic. Modern indnstrialism was bound to bring about profound changes in the position of woman. The West manufactured, the East supplied the market, so that the West could produce as much as it liked. This drew woman into the economic field. She as a mere household drudge, was a loss economically; as an active co-worker of man in the industrial field, she yielded more profit. This change in the economic status of woman was bound to bring about changes in other fields, in the domestic, conjugal and social life. But what has been the consequence? The West finds that unemployment is staring it hard in the face. The East has awakened. It refuses to be the dumping ground of the products of the West. The West has been over-producing. It must not do so any more. In fact, with the passing of days, as the Eastern countries would be catering to themselves more and more, the West will have to reduce its production proportionately. There must be smaller and smaller number of workers in the industrial field. Some must seek other fields of action. Why should not those be women? In fact, not long ago, one British Cabinet Minister openly deprecated the invasion of the economic field by women.

The communal life of a people, in fact all life, always wants systematisation. There is no lasting peace and gain in changing from day to day. The modern mind is so deeply bewildered that it has begun to believe bewilderment itself as the normal thing. The West, if it would gain the greater things of life, must learn to have some system and order in its life, and not haphazard action and thinking in the name of individual freedom and rationalism. When the spirit of order prevails, women are bound to be ousted from the industrial field more or less and

pushed back into domestic life. There is a very good reason why it would be so. If woman in the West has gained in certain respects, she has lost much in another respect. She is no longer the ideal wife or mother. She cannot build up a home, where new generations can be properly brought np. She herself has to be out all day like her husband. Housekeeping is more and more precarious. The proper atmosphere is absent from the home. The peace, sweetness, poise and calm which make home the training ground of life, cannot be engendered without the loving meditations and silent ministrations of wife or mother. Woman must abide perpetually in the home to invest it with the sacred graces of a sanctuary. The modern woman, who is the equal of man in functions and mentality, is ill equipped to make a home. Life has become mechanical, the deeper forces are absent. Man cannot replace woman in this respect. It is pre-eminently the function of woman. We have no doubt, therefore, that when conditions will settle down in the West, when order will emerge out of the present chaos, life there also would be divided between man and woman—the world for him and the home for her. This is not to uphold the *purdah*, however, or to limit woman to domestic functions only. By all means women should have all culture of head and hands and exert a potent influence on the affairs of nations and the world. But her primal concern should be the home.

In the light of the above observations, the present position of the Indian woman may not seem so bad as it at first has been imagined. It is quite true that she is too circumscribed. Her education has been neglected in certain respects, and her mind works often within narrow limits, which is due to the lack of intellectual equipment. But her fundamental position is correct. Let none suppose that the Indian woman is busy with the kitchen or purely household works only. It is the woman that looks after the intricate relationships that exist between innumerable kiths and kins and neighbours in India. She is alert about the smallest details. She never allows them to lapse. Man looks after the business side of life. But the maintenance of these relationships is the duty of woman primarily. And she takes the liveliest interest in the activities of her husband and children. She knows the details of their works and advises them, and her advice is often valuable. No man will ever do a thing—even a business deal—without asking the advice of his mother and wife. It may be that her ignorance of business intricacies will not always enable her to advise correctly, and perhaps her advice in that case will have to be ignored, still it is always sought. It thus happens that, because of this practice, when the husband dies, the wife, a *purdah* lady, never seeing the outside world, often manages vast estates with the utmost skill and efficiency. Still we must admit that it is not in these things that we seek the excellence of the Indian woman. It is always in the mystic atmosphere that she creates about herself and in the home, that we find her greatest glory and function.

Indian culture is pre-eminently spiritual. And spirituality is more or less a discipline of emotions. Those fortunate few who realise the Lord face to face, have their life transformed. Their entire being is impregnated with God; and their efforts never deviate from the high level of spiritual truth. They feel rightly and act rightly. But for all others life must be an adoration to an invisible Divinity. They do not clearly or even vaguely perceive the spiritual goal towards which they have to travel and in reference to which they have to mould their life and control their thoughts, feelings and actions. As impulses, in the last analysis, are the guide of life and action, their primary duty is the right regulation of impulse. They must learn to feel rightly. The impulses of a man of spiritual realisation are spontaneously correct. Those of an

ordinary man have to be made so by strenuous efforts.

Men, engaged in various activities, especially in earning money, have to depend largely on their womankind to maintain the correct level of their thought and feeling. Without their help, the turmoils of life would easily submerge them in materialism. In India, therefore, the mother and the wife have the responsibility of maintaining the true tone in the life of their children and husbands. This is the keynote of the life of an Indian household. Through prayer and service, women create the proper atmosphere in the home, so that whatever the men-folk may be doing outside, at home they must always dwell as it were on the threshold of the chapel. The excessive religious enthusiasm of our women, sometimes manifesting as a fanatical regard for ceremonial purity, is sometimes ridiculed by certain critics. That is because they fail to understand the inwardness of it. The spiritual idealism of modern India, it must be remembered, is largely due to our women. The reason why we are not yet engulfed by the aggressive secularism of the West, is due to *their* conservatism. They are faithful in every respect—to their people, to their religion, and to their God. This faith still holds together the best elements of Indian domestic life.

But mere religious enthusiasm would have availed little if there were not a superabundance of love. It is love that tells even in difficult situations. Our women's actions may appear unreasonable to us. Their commands may not appeal to our common sense. But the love that accompanies these, endows them with a sweetness of perfection, which is irresistible. This love and affection often hold in check otherwise refractory natures. Foreigners have often observed the disparity between the intellectual convictions of an educated Indian and his actions under the influence of his family. And they have laughed at his impotence. They do not know that an Indian considers correct feeling as higher and more precious than a correct idea. How can an Indian, knowing that to feel truly is infinitely better than to be rational, resist the appeal of his home where, in spite of lack of modern knowledge, there is still an intensity of noble feeling?

The lack of modern accomplishments in our women is undoubtedly regrettable. This has accentuated the division between the home and the outside world. But perhaps this is not without its saving graces. The modern age with its tremendous need of readjustment in every sphere of life, is drawing us more and more into the vortex of mad action. Hurry and bustle, strife and struggle—from the waking hour to sleep it is one continuous physical movement. There is no rest for the mind. It finds no time or opportunity to dive deep into the inner being wherein is real peace and fulfilment. Perhaps this mad whirl of action is unavoidable. Evidently we have to pass through this phase of history. But while the outside is full of noise and clamour, the home may remain cool as an oasis. If modernism, however, catches hold of our womankind, the home would naturally lose its intense conventual atmosphere, unless a new spiritual background is set up beforehand. Men would miss the soothing influence. If our women are not modern enough, they at least radiate the calm of the Eternal. Perhaps it is too much to hope, nor is it desirable, that our women should remain exactly as they now are. But in the mean time let us not forget the strength of our present position.

II

A proper understanding of the position of women in Indian life and the secret of her greatness would be impossible if we do not remember the above facts. It would be futile to judge by the exterior. Not merely of Indian women, but of men also it is true that they look upon correct feeling as the primary thing. It is through the heart that the deeper truths of life and reality are

revealed. We gain in personality and reach the heart of things through purified emotions. So actions do not matter. It is the motive behind, the will and the aspiration, that count. If we have the proper motive, even the most menial action would be transformed into worship. This is no mere philosophical ideal—a counsel of perfection. It is intensely believed in by most Indians. Greater attention is paid to the motive and less to its expression. This is pre-eminently true of our women. It is natural to love and serve one's husband, children and other relations, and this love and service can be easily raised to higher levels. The domestic works that they do, are, therefore, not what they appear to us. To them, these are suffused with a celestial light. Household work is not mere drudgery. We have to note this fact. The works that our women do at home are not a cruel superimposition. Our women are not like slaves to us, whom we work day and night for our comfort while we look on without sharing their burden. This view is altogether wrong. When we look at from the outside and do not take into account the spirit that lies behind, we are apt to make these strange mistakes, especially when there are preconceptions. Our women never think that their men have superimposed cruel tasks on them. The very idea is absurd. In India, marriage is not a contract. It is a mystic union between man and woman which even death cannot annul. With such an idea of marriage, the idea of the wife being a slave does not cohere. Our men also never think that way. And it is wrong to suppose that men do not help their women in domestic works. But it is true that women have the charge of domestic works pre-eminently. The reason of it has to be sought elsewhere. One must never forget that to the woman, her domestic service is sacramental. She considers it a great shame to relegate it to others. She must do it herself. Just as one finds no satisfaction in worshipping by proxy, so the Indian woman is disconsolate if she has to neglect her household work. We dare say this is characteristic of women in every land. Wherever there is deep and true love, it takes the form of worship and finds expression in personal service. In India this fact has been so well recognised that it has been made into a kind of cult. Woman must never give up household work. To be able to manage with her own hands the entire work of the household with complete success and satisfaction, is her pride and glory. Even in the rich households where servants are employed, the wife daily cooks a dish or two for her husband and does personal service to him herself. This is considered to be the right thing. This is not slavery, but the exaltation of conjugal life into a form of worship, without which domestic life becomes barren of spiritual results. Our men know this. They are fully aware of the sacramental nature of their women's services.

Our women get up from bed earlier than the men. They are about their work before others have risen. The house is tidied up and washed and preparations made for the new day at the earliest hour possible. Then they bathe and finish their worship and prepare the meal for the household. And they never eat before the entire household has been served. So on through the round of daily duties till all have retired for the night. First to wake up and last to sleep, their whole life is one continuous service. Silence, sweetness and an infinite patience radiate from their every movement. They envelop themselves and the home with a sacramental atmosphere. This is the most precious heritage received by us from the past, and this must remain intact amidst all necessary changes of the coming days.

Foreigners do not understand where the strength of our women lies. They look upon them as tyrannised by men, suffering, miserable. It is true their present life and position are not as ideal as they should be. But they still compare very favourably with modern

women. We in India find much in the modern Western woman, which we scarcely admire and would never wish our mothers and sisters to imitate. We have already pointed out that the modern Western woman is not such a happy being as is usually imagined. She is also not successful as a wife. A tree is known by its fruit. If the characteristics of the modern Western woman are so desirable, why is it that marriage in the West is becoming daily a mere verbal affair, losing its sanctity and depth? How is it that divorces are becoming more and more numerous? Why is chastity becoming a byword of ridicule? Why is the happy home becoming rarer every day? Why are women becoming more and more frivolous? We by no means indict the entire womanhood of the West. But much of the so-called modernism of the Western woman is of questionable merit, —it has yet to justify itself, and so far as our present knowledge goes, it has proved on the whole harmful. Sane minds are increasingly realising that the old-world idea of woman, as the chaste, faithful wife, dignified mistress of the home and affectionate mother of children, is more fruitful and real than the present-day masculine and frivolous aspects of women. When the 'civilised' nations are finding their experience of the modern woman so distasteful, 'uncivilised' India may well be justified in not condemning the present position of her womanhood. Surely there is much room for improvement in it, but not perhaps in the fundamentals. The purity, dignity and nobility of our women can stand comparison with those of the womanhood of any other country. Even our severest critics, if truthful, will admit this.

III

If the first function of the mother and the wife is to maintain the spiritual traditions and idealism of the family intact, the means to do is evidently the perfect chastity, the *Sati-dharma* of the wife. Marriage in the Hindu eyes is a sacrament. It is not a relation of flesh or of this life merely. It is a union for ever. To a foreign reader, such a description may seem too idealistic. But there are still thousands and thousands of Hindu wives who believe this to be literally true. On this belief they build their life, and out of it they draw sustenance and strength to go steadfast and unflinching through the vicissitudes and difficulties of their conjugal life. The Hindu wife believes that her relation with her husband is only a continuation of that of previous lives, and that it will stretch forward to the future births as well, until both have been emancipated by realising *Brahman*. The husband cannot leave the wife behind, however highly advanced he might be spiritually, and the wife also cannot outstrip her husband. Whatever merit the one earns, goes equally to the other. They must go side by side through all lives. It is a fond belief among the Hindus that the husband and wife are predestined for each other, and one day, through varied negotiations, they are bound to be united. There is thus an element of fatality in the relationship between the husband and the wife.

It is irrelevant to enquire whether this belief has any basis in reality. The belief itself is a reality, especially when it is so earnestly held. There is not the slightest doubt that millions of Hindus intuitively hold this belief and mould their life in its light. But we need not conclude that there is no reality in it. In fact, no great belief can exist without being fundamentally real. The secret must be sought primarily in the mind of the believers. We must remember that to the wife her husband is no mere man, but God Himself. He is all in all to her. Not in the sense in which the foreign critic conceives it—she the slave and he the master owning her body and her service!—but in the sense that she sees her Ideal embodied in him and as such pours out all the love and devotion of her heart unstintedly at his feet. In such self-dedication there is no humiliation or loss

of personality; on the other hand, there is a great freedom and accession to the higher realms of spirit. There is a beautiful custom in some parts of India. The wife once a year fasts for three days worshipping Sâvitri (the great Hindu wife whose love for her husband compelled even Death to bring him back to life) ending it with the worship of her own husband. All these three days she listens to the story of Savitri from the lips of the priest,—how she followed the husband of her choice to the forest knowing well that he would be short-lived, and how her great love gave her the spiritual vision, so that when the husband passed away in death, she could visualise the dread god Death and his emissaries and the soul of her husband being carried away by them (had she not dwelt so long on the *soul* of her husband and not on his body?—so she gained the subtle vision which comes to one only after much spiritual exercise). This annual observance of the Hindu wife is typical of her attitude towards her husband. To her he is an ineffable admixture of God and man. There is undoubtedly all the romance and intimacy between them as between any lovers. But transfiguring and enveloping them, there is this worshipful regard of the wife for the husband. The wife salutes him bowing at his feet and touching them. The husband places his hand on her head in benediction. In such a relationship, therefore, the wife always abides in the consciousness of the Eternal. And if the wife expects that the husband, that is to say, her vision of him, should stand by her through life and death for all eternity, who can dare to say that it would not come true? Does the Eternal ever fail anyone, when He is truly and sincerely relied on?

The Hindu wife knows what she is doing. She is fully aware that the body and the mind of her husband are in themselves ephemeral and imperfect. She never deludes herself that they are, as they may appear, perfect. And she also, common human being as she is, rejoices if the person of her husband is beautiful and his mind cultured and noble. But she does not stop there. The Hindu wife is a very great idealist, the greatest perhaps of all human beings. From the moment of her marriage, she beings to idealise her husband. The process begins with going deeper than his mind and discovering the light of perfection in his inner Godhead. Through prayer and loving service, she intensifies this vision until it has become natural to her. Then her husband and God become one in her eyes. But this does not turn the head of the husband. It is true that as the head of the family he exercises authority on the household. But only to a certain extent. And even that is not because he thinks he is the master of his wife. He knows that if the wife serves him with a worshipful regard and absolute submission, it is not because of his so-called authority. He fully recognises that it is her way of spiritual self-realisation. It is *her* greatness. He is merely the symbol of her worship. He cannot lay any claim to it, it belongs to God that is in him. There is thus a paradoxical relationship between them. To the wife, the husband is all in all. But the husband in his heart of hearts ever refuses this worship, turning it deliberately towards a higher destination. He admires and respects the greatness of soul that his wife's devotion to him represents.

A word in explanation is perhaps necessary here. When we say that the Hindu wife looks upon her husband as Divine, we do not mean that all Hindu wives reach the acme of that realisation. What we mean is that this attitude and outlook is always there. We may believe in God and yet may not have realised Him. But the belief itself has a tremendous value. It regulates our life according to its truth, it spurs us on towards its realisation and it saves us from straying into other paths. Similarly even to *believe* that one's husband is Divine has a tremendous effect. And we may confidently say that this belief with many many Hindu wives is no

mere idea, but the very breath of their life. It is this that makes them overlook the imperfections of their husbands and patiently bear with them in their lapses. And this love always tells. It may be said that a more natural and human attitude towards their husbands would have been more beneficial to the latter. But experience shows that those who love silently, ultimately help most.

IV

The husband considers it his supreme duty to love and cherish his wife, giving her the purest love possible. He must never look upon any other woman with the same light of love in his eyes. We recognise only these several relations of men with women : mother, wife, sister and daughter,—all women must fall within these four categories. A Hindu cannot become the *friend* of another woman or *vice versa* in the intimate sense of the word. His love must be entirely faithful to his wife. She is his *Shakti*, his power and inspiration. She is his consolation in the hour of trial. However fallen he might be—he may be the greatest of sinners, the worst of men —she must ever stand by him. Her faith must be as great as God's, and God never forsakes a man however low he may lie. The husband, however, has the right to forsake her if she proves faithless to the marriage vow. This is undoubtedly cruel, but is not without some justification. We must remember that the attitude of the husband and the wife towards each other is not the same. While the wife should look upon the husband as her greatest concern, the husband's allegiance should be above all to the family and society. He must look upon the well-being of the family above his personal considerations. If there is any element in the family which it is considered would poison its moral health, he must ruthlessly eliminate it, whatever it might cost to his heart. It is an extreme measure and is applicable only in extreme cases—those of unchastity. In such cases, the Hindu is clear in his duty. All other faults may be condoned, but not unchastity. Today in the West, incompatibility of temperament, cruelty, poverty, all these are reasons enough for annulment of marriage. Hindus endure all these with a calm mien. But unchastity they cannot tolerate in the slightest degree. There are reasons. It cannot be otherwise in a community of which the one ostensible purpose is spiritual self-realisation. Chastity is indispensable for spiritual efforts. The Hindu race, of all races the most spiritually disposed, has, therefore, laid the greatest emphasis on chastity, and any defalcation of it, it punishes with the utmost rigour, not for punishment's sake, but for the safety of society. It is needless to point out that the unchastity of a wife is infinitely more harmful to the family and communal life than the unchastity of a husband. This is not, however, to condone the husband's infidelity which is always punished by society. But who can deny that the spiritual good of the entire household depends, in the last analysis, on the faith of the woman?

Another factor must be taken into account in understanding this point: The Hindu family is in most cases a joint family. The welfare of a large number of persons depends on the head's decision. He cannot sacrifice their good to his personal interest. Not merely in this, but in every respect, the husband's love for his wife must always take a secondary place in his thought. His love for her may be, and often is, as deep as the wife's love for him. But in all decisions and actions relating to the common good of the family, it cannot come in for consideration. It must not manifest itself outside. He must forget that he is her husband and remember above all that he is the head of the family and a member of his community to which he owes his first duties. That is also why in any difference between his mother and wife, he must stand by his mother and not his wife, right or wrong.

In any understanding of Hindu customs, the fact that the Hindus are pre-

eminently communistic in view, must never be forgotten. We live for the community. The communal good is higher than the individual good. In this we are diametrically opposed to the West which believes so much in individualism. Why are children given in marriage? Why should not the wife have freedom to order her own life? Why should she bow to the cruel orders of the family or community? Why should not she have a family of her own, herself the mistress and not the mother-in-law? Why should her lapses in chastity be so severely punished in consideration of family good? Why should not widows remarry if they wish? Why may not the wife divorce her husband? These questions we have answered in one way, the West in another. And the justification lies in our characteristic view of life. Our customs stand or fall with the truth or falsity of communism. Which shall man do?—Should he allow his personal desire triumph or should he submit to the communal good in case of conflict? One thing we must remember. Individuals are not such independent beings as individualism supposes. Their thoughts and actions influence the larger community. For the sake of the community, we cannot allow individuals complete freedom. Why has democracy failed? Because when we allow the masses of mankind to have their way, disaster is sure to follow. For they are after all ignorant; they lack knowledge and judgment. They need to be led. They cannot decide anything. They are unfit. Such freedom to the masses of men and women has resulted equally in social disaster. The Hindus, are, therefore, correct in thinking that individuals cannot always have their way. They must be disciplined for their own sake as well as for the sake of the good of the community. By submitting to the communal good, we are deprived of the pleasures of lower desires, but realise a higher indiyiduality, which is the greater good. Of course the communal good must represent the higher individual good, otherwise conflict between individuals and society is inevitable. Fortunately, Hindu community escapes this conflict. Therefore, generally speaking, the rigours that the urge of communal good imposes on Indian women, are justified, for they ultimately lead individual women also to greater good. The Hindu woman is alive to this fact, though she may not always explain it.

It is needless to say that this high idealism necessarily inflicts great suffering on the women. It is not always easy and pleasant to live up to ideals in this world of sordid realities. Hindu men are not all saints, they have their follies and foibles like other men. It is the great glory of Indian women that they still maintain their faith intact. Especially in the present days when Hindu society is extremely degenerated, when no society practically exists, when men's faith in their national ideals is so dim, it is extremely difficult for women to retain their faith undimmed. When men do not and cannot respond to the idealism of their women, home life becomes miserable. There is extreme poverty everywhere. Finer aspects of life are almost submerged. Men have forgotten their duties in return for the services accepted from their women. It is no wonder that the patience and faith of the women are being strained to the utmost. Yet the faith still persists. This is our glory and our great good fortune. This is the one lamp burning unflickering and undimmed when other lamps are extinguished or about to go out. And this will, we have no doubt, soon recreate the ancient sweetness, peace and strength of our domestic and social life.

V

In these days of cheap idealism and surrender to the tangible and the obvious, our women may be tempted to forsake their noble ideals for more comfortable prospects. Why should women look upon their husbands as Divine and why should they be as faithful to them as they are?—it may be asked. It may

be argued that the attitude must be mutual. Both sides must be equal. Well, if men are bad, should women also become bad? If men fail to rise to the high level where the women's faith shines, should women degrade themselves for the sake of so-called equality? The fact is, there is no real and abiding joy and peace until we relate our thoughts and actions to God or Spirit; life's fruition is impossible either for men or women except in relations with the Spirit. In so far as women do it by means of love and service to their husbands, their life's purpose is fulfilled. Men also do it. They are also required to spiritualise all aspects of life. The difference is that while women are expected to concentrate their full mind on their husbands and all that relates to them, men are expected to practise spiritualisation in relation to the larger world. This difference is due partly to social customs which have circumscribed the women's world within the family, and partly due to the nature of women itself, which seeks to lose itself in the love and service of the dear ones. The differences of masculine and feminine natures cannot be ignored. After all the experiments at equalisation, women are coming to recognise a fundamental difference in nature between man and woman. In any case, for women as well as men, there is no other way than the way of spiritualisation. By forsaking their present ideals they would only be creating new problems and difficulties for themselves and gain nothing real or abiding. There is no easy means of solving the women's difficulties. The solution lies not in forsaking the present ideals, but in asserting them more and more, and re-creating the dead conscience of our men so that they may rise to the required heights in their thoughts and actions. And when this has been done, the spere of women's life will be automatically enlarged; they will naturally outgrow their present limitations and will exert a direct influence, not only on the family, but also on the larger life of the community and nation, though the home will always remain their special sphere of activity.

DISCOURSES BY SWAMI PREMANANDA

It was 8 p.m., Tuesday evening, March 8, 1916. Some monks and lay devotees had assembled in the Visitors' Room at the Belur Math and were listening to the reading of one of Swami Vivekananda's works.

When the reading was over, Swami Akhandananda (a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna) said: "From to-morrow I shall teach them *Upanishads.*" At that Swami Premananda (another direct disciple of the Master) remarked:

"What other *Upanishads* would you teach them when there is the living *Upanishad*? The life of the Master is the living, flaming *Upanishad*. None could understand the meaning of the Radhâ-Krishna cult if Sri Chaitanya had not been born and demonstrated it in his life. Even so the Master is the living demonstration of the truths of the *Upanishads*. The *Upanishads* have been current for many centuries and people also have been reading them. And yet they bow down to our illiterate Master and accept his words as gospel truths. *He* never read the *Upanishads* or any other book. Yet how is it that he could explain those subtle and complex truths in so simple and straight a manner? If you want to read the *Vedas*, you have to commit its grammar to memory and read various commentaries, in which every commentator has sought to explain the texts in his own way. Innumerable scholars have been arguing over the texts without coming to any conclusion. Our Master, however, has in very simple language explained all those

truths, and his words are extant. When you have such a living fountain before you, why dig well for water?"

The day before, the birthday of Sri Ramakrishna, twelve of the novices had been initiated into *Sannyâsa*. To-day they begged a rupee of a lay devotee, hired a boat and went to the Dakshineswar Temple. Swami Premananda did not like this. He said to them:

"You shaved your heads (became monks) yesterday, and you already think that you are beyond all disciplinary restrictions? Unless one observes disciplinary laws, can one go beyond them? Those who have renounced—who are *Sannyâsins*, are the teachers of men. And you, having renounced, have become such. But how is it that you begged money to-day to pay for the boat-hire? Is that spirituality? If you wanted so much to see the place of the Master's *Sâdhanâ*, why, instead of begging money, did you not go to Bally and beg the ferryman to take you over, or swin across the Ganges? Or you could walk all the way *via* the Howrah bridge. Then I would have known that you are indeed fit to be teachers of men. You are thinking that you will have *Maths* and from there spread the ideas of the Master, and that otherwise the Master's ideas would vanish from the earth! You may build as many *Maths* as you like, or you may take *Sannyâsa*, but if you have no spirituality, all will be in vain. On the other hand, those who are not building *Maths* or taking *Sannyâsa*,—the householders, if they have spirituality and live the true life, will surely be worshipped by people even though they may not wear the ochre cloth. Whoever will assimilate the ideals of the Master into his life, be he a *Sannyâsin* or a householder, will be great. The Master himself is spreading his own ideas. Never think that if you *Sannyâsins* do not preach his ideas, these will not spread! Rather thank your stars that you have better opportunities than the householders and are living in the blessed company of these great souls (the direct disciples of the Master)."

Swami Akhandananda: 'Six of us at one time lived in the same cottage at Hrishikesh for nearly two months. This very much astonished the other *Sâdhus* of the place. They said to us: 'How do you brother-disciples live together? If only two of our brother-disciples lived for two days together they would begin to quarrel.' Once I told this to Vijaykrishna Goswami at Brindaban. He was overjoyed to hear me and said: 'There is nothing surprising in this. It is no ordinary thread that binds you. Was your Master an ordinary man and *Sâdhu*? Had he been an ordinary man, could he have built you Calcutta boys up in this fashion? I do not wonder that there is such love and union amongst you.' He (Goswamiji) then used to live in the Dâuji's temple and I would occasionally go to him for tea."

Swami Premananda: "I tell you for a fact, I am not enamoured of the mere ochre cloth, I want renunciation and dispassion. I very much appreciate the life of Nag Mahashaya (Saint Durga Charan Nag—a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna). He did not wear the ochre cloth, and yet what a great soul he was and how great was his renunciation!

"When I visited Dacca the last time, I went to Nag Mahashaya's place before I left. One of his friends told me that a Brahmin used to come to his house to read the *Bhâgavatam*. He would read a verse and Nag Mahashaya would expound it for a long time. Pandits *read* the *Bhâgavatam*, but Nag Mahashaya actually *realised* the truths contained in it and they were, therefore, as vivid to him as any sensible object. His father, however, would not like his long exposition. He would get angry and say: 'Well, won't you allow me to listen to the reading of the *Bhâgavatam*?' Nag Mahashaya was infinitely patient. He would remain silent."

Swami Akhandananda: "Suren Mukherji, afterwards Baba Premananda

Bharati, was devoted to the Master. He visited the Baranagore *Math* for some time, and went to preach Hinduism in America. Once he went on a visit to Nag Mahashaya's village. As soon as Nag Mahashaya saw him, he began to dance in joy raising his hands and crying: 'Calcutta!' 'Calcutta!' That is to say, he had come from the very place where the Master used to live. Sri Gouranga also, you know, went into ecstasy when he learnt that the musical instrument called *Khol* which is played in devotional music, was made of the clay of the village he was just then visiting.

"You will be astonished to hear of the hard austerities Swamiji (Vivekananda) practised. When he was wandering as an itinerant monk over India, I used to follow him. In those days, before he left for America, he used to place a coarse blanket, some fifteen to twenty seers in weight, on his shoulder, and have a bag full of books with him. Once he fell on hard days at Limdi, when a poor Brahmin gave him shelter. He lived with him for a few days. The Maharajah of Limdi, in the mean time, came to know of his greatness and requested him to come to his palace and live there. But the Swami refused lest his removal to the palace would cause pain to the Brahmin. The Maharajah, however, used to send him various royal dishes, and the poor Brahmin also would partake of them."

PHILOSOPHY AND THE LIFE-VALUES

By S. Radhakrishnan

In India to-day we are faced by a real danger of ignoring the importance of ideal values in our anxiety to incorporate scientific conceptions and political devices into our national life. Many seem to think that political arrangements and scientific applications are the things which have the greatest value for human efficiency and human happiness. I am persuaded that they possess what is called instrumental value as distinct from intrinsic value; they refer to the appurtenances of life and not to life itself. I believe that politics and industry, necessary as they are, are only means to the end of the happiness of mankind which consists in the realisation and maintenance of ultimate values whose study and achievements constitute the problems for philosophy and religion. These latter give us the inside of a civilisation, the spiritual core of it, while science and politics give us the outside or the external aspects. Something more than physical efficiency and rational content is necessary for a stable civilisation and that is spiritual values. Hegel said: "A civilisation without metaphysics is like a temple without the holy of holies." We cannot rebuild a civilisation without a definite philosophy of life.

The greatness of a civilisation is not to be judged by the efficiency of its railway system, or the number of its battle-ships, or the extent to which machine-made goods have replaced handicrafts within its borders, or its reserve of gold, or system of ballot. No, it has its own proper excellence. Human happiness belongs to a dimension other than physical development or intellectual efficiency, important as these are. Man is not a mere physical body with certain natural propensities, not a mere intellectual being ever busy with devising ways and means for satisfying the natural propensities, but is a soul, a conscious manifestation of the universal self, a spiritual being. His real excellence consists in the manifestation of the soul in him.

The danger of modern civilisation with its excessive concern for the objective and the concrete is that the soul in man is not getting its chance. Human beings are becoming transformed into machines. If it took centuries of bio-

logical evolution for the animal to grow into the human being, we seem to be witnessing to-day the gradual transformation of the human being into a machine. The insistence on body and mind to the neglect of the spirit in man is leading to a mechanised life. In the world of body and mind, we are more like than unlike others. We eat the same dinners, wear the same clothes, live in the same houses—which are more human packing cases than homes—profess the same opinions. In a mechanised society, it is more easy to be a cog than an inventor, a Babbitt than a Blake. It is difficult to resist the pull of the crowd. A mechanical civilisation flattens everything out. If our ancient sages retreated into themselves neglecting external life, we seem to ignore all inwardness in our craze for external achievement. The nature of man has overflown into the tool and we have no time to stand and stare and shape life into significant form. Peaceful intervals for the loafing of the spirit are squeezed out. We have become public phenomena, leading formal lives, superficial to the point of soullessness. That is why we lack centrality, repose, poise. We are not at peace with ourselves. The hunger of the soul is unsatisfied. We disguise from ourselves the inner void by constant excitement. To relieve the staleness of life and stimulate our tired senses, gambling, sightseeing, sex-excitement—which is the only indoor sport available to millions—are resorted to. Even the spirit of adventure is taking conventional forms as to who will drink the most or drive the fastest. Aimless melancholy and empty lives are maladies quite as mortal as illiteracy and inefficiency. The twin evils of exhaustion and excitement are the direct results of the mechanising of modern life. Only the delights born of creative work and beauty, and not the pleasures which result from costly excitements, can satisfy the spirit in man. In a civilisation based on science to the exclusion of religion and philosophy we are afraid of being alone. In the City of New York, I am told, if any one asks for a room on the tenth floor, the clerk in charge asks, is it to sleep in or fall from?

I do not want to waste ink over the elaboration of the distinctions between the primitive and the savage, the barbarian and the civilised. We are not perfectly civilised if we do not develop a harmonious life of body, mind and spirit. A society which stresses the intellectual as against the spiritual, is a lop-sided one and is not in principle different from a barbarian society. We have barbarians of the body as well as barbarians of the intellect. Both of them make wrecks of human beings since they do not insist on the wholeness of man. Are we in essence different from the savage? He fought his enemy with sticks and stones; we do so with guns and gases, but fight we both do. His victories were won by courage and character; ours by brain-power and the weight and accuracy of the guns. He fought more with his body; we fight more with our mind. We are not any more domesticated in the world than he was. We are certainly more intellectual, but not more humane or gentle. Our baser passions are now armed with more destructive weapons. The ability to drive a car and handle a rifle, put on glasses and wear a top hat with dignity does not mean that we are happy. Men, the world over, are increasingly dissatisfied with vapid and vacuous lives, with the vulgarity and vacancy which are such prominent features. There is a yearning, a wistfulness for something beyond science and technology, for something deeper and more fundamental.

The scientific or organising intellect deals in generalities and remains impersonal and unhuman while the significant things in life are personal and human and beyond the reach of science and organisation. Organisation is only a means to an end and if it usurps the place of the end it becomes a tyrant, stifling personality and freedom. Abiding happiness and permanent value are found in the self-discovery of the

individual. In spite of scientific backwardness, social inefficiency and political ineptitude, our ancient sages possessed a true perception of the right values which make for human happiness. It used to be said that God created the universe in order that He might apprehend Himself. The Hindu view as developed in the Sâmkhya and the Vedânta seems to be more suggestive. The world exists in order that we may apprehend ourselves, attaining our full selfhood through response to whatever in it corresponds to our growing personality, by acquiring each his own place in the world by sincere effort, by stationing oneself in the proper way towards the great facts of the universe.

It is not possible in a short article to discuss with any approach to adequacy the need for spiritual emphasis in modern life. If a distinction which is a strictly relative one, is permitted, we may say that there is a great emphasis on the intellectual in Western thought and on the spiritual in the Eastern. Reason, analysis, action, progress are the Western heritage. Calm, cultivation of the inner life, the surrender of the mind to the pure attraction of the light, the striving of the spirit to the securing of what is sacred and good, the Eastern.

Cognitive awareness or knowledge is of different kinds. The perceptual variety helps us to know the sensible characters of the external world. We have intellectual or logical knowledge obtained by the processes of analysis and synthesis. It gives us logical or conceptual knowledge which is indirect and symbolic in character. These two types of awareness help us to acquire proper control over the environment. It is contended by some, notably Bradley and Bergson, that conceptual knowledge breaks up the original integrity of the object and gives us only a diagrammatic or conceptual reconstruction of the object. If we speak about sleep, its nature and conditions, we know all about it except the sleep itself. The object is not merely a putting together of the class characters or the aspects or qualities it has. There is also knowledge of the object in its intimate individuality. Perceptual knowledge gives us outward characters, logical knowledge and conceptual relations, while integral knowledge gives us the entire object in its individuality. It is knowledge by being and not by senses or symbols. There are aspects of reality where no other kind of knowledge is possible. Take an emotion like that of anger. Sense-knowledge of it is not possible except in regard to its superficial manifestation; intellectual knowledge is unavailing until the data are supplied from somewhere else. We know the mood of anger by passing through it. No one can understand fully the force of human love or parental affection, who has not himself been through them. No amount of intellectual analysis or imaginative reconstruction can help us to know in its true nature what it is to be in love. To know love truly we must be in love. It is a case of knowledge by being. Self-knowledge, for example, is born of an identity between that which knows and that which is known. The typical Western mind is inclined to ignore this third kind of knowledge.

Speaking in general terms, for Western thought there is no other higher authority than logical reason. Thought can discover by its own strength the system of truth. Socrates is credited by Aristotle with two things, inductive arguments and universal definitions. Whatever is real must have a definable form. The classification of moral concepts is the first step to any improvement in practice. For Plato geometry was the model science after which all truths should be framed. Aristotle invented the science of logic. Man is for him pre-eminently a reasoning animal. Logic for the Greeks is not so much a science of discovery as one of proof. The civic life of the ancient Greeks centred round the assembly and the law courts and so great attention

was paid to intellectual subtlety and mental dexterity. To secure victory in debate was the great aim, and to that end the mastery of the technique of the game of argument was necessary. More prominence was given to the expression and communication of thought than to its discovery and exploration. With the growth of natural sciences which were interested in pushing back the frontiers of knowledge through experiment and verification, the processes by which belief grew and thoughts evolved engaged attention. But even the methodology of the sciences is concerned with the grammar of discovery and not the life or art of it. The latter by its very nature sets limits to logical exposition and yet, however truth may be discovered, it can be discussed only when it is formulated in logical propositions. For Descartes, whatever can be expressed in mathematical form is clear and distinct. He sets forth a system of universal concepts of reason which are derived from a consideration of certain fundamental logical and mathematical relationships and these concepts can be applied to all empirical data. For Spinoza, notwithstanding his insistence on intuitive knowledge, even ethics could be treated in a geometrical order. For Leibnitz, again, the monads or perceiving minds differ in nothing other than the form of perception, for each monad resembles the others as regards the content of its perception. Each reflects the total universe from its own special angle. While the lowest monads, the plant and the animal ones, have only dim and confused mode of perception, divine cognition consists in completely distinct and adequate ideas. We, human beings, are in between. Our ideas of sense-qualities are confused, while those of logic and mathematics distinct. We strive to transform the former into the latter, sense-presentations into notions conceived by reason. The accomplishment of this idea means for Leibnitz the formulation of a general system of possible forms of thought and the universal laws of connection which these laws obey. Leibnitz outlines such a scheme in his *General Characteristique* and thus founds symbolic logic which reached its great development in the works of Boole and Peano, Frege, and Russell. Kant's main purpose was to lead philosophy into the sure path of science and he inquired into the possibility of philosophy as a science with the intention of formulating its conditions. The nature with which we are conversant in the world of science and common sense, is traced to the work of understanding which arranges the sense manifold in an orderly way according to a logic which Kant calls synthetic as distinct from the usual, formal or analytic logic. Kant's successors took over the logic of synthesis and used it more rigorously to remove such imperfections of his system as the assertion of things in themselves. In Hegel, logic ceases to be a mere theory of thought and becomes an account of reality. It is an abstract representation of an actual process by which the absolute spirit reveals itself as the universe in the different forms which the universe assumes to human consciences, nature, history, society, art and religion. The rational becomes the real. British idealism is in the main a continuation of this tradition, though there are of course notable exceptions. The realists of the Cambridge school are worshippers of logic and the scientific method. From the Socratic insistence on the concept to Russell's mathematical logic it is one long illustration of the primacy of conceptual logic.

For the Hindu mind, on the other hand, the real is not merely the logical. It is something inward, subjective and experiential. It believes in the third kind of knowledge, knowledge by being, as the source of all fundamental convictions of life. The ideal of this direct knowledge is not contrary to the ideal of abstract logic. In moving from conceptual logic to integral knowledge we are not moving in the direction of unreason, but are getting into the most fundamental rationality of which human

nature is capable. In it we think more profoundly, feel more deeply and see more truly. We see, feel and become in obedience to our whole nature and do not simply measure things by the standards of intellect. If integral knowledge does not supply us with the universal major premises which we can neither question nor establish, knowledge and life themselves will fail. The fundamental bases of scientific activity, artistic creation and ethical striving are the ultimate consistency of the universe, the ultimate beauty of the universe and the ultimate soundness of the universe. These are assumptions for science and logic, art and morality. But they are by no means irrational assumptions. They are apprehensions of the soul, intuitions of the self. If we deny integral knowledge, if we make nothing evident of itself unto man's soul, we deny the possibility of all knowledge and all life. Disbelief in integral knowledge means complete philosophical scepticism. If we reduce all knowledge to perception and conception, disbelief is inevitable. The proof of integral knowledge is similar to Kant's proof of *a priori* elements. We cannot think away the fundamental convictions of life. Their opposites are inconceivable. They belong to the very structure of our self. They are not data received by it or attained by it as the result of intellectual analysis and synthesis, and there can be no perception or conception, if these are not assumed. All knowledge is a synthesis by which the scattered data of experience are pieced together into a consistent whole. But this synthetic activity is impossible and unmeaning unless we start with the idea of the whole which must be regarded as an idea native to the self. All experience issues forth from it and rests on it. Logic and life, intuition and intellect are specialised and peculiar modifications of it.

It will not be difficult to establish that the great philosophers of the West, Plato and Aristotle, Descartes and Spinoza, Kant and Hegel did make use of integral knowledge, though they were not clearly conscious of its fundamental implications. "Recollection" is Plato's name for that concentrated endeavour of the whole man by which the essential principles of life and logic are apprehended. Aristotle's 'nous' is the intuitive apprehension of the first principles which all reasoning assumes to start with. Descartes insists on the clear evidence of God's existence yielded by the very nature of thought itself. It belongs to the same region of intuitive certainty to which the foundations of all sciences belong. The truth of the fundamental ideas is their clear intelligibility. Cudworth rightly remarks: "Truth is not factitious; it is a thing which cannot be arbitrarily *made* but *is*. . . . The very essence of truth is this clear perceptibility or intelligibility" (*Intellectual System* III, pp. 31-35). Kant's chief contribution to the philosophy of religion is his insistence on the logical indemonstrability of God. He relies on the consciousness of moral obligation. We know our duty, according to Kant, by means of rational intuition and not an intellectual calculation of results. When we ask why Hegel voted for a monistic conception of the universe, we see that it is not due to mere dialectic. Hegel's philosophy is one long dialectical exposition of the concrete unity, but dialectic is not the way in which the idea of the One was arrived at. We must put the One in the premises, if the dialectic is to deduce it in the conclusion. It is something more than dialectical knowledge that tells us that the universal consciousness operates in each one of us, the eternal subject is present in the mind of man, without which sensations would be blind and concepts barren. The Hindu thinkers were clearly conscious of the source of our fundamental convictions. The central point of Sankara's metaphysics, to take an outstanding example, is that the idea of the supreme reality, pure being, infinite and absolute, is not derived from the senses or the ordinary

processes of logical reasoning. Conviction of its truth comes only through realising it as the common ground implied in all our several knowledges.

The roots of all great thinking lie deep in life itself and not in the dry light of mere reasoning. Creative work in science and philosophy, art and literature, is due to this something which is greater than mere knowledge. Plodding processes of intellect may give us precise measurements, detailed developments of well-established theories, but the new discoveries which have made modern science so wonderful, are due to the inventive genins of the creative-thinkers. The greatest insights are due to processes of the mind, which are beyond the level of deliberate ratiocination. When we consciously concentrate on the object, think attentively about it, we do not move very much from the point at which we started. We must let the intellect lie fallow, allow the object to soak into the subsoil of our mental life and elicit the reaction of the whole mind. Genius is a special quality. It is not easy to define it. It uses intellectual talents as its instruments, but it comes from somewhere further away, a source behind and beyond the intellectual, which puts conpulsion, so to say, on the intellect, uses it for its own purpose of voicing abiding truths.

In poetic experience we have knowledge by being as distinct from knowledge of symbols. The mind grasps the object in its wholeness, clasps it to its bosom and becomes one with it. "If a sparrow comes before my window," Keats wrote, "I take part in its existence and pick about the gravel." A deliberate cancellation of individuality, a complete submission to the object makes the poet breathe the life of the object. The object becomes for the poet the specific form, the concrete picture of an idea, "a faultless essence of God's will," as Robert Bridges puts it in his *The Testament of Beauty*. The poet has the gift of realising this experience and entering into it through appropriate words, even as the other artists attempt to embody their experience in canvas or stone. "Poetic creation," Carlyle asks, "what is this too, but *seeing* the thing sufficiently?" and he adds: "The word that will describe the thing follows of itself from such clear intense sight of the thing" (*On Heroes* III). Poetry originates in a moment of intense awareness following the act of self-submission. This creative experience is so unlike conscious mind that the latter feels itself to be inspired, to be raised above its normal power, by the breath of spirit. Without this creative intuition, we may have clever verses, technical exercises, repetitions of old themes, but not poetry. Plato distinguishes the man of genius, the madman inspired by the muses, from the industrious apprentice to the art of letters, and maintains that the latter has no chance against the former. It is all the difference between inspired poetry and insipid verse. Emerson called Paul's style "pure flame." When Carlyle gave the finished *Ms.* of his *French Revolution* to his wife, he said: "I know not whether this book is worth anything, nor what the world will do with it or misdo or entirely forbear to do, as is likeliest; but this, I could tell the world: you have not had for a hundred years any book that comes more direct and flamingly from the heart of a living man" (*Carlyle's Life*, Vol. I, p. 89).

The hero who carves out an adventurous career is akin to the discoverer who brings order into the scattered elements of a science or the artist who composes a piece of music or designs a building. Highest virtue is the result of intuitive insight and not a mechanical observance of maxims or an imitation of models. Virtue is knowledge, said Socrates; it is not, however, knowledge of the intellectual type. It springs from the deeper levels of man's being. It is an absolutely free and living adjustment and not a mechanical adaptation to a preconceived end. The spiritual obliga-

tion is of more consequence than the traditional codes and conventional standards. The behaviour of the hero may offend and bewilder the cautious conventionalist, but men of creative insight are liable to the charge of immorality. Sankara says: *Nistraigunye pathi vicharatâm ko vidhih ko nishedhah.*

There is no greatness, no sublimity, no perfection, whatever be the line, without the touch of this creative intuition. The lords of humanity are shaped after the same pattern. They have touched the deeps of spirit and speak and act from that undivided impersonal root from which our personal thoughts, emotions and wills arise. The spirit in us is the supreme light. To adapt Emerson, when it inspires the intellect we have genius, when it stirs the will we have heroism, when it flows through the heart, we have love. Put the fire of spirit on any altar, it blazes up to heaven. Completeness of achievement is always satisfying. It is a glimpse into the divine. As the *Gitâ* says, there is the creative vision however nebulous and untried, wherever there is genius, ardour, and heroism.

Happiness is not pleasure. It is a state of inner and outer harmony. It is an accompaniment of creative work. Sense-pleasures are pale reflections of the true happiness which comes from real self-knowledge. Politics and science do not reveal the sources of human happiness; philosophy and religion speak to us of them. While the culture of science is necessary for the comfort of the world, the culture of philosophy is necessary for the salvation of mankind.

THE MEXICAN ANALOGY

By K. B. Madhava, M.A., A.I.A. (London)

It has been said that India is a rich country inhabited by poor people. So is Mexico, which with its meagre 15 millions of people distributed over nearly eight hundred thousand square miles, and which for centuries has stirred the imagination of people as a treasure-house of the world, shares with India the paradox of a people starving in the midst of plenty. "Behind marble palaces and magnificently appointed public buildings, beautiful churches and public squares, refined manners and refined tastes, flowers and colourful costumes, a pessimistically resigned literature, in a minor key, brilliant intellects philosophising in vacuo, there is a large mass of half starved population working a niggardly soil, with primitive tools, always afraid of God, the landlord and the policeman." A reader in India would assume that this was written of this country, but Mexico too like India is a picturesque and fascinating country exploited fully by students of archaeology, and anthropology, history, sociology and politics, while from the economic standpoint both are poor and backward. Yet by a series of Revolutions—political, agrarian and social—for well over three centuries, and culminating in the one in 1910,—Mexico has shown definite signs of recovery and advance. To-day, we read, "food supplies are less scanty, and more diversified, . . . there have been increases in the consnmption of meats, milk, fruits and vegetables . . . shoes are increasingly common and clothing increasingly adequate in essentials . . . the use of soap is increasing . . . progress has been made, though more strikingly in cities, in housing, sanitation and household facilities . . . shorter working hours and increased mobility of the population yield direct and indirect benefits . . . a middle class has definitely emerged and is growing in size and strength, and educational efforts are beginning to show their fruits." This is unquestionably the

most important aspect of the Revolution which began twenty years ago and is still in process, and which has brought forward a prodigious effort to liquidate the accumulated political, social and economic evils of many centuries, and thus brought to the Mexican peoples their concept of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness". The story of this achievement is not without its topical or permanent interest to us in this country.

It is necessary to obtain a fair picture of the conditions that existed in Mexico about the time of the Revolution, the more so as it affords the parallel to the conditions in India. The Mexican people are predominantly Indian, descendants of multifarious tribes speaking many languages, with much of their best blood wasted over internecine struggles and in conflicts with the invading Spaniards. The social and political organisations of Mexico were not such as to develop the potentialities of the people. "A ruling caste, roughly corresponding to the nobles and clergy before the French Revolution, dominated the mass of the people. Wealth and power rested with a small aristocracy of landlords, the Catholic church, resident foreigners and foreign business interests and a few politicians and Generals who were able to grasp a liberal share from time to time. The professional and business classes and the class of skilled labour were extremely small in numbers and in influence. Educational facilities were pitifully limited and much of the actual education, whether for rich or poor, was ill adapted to the needs of people. Opportunities for discovery, emergence, development and utilisation of native talent were well nigh negligible and the mainsprings of economic progress—ambition, enterprise and thrift—were actually dried. The white man who had asserted and had exercised leadership through centuries was notably selfish and short-sighted." The aims of the Revolution, besides being social and political, were also economic, particularly as governing land and as governing labour.

It is very true that a nation lives ultimately on the land. And few people, except those that know, realise what a battle-cry land-hunger has been in the twentieth century and in the post-war changes. But far-reaching and unusually enduring changes have been wrought within this period in the redistribution of land. Agrarian reform has been undertaken on a vast scale in the two hemispheres at almost precisely the same time, within the very same ten years; and more striking than this coincidence in time is the curious parallelism in general purpose and method—in the transfer of land-holding from the few to the many, in the full enjoyment of the fruits of agricultural labour, in the great changes by which millions of labourers became small independent farmers. This rural awakening in economic and therefore also political liberation have taken place in both Balkan and Baltic states, in the kingdoms of Rumania, Bulgaria, Jugoslavia, in the Republics of Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Esthonia; in all the "backward" countries of Europe and likewise in Asia too in the same way in which it has worked out in Mexico.

The land question in Mexico has been always complicated by its regional and climatic limitations, and it presents "the curious ironies of not being able to correlate altitude, latitude, soil and precipitation in the proper combinations." As successive invaders crossed the coast lands and deserts and reached the uplands, they found the really choice and fertile pockets, where the waters from the surrounding mountains gathered, already pre-empted. Hence the warfare between earlier and later arrivals, and hence the displacement of the presumably more effete and established culture by the more warlike and hardier migrants. There was thus persistent intertribal warfare and struggle between one village and another for land or for water. And then in response to the increasing difficulties of making the stub-

born soil and the unresponsive heavens productive, a ferocious and insatiable religion, which increasingly demanded sacrifice, first animal, then human, grew up with the propitiatory aim of sustaining the population. And so on through centuries, until when the Spanish landed they found a nation hopelessly divided and readily amenable to conquest and subjugation. After the conquest, a caste system, corresponding to feudalism, in land-owning rapidly grew up and land was set apart for the king, the nobles and the hierarchy, and with the serfdom of the native population they had a luxuriant existence. By a system known as encomienda, the native population was distributed and "given in trust" "to be made use of" on the farms and mines. For better handling of the serfs, some dociles from the natives themselves were retained as foremen, and these developed a relatively superior position over their fellow Indians, but they too were equally serfs even though by the barter of their own souls they mitigated their hard lots. The villages had nominally certain communal lands which were to be respected by land barons, but actually a steady process of encroachment took place, both by sale and by mortgage, until the "haciendas", the "great estates", grew up. This persisted for well nigh four centuries and by the beginning of the twentieth century, the greater part of the rural population consisted of serfs, their names of *peons* literally describing their condition of *peonage*. There is no surprise then when under these conditions the slightest incitement led these suffering masses to violence and bloodshed in each of the many Revolutions that Mexico was heir to for centuries. It is with the remedies that the Revolution of 1910 supplied, that we are concerned with here. The great leader Madero promulgated the promise of restoration of lands to such as had been deprived of them by the cruel "laws" of the land, but he did not carry conviction to the peoples as he mixed up this demand with general suffrage for which the masses did not really care. The slogan of Emaliano Zapata for the immediate expropriation of one-third of the land of the haciendas and the removal of a number of minor disabilities carried more appeal to the landless and injured rural proletarians. But this manœuvre was soon discovered to be a piece of political or military strategy and his leadership too soon fell. It was the rebel leader, Carranza's, acquiring the control of the people and promulgation from Vera Cruz, famous law of January 6, 1915, which has been aptly compared with Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in the midst of the American Civil War, that was the most earnest and successful attempt to solve the nation's oldest and most acute problem.

The Decree or Law of January 6, 1915, above referred to, provided that land should be restored to villages which could prove they had been deprived of them, and also provided that land should be given to villages which though they could not prove despoilment, yet could establish need. In other words, for the first time, agrarian reform as such, without reference to any particular despoilment or encroachment, was launched. In case despoilment was established, the process was called "restitution"; in the other case, the process was called "dotacion" meaning "gift" or "endowment". Two years later, in February, 1917, this legislation was incorporated in Article 27 of the Constitution. Under this provision, heads of families, males over eighteen years of age, unmarried women, or widows supporting a family, persons owning no real estate and virtually indigent, and such others are entitled to land to an extent supposed roughly to correspond to the ability of the individual to cultivate it. The amount, therefore, varies from one to four hectares ($2\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 acres) of the best land, *i.e.*, which is irrigated or permanently watered, or about twice that amount of good soil wet only by rainfall, and from six to twelve hectares (15 to 30 acres) of still

poorer land; and from about eight to twenty hectares of grazing land or even larger quantities of much poorer land. The legal procedure under which land is distributed is that a petition is presented to the Governor of the State by the villagers naming those eligible to receive land. He refers the petition to the State Agrarian Commission, which studies the needs of the village, the land to be taken, the landlords to be affected, and through the Governor gives provisional possession. The "restitution" or "dotacion" later goes up to the National Agrarian Council where after the evidence, pro and con,—pro usually from the villagers themselves and con invariably from the large landholders,—the Council awards its decision in the name of the Nation's chief executive. That is the entire proceeding unless there be an appeal to the Supreme Court which may grant an injunction temporarily, and if it find cause, confirm it later. If the Supreme Court fail to confirm, the land has permanently passed back into the possession of the villagers. Protection, however, to the large landholder too is given to the extent that his farm-buildings, fruit-orchards and other special plantations not only being excepted, he is left with some 150 hectares (*i.e.*, 375 acres) of irrigated land and some five times this amount of pasture land.

This was followed by a large number of beneficent and necessary reforms in national policies of protection, taxation and general administration, all of which have secured for the nation at large sustenance, contentment and strength. With this relief and security the nation is once more forging ahead in the path of its cultural and spiritual civilisation. There is great significance in the fact that this transformation came through a process of "reversion", a reversion not merely of the land to "the actual and spiritual descendants of the original owners," but a restoration on a close analogy to the pre-Cortezian communal land-system so natural to the native sentiment and evolution. Under the present agrarian laws there is complete individual usufruct; the land is unalienable; it cannot be sold or mortgaged by the cultivator; it must be worked by him unless forsooth it is transferred by him to another on account of his inability, such as ill-health, to work it himself. Moreover, it is his land and he will not move. Twice the amount of "better" land elsewhere would not lure the Mexican Indian villager from his "tierra", a word which has a deeper significance than any other to him, meaning both "home" and "fatherland" rolled into one.

In spite of the fact that Mexico is essentially an agricultural country, and that the mass of its people live in small rural communities on the average of less than three hundred, and that what industry it has is largely extractive, mining and oil predominating, with a few public utilities and minor manufactures, there has developed an unusually interesting and significant trade-union movement. This development represents the story of the economic advancement of Mexico through its labouring masses.

Before the Revolution—that is, before 1910—there was no Mexican trade-union movement. Organisation was forbidden in law, condemned in theory, and forcibly suppressed by Government. A few vague radical ideas originating with itinerant Spanish anarchists had filtered into some of the industrial groups in Mexico. But, broadly speaking, there was neither an industrial labour movement nor an industrial philosophy around which a labour movement could centre. Between the years 1910 and 1917 the Mexican Revolution called into being a few organised labour groups who, for military reasons, were given special privileges and prerogatives of agitation and organisation behind the lines. As a matter of fact the Carranza government, before it established itself in power, regularly courted their services, in return for which the Mexican trade-union leaders

got a hold upon the government of Mexico, which proved invaluable in the development of their trade-unionism. As a consequence, when the Government became stabilised, they obtained for themselves constitutional recognition, and in fact they secured by statute in one stroke what it had taken the industrial nations of Wesern Europe and America one hundred years to achieve. These constitutional provisions provide for such things as the eight-hour day, limits on child labour, the right to organise and the right to strike, and so on. As the legislation stands at present, however, the enforcement of the constitutional provisions is left to the States, and in the year of grace 1930 there is a persistent demand for the transfer of power from the States to the central government for the codification and enforcement of labour legislation. The chief question, however, appears to be to unravel the mystery why a comparatively unindustrialised country should be elaborating such a complicated system of labour organisation. The answer seems to be, at least in the minds of the labour leaders themselves, we are told, that what they are trying to do is to build up an institutional system in Mexico, which will serve to protect the Mexican workers from the evil consequences of too rapid industrialisation by foreign exploitation. Most of the industries are owned by foreigners, practically all active capital is foreign and the trade-unionists are acting as a bulwark against a too drastic and sudden exploitation by foreign investors. It is clear thus that the Mexican movement is not a radical movement in the older sense of the term; it is really a species of nationalism, and it is in one way a nationalistic development in a country, having natural resources but no capital, needing and wanting capital, and too shy to come out. And for students interested in imperialism, this presents an interesting and perhaps too original an attack on the problems which arise from the impingment of an industrial npon a primitive agricultural community by a foreign agency. The outcome of this attempt will certainly be watched as much in Mexico as elsewhere.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION*

By Romain Rolland

The spiritual harvest of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda was not scattered broadcast to the winds. It was garnered by Vivekananda's own hands and placed under the protection of wise and laborious farmers, who knew how to keep it pure and to bring it to fruition.

In the *Life of Vivekananda* I have described his foundation in May, 1897 of a great religious Order to whose trust he confided the storing and administration of his Master's spirit—the Ramakrishna Mission. And there we have also traced the first steps of the Order with its twofold activity of preaching and social work from its inception up to Vivekananda's death.

His death did not destroy the edifice. The Ramakrishna Mission has established itself and grown.[1] Its first director, Brahmananda, busied himself to secure it a regular constitution. By an act of donation prepared by Vivekananda the Order of Sannyâsins of Ramakrishna, domiciled in the Belur Math, near Calcutta, became possessed in 1899 of a legal statute. But in order that the Order might be empowered to receive

[1] We can follow its development in details in the General Reports of the Mission, published by the Governing Body of Belur Math from 1913 to 1926.

gifts for its charitable work the necessity arose for a legal fiction to double the original foundation into a Math (monastery) and a Mission. The latter was duly registered on May 4, 1909, "under Act XXI of 1860 of the Governor-General of India in Council." The Math and the Mission are really the two aspects, the monastic and the philanthropic, of the same organisation, both controlled by the General Council of the Order. But the popular name, wrongly applied to the whole, is that of the Ramakrishna Mission.

The aims of the Mission, as defined in the Memorandum annexed to the act of registration of 1909, are divided into three classes :

1. Charitable works.
2. Missionary works (organisation and publications).
3. Educational works.

Each is sub-divided into permanent institutions (Maths, Ashramas, Societies, Homes of Service, orphanages, schools, etc.) and transient enterprises, activities of casual help called into being by urgent but temporary necessity.

In the Maths or monasteries there are regular monks, who have renounced the world and have received initiation after a period of novitiate. They are constantly moved from one centre to another according to the exigencies of the work, but they remain under the control of the General Council of the Order at Belur. There are some five hundred of them.

A second army is composed of laymen (householders), forming a kind of Third Estate. They are intimate disciples who come for spiritual instruction to the Maths where they sometimes spend short periods of retreat. They number no less than twenty-five thousand.

The other class of the reserve, rising to some millions, is composed of those who have partly or wholly adopted the ideals of the Mission, and serve it from outside without labelling themselves its disciples.

During the first part of April, 1926, the Mission held an extraordinary general Reunion at the Math of Belur in order to form some idea of its full scope. About 120 institutions were represented; of which half were in Bengal, a dozen in Behar and Orissa, fourteen in the United Provinces, thirteen in the Province of Madras, one in Bombay. Outside the Peninsula there were three centres in Ceylon directing nine schools, where fifteen hundred children were being educated, a student centre at Jaffna, not to mention the Vivekananda Society at Colombo. In Burma there was a monastic centre with a large free hospital. Another centre was at Singapore. There were six in the United States : at San Francisco, La Crescenta near Los Angeles, San Antone Valley, Portland, Boston, New York—without reckoning the Vedanta Societies of St. Louis, Cincinatti, Philadelphia, Tacoma, etc. At Sâo Paulo in Brazil a group of men have busied themselves since 1900 with Vivekananda's teaching. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, and *Raja Yoga* by Vivekananda have been translated into Portuguese. *Circulo Esoterico da Communhâo do Pensamento* which has 43,000 members, publishes Vedantic studies in its organ : *O Pensamento*.

The Order possesses a dozen Reviews : three monthly reviews at Calcutta (two in Bengali : *Udbodhan* and *Viswavâni*, and one in Hindi : *Samanvaya*); one in Tamil at Madras : *Sri Ramakrishna Vijayam;* one in Malayalam in Travancore : *Prabuddha Keralam;* two monthlies and one weekly in English : *Prabuddha Bharata* at Mayavati in the Himalayas, *Vedanta Kehari*, at Madras, *The Morning Star* at Patna—without counting one in Canarese, and one in Gujerati run by the disciples of the Mission; in the Federated Malay States a monthly review in English : *The Voice of Truth;* in the United States a monthly review in English : *The Message of the East* published by the La Crescenta centre.[2]

[2] *Visvavâni* does not actually belong to the Order, though it is conducted by one who

The education given within the monasteries follows the principles laid down by Vivekananda.[3] "The aim of the monastery," he had said, "is to create man"—the complete man, who "would combine in his life an immense idealism with perfect common sense." Hence in turn, with hardly a break, the initiates practise spiritual exercises, intense meditation, reading and study of the sacred and philosophical texts, and manual work: household duties, baking, gardening and sewage-farming, bridges and roads, farms and agriculture, the care of animals—as well as the double ministry of religion and medicine.

"Equal importance should be given to the triple culture of the head, the heart and the hands," said the great Abbot, the present head of the direction of the Order, Swami Shivananda.[4] Each one if practised to the exclusion of the rest is bad and harmful.

The necessities of organisation called for a hierarchy within the Order. But all are equal in their allegiance to the common Rule. The Abbot Shivananda reminded them that "the chiefs ought to be the servants of all." And his presidential address of 1926 ended with an admirable declaration of universal happiness, accorded in equal measure to each one who serves, whatever his rank:

"Be like the arrow that darts from the bow. Be like the hammer that falls on the anvil. Be like the sword that pierces its object. The arrow does not murmur if it misses the target. The hammer does not fret if it falls in the wrong place. And the sword does not lament if it breaks in the hands of the wielder. Yet there is joy in being made, used and broken; and an equal joy in being finally set aside. . . ."

It would be interesting to discover how this powerful organisation affects the diverse political and social currents that have been flowing for the past twenty years through the body of awakened India.

It repudiates politics. In this it is faithful to the spirit of its Master, Vivekananda, who could not find sufficiently strong terms of disgust wherewith to spurn all collusion with politics. And perhaps this has been the wisest course for the Mission to pursue. For its religious, intellectual and social action, eminently pro-Indian as it is, is exercised in the profound and silent depths of the nation, without giving any provocation to the British power to fetter it.

But even so it has been obliged to lull the suspicions of the ever vigilant watch-dogs by continual prudence. On more than one occasion Indian revolutionaries, by using the words and name

belongs to the Order. *Samanvaya* and *The Voice of Truth* have since been discontinued and *The Morning Star* has been converted to a monthly.—*Ed.*

[3] Vivekananda's spirit was essentially realistic both in education and religion. He said: "The real teacher is he who can infuse all his power into the bent of his pupil . . ." "who will take someone as he stands, and help him forward . . ." (1896, in America). And in his interviews with the Maharajah of Khetri (before his first journey to America) he laid down this curious definition: "What is education? Education is the nervous association of certain ideas." He then explained that it was a question of developing ideas into instincts. Until they had reached that stage they could not be considered to be real and vital possessions of knowledge. And he gave as an example "the perfect educator," Ramakrishna, whose renunciation of gold had been so vital that his body could not bear to come into physical contact with the metal.

He said that it was the same with religion. "Religion is neither word nor doctrine. . . . It is deed. It is to be and to become: not to hear and accept. It is the whole soul changed into that which it believes. That is what religion is." (*A Study of Religion*).

And I will permit myself to add that although I recognise the effectiveness of such an education, my free spirit is opposed to the dominion of certain ideas over the whole nature of an individual. I would rather use the same contagious energy to fill his being with the inextinguishable thirst for liberty: a freedom from control ever keenly aware of its own thoughts.

[4] Presidential Address of the first Convention of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, April 1, 1926.

of Vivekananda, have placed it in a very embarrassing position. On the other hand its formal declarations of abstention from politics during hours of national crisis, have laid it open more than once to the accusation of patriots that it is indifferent to the liberties of India. The second General Report of the Mission, which appeared in May, 1919, testified to these difficulties and laid down precisely the non-political line the Math was to follow. It is not necessary to give a summary of it here.

1906, the year of the division of the Province of Bengal, marked the beginning of the Swadeshi movement and political unrest. The Mission refused to take any part in them. It even thought it prudent to suspend its work of preaching in Calcutta, Dacca and Western Bengal, although it still carried on its charitable activities. In 1908 it was obliged to make a rule not to receive strangers at night in its establishments, because it feared that some were abusing its hospitality in order to prepare their political offensives. It transpired from the answers of political prisoners that more than one, disguised under the robe of a Sannyâsin, had cloaked their designs under the name of its work and religion. Copies of the *Gitâ* and Vivekananda's writings were found on several of them. The Government kept a strict watch over the Mission, but it continued to preach its ideal of social service; it publicly reproved all sectarian and vengeful spirit, and even condemned selfish patriotism, pointing out that eventually it led to degradation and ruin. It replied alike to the accusations of the patriots and the suspicions of the Government by these words of Vivekananda, which were inscribed on the covers of its publications: "The national ideals of India are Renunciation and Service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself."

Nevertheless, the struggle grew more bitter. According to their usual tactics of compromising all independent spirits, the revolutionary agitators used in a twisted form portions of the religious and philosophical publications of the Mission. In spite of its public declaration in April, 1914, the Government of Bengal in its Administration Report of 1915 accused the Mission and its founders of having been the first instigators of Indian nationalism.

And in 1916 the first Governor of Bengal, Lord Carmichael, although he sympathised with Ramakrishna Mission's work, announced publicly that terrorists were becoming its members in order to achieve their ends with more ease: nothing more was needed for the dissolution of the Mission. Fortunately devoted English and American friends in high places came forward and warmly supported its defence in a long Memorial of January 22, 1917, so that the danger was averted.

It has been seen that, like Gandhi, the Ramakrishna Mission absolutely repudiates violence in politics. But it is remarkable that the violent have more than once invoked it, despite its protestations: a thing that I believe they have never dreamed of doing in the case of Gandhi. And yet Ramakrishna's followers, more absolutely than Gandhi, reject all compromise, not only with certain forms of politics, but with them all.

This seeming paradox comes from the individual character—I might almost say—from the temperament, of Vivekananda, their Master. His fighting and ardent Kshatriya nature appears even in his renunciation and Ahimsâ (Non-resistance).

"He used to say that the Vedânta may be professed by a coward, but it could be put into practice only by the most stout-hearted. The Vedânta was strong meat for weak stomachs. One of his favourite illustrations used to be that the doctrine of non-resistance necessarily involved the capacity and ability to resist and a conscious refraining from having recourse to resistance. If a strong man, he used to say, deliberately refrained from making use of his strength against either a rash or

weak opponent, then he could legitimately claim higher motives for his action. If, on the other hand, there was no obvious superiority of strength or the strength really lay on the side of his opponent, then the absence of the use of strength naturally raised the suspicion of cowardice. He used to say that that was the real essence of the advice of Sri Krishna to Arjuna."

And talking to Sister Nivedita in 1898 he said :

"I preach only the Upanishads. And of the Upanishads, it is only that one idea—*strength*. The quintessence of Vedas and Vedanta and all, lies in that one word. Buddha's teaching was Non-resistance or Non-injury. But I think this a better way of teaching the same thing. For behind that Non-injury lay a dreadful weakness. It is weakness that conceives the idea of resistance. I do not think of punishing or escaping from a drop of sea-spray. It is nothing to me. Yet to the mosquito it would be serious. Now I would make all injury like that. Strength and fearlessness. My own ideal is that giant of a saint whom they killed in the Mutiny, and who broke his silence, when stabbed to the heart, to say—'And thou also art He !' "

Here we can recognise Gandhi's conception : a *Non-resistance* in name, that is in reality the most potent of Resistances,—a *Non-acceptation*,[5] only fit for spiritual heroes. There is no place in it for cowards. . . . But if, in practice, Gandhi's ideal is akin to that of Vivekananda, to what passionate heights did Vivekananda carry it ! With Gandhi all things are moderated, calm and constant. With Vivekananda everything is a paroxysm, of pride, of faith, or of love. Under each of his words can be felt the brazier of the burning Atman—the Soul-God. It is then easy to understand that exalted revolutionary individualism has wished to use these flames in social incendiarism, and this is a danger that the wise successors of the great Swami, who have charge of his heritage, have often had to avoid.

Further the tenacious and unwavering moderation of Gandhi's action is mixed up with politics, and sometimes becomes their leader ; but Vivekananda's heroic passion (that of Krishna was battle) rejects politics of all kinds, so that the followers of Ramakrishna have kept themselves aloof from the campaigns of Gandhi.

It is regrettable that the name, the example and the words of Vivekananda have not been invoked as often as I could have wished in the innumerable writings of Gandhi and his disciples. The two movements, although independent of each other and each going its own way, have none the less the same object. They may be found side by side in service that is devoted to public well-being ; and both of them, though with different tactics, follow the great design—the national unity of the whole of India. The one advances to the great day by his patient Non-Co-operation struggles (it has been crowned with victory during the past year, 1928)—the other by peaceful but irresistible uni-

[5] The temperament of a born fighter like Vivekananda could only have arrived at this heroic ideal of Non-acceptation without violence, by violating his own nature. And he did not attain to it without a long struggle.

Even in 1898 before the pilgrimage to Kshir-bhavâni, which produced a moral revolution in him, when he was asked : "What should we do when we see the strong oppress the weak?" he replied : "Why, thrash the strong, of course."

On another occasion he said :

"Even forgiveness, if weak and passive, is not true : fight is better. *Forgive* when you could bring (if you wished) legions of angels to an easy victory." (That is to say, forgive when you are the stronger.)

Another asked him :

"Swamiji, ought one to seek an opportunity of death in defence of right or ought one to learn never to react?"

"I am for no reaction," replied the Swami slowly, and after a long pause added, "—for Sannyasins. Self-defence for the householder."

(*Cf. The Life of the Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. III, p. 279.)

versal Co-operation. Take for example the tragic question of Untouchability. The Ramakrishna Mission does not conduct a crusade against it like Gandhi, but better still, denies it according to those words of Vivekananda that I have just quoted: "It is weakness which conceives the idea of resistance."

"We think," Swami Ashokananda wrote to me, "that a rear attack is better than a frontal one. We invite people of all classes, beliefs and races to all our festivals and we sit and eat together, even Christians. In our Ashramas we do not keep any distinction of caste, either among the permanent residents or among visitors. Quite recently at Trivandrum, the capital of the Hindu state of Travancore, notorious for its extreme orthodoxy and its obstinate maintenance of untouchability, all the Brahmin and non-Brahmin castes sat together to take their meals on the occasion of the opening of our new monastery in that town; and no social objection was raised. It is by indirect methods that we try to put an end to the evil, and we think that thus we can avoid a great deal of irritation and opposition."

And so, while the great liberal Hindu sects like the Brâhmo Samâj, the Prârthanâ Samâj, etc., storm orthodoxy from the front, with the result that having broken their bridges behind them, they find themselves separated from the mass of their people, and partially rejected by the mother Church, so that their reforms are lost upon it—the Ramakrishna Mission believes in never losing contact with the Hindu rank and file; it remains within the bosom of the Church and of society, and from thence carries out reforms for the benefit of the whole community. There is nothing aggressive or iconoclastic, nothing that can wound, such as that attitude of Protestant rigidity, which, although armed with reason, has too often torn the universe by schism. Keep within the Catholic fold, but maintain a patient and humanised reason, so that you carry out reform from within, and never from without.

"Our idea," Swami Ashokananda wrote in another place, "is to awaken the higher conscience of Hinduism. That done, all necessary reforms will follow automatically."

The results already achieved speak volumes for these tactics. For example, amelioration of the condition of women has been vigorously pursued by the Brahmo Samaj, their self-constituted and chivalrous champion. But the suggested reforms have often been too radical and their means too heterodox. "Vivekananda said that the new ought to be a development rather than a condemnation and rejection of the old. . . . The female institutions of the Ramakrishna Mission combining all that is best in Hinduism and the West, are today considered models of what ought to be the education of woman." It is the same with regard to service of the lower classes; but I have already emphasised this point sufficiently and need not return to it. The excellent effect of a spirit that weds the new to the old has been also felt in the renaissance of Indian culture, to which other powerful elements have contributed such as the glorious influence of the Tagores and their school at Santiniketan. But it must never be forgotten that Vivekananda and his devoted Western disciple, Sister Nivedita, were their predecessors; and that the great current of popular Hindu education began with Vivekananda's return to Colombo. Vivekananda was indignant that the Indian Scriptures, the *Upanishads*, *Gitâ*, *Vedânta*, etc., were practically unknown to the people, and reserved for the learned. To-day Bengal is flooded with translations of the Holy Writings in the Vernacular and with commentaries upon them. The Ramakrishna school have spread a knowledge of them throughout India.

Nevertheless—(and this is the most beautiful characteristic of the movement)—the Indian national renaissance is not accompanied, as is the general rule, by a sentiment of hostility or superiority towards the alien. On the

contrary, it holds out the hand of fellowship to the West. The followers of Sri Ramakrishna admit Westerners, not only into their sanctuaries, but into their ranks (an unheard-of thing in India)—into their holy order of Sannyâsins, and have insisted on their reception on equal footing by all, even by the orthodox monks. Moreover, the latter, the orthodox Sannyâsins, who in their hundreds of thousands exercise a constant influence on the Hindu masses, are gradually adopting the ways and the ideas of Ramakrishna's followers, to whom they were at first opposed, and whom they accused of heresy. Finally, the hereditary Order of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda has made it a rule never to take anything into the world that makes for division, but only what makes for union.

"Its sole object," it was said at the public meeting of the Extraordinary General Convention of the Mission in 1926, "is to bring about harmony and co-operation between the beliefs and doctrines of the whole of humanity"—to reconcile religions among themselves and to free reason—to reconcile classes and nations—to found the brotherhood of all men and all peoples.

And further, because the Ramakrishna Mission is permeated with a belief in the quasi-identity of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm, of the Universal Self and the individual self—because it knows that no reform can be deep and lasting in a society unless it is first rooted in an inner reformation of the individual soul—it is on the formation of the universal man that it expends the greatest care. It seeks to create a new human type wherein the highest powers, at present scattered and fragmentary, and the diverse and complementary energies of man shall be combined—the heights of intelligence towering above the clouds, the sacred wood of love, and the rivers of action. The great Rhythm of the soul beats from pole to pole, from intense concentration to "*Seid umschlungen, Millionem!*"[6] with its universal appeal. As it is possible in spite of difficulties to attain the ideal in the case of a single man, the Ramakrishna Mission is trying to realise the same ideal in its Universal Church—the symbol of its Master—"his Math, which represents the physical body of Ramakrishna."

Here we can see the rhythm of history repeating itself. To European Christians such a dream recalls that of the Church of Christ. The two are sisters. And if a man wishes to study the dream that is nineteen hundred years old, he would do better, instead of looking for it in books that perish, to listen at the breast of the other to its young heart-beats. There is no question of comparison between the two figures of the Man-Gods. The elder will always have the privilege over the younger on account of the crown of thorns and the spear thrust upon the Cross, while the younger will always have an irresistible attraction on account of his happy smile in the midst of agonising suffering. Neither can yield anything to the other in grace and power, in divinity of heart and universality. But is it not true that the scrupulous historian of the Eternal Gospel, who writes at its dictation, always finds that at each of its new editions, the Gospel has grown with humanity?

[6] The Ode to Joy of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

TRUTH AND VALUE

By Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D.

An interesting comparison suggests itself. The scientific cosmology of the day has an approach to the Upanisadic truth. Professor Alexander has conceived the growth of the world out of space, time and energy and has borrowed from science the indissolubility of space and time. Time enfolds space and

the primal energy plays in the eternal space-time order generating out of it the finer forces of life and spirit. Evolution begins with the cosmic dance of energy in the silence of the spread-out space and the three are the basic elements of reality. It is the space-time-and-energy entity. The complexity of the fabric of being arises as the evolution proceeds. And the more is the ascent in the evolution, the more complex is the emergent in evolution. The life in its cosmic dance loses its original simplicity and acquires in the process of emergent evolution a growing complexity and multiplicity. This dance has as if a periodicity, and the drama is not evenly played all the time in equal intensity. A forward push is succeeded by a temporary inertia. Life appears first on the scene. Matter is ruled out of order. It gives place to energy. When the play of the vital forces becomes too much complex, the signal for the next higher emergence is hoisted. A greater integration and a higher unity in the form of mind with its light of intelligence appears in the surrounding gloom. The primal darkness is dispelled and the illumination of consciousness is hailed as the welcome visitor. Evolution cannot stop with the mind which can illumine a centre but not all centres. In the corner of this consciousness is felt the jostling of a wider life and, we reach the next higher stage in the onward march of life, the social mind and the Deity meeting the higher instincts of morality and religion. Professor Alexander conceives a scheme of cosmology from space and time. God is the last element in the evolution. Religious consciousness is its first blossoming in man. The more complex is the integration, the higher is the unity. God is the highest unity because of his being the last in the evolution.

Professor Alexander is inspired by the noble instinct of establishing a synthesis between science and religion, between reality and value. And his intuition is correct when he confines himself to the world of concrete realities. Science is confined to the reality and facts; religion, essentially to values. He, therefore, conceives a scheme of thought in which value has its place and recognition with reality. Behind the order of values lies the bare reality of space, time and causality, and the realm of value has a unique quality, not to be found in the basic reality though it comes in the order of posteriority. But this does not take away from it the truth of the values, for they present an experience not to be found in the basic elements. God may not be the Absolute of philosophy, but still in the sphere of values, which is the province of religion, it is the highest concept.

Professor Alexander has shown much ingenuity in setting up a religious system in an empirical metaphysics. But it is difficult to reconcile the order of values with his Absolute, and more so to derive the one from the other. The order of values necessarily is concrete and, therefore, may have full expression where self-consciousness has its full play of creativeness. Value and creativeness go together, and where the dynamic conception of the self is not at its highest growth and development, art and religion have not their finest expression. The Upanisads confine the religious values to the realm of the concrete expression of spirit, but even here the emphasis has been laid upon the finer and subtler move of life and consciousness yielding a wider range of intuition and higher intensity of activity. The values, however fine and subtle, are actualities in the restricted life of creative expression. They have no reality in the realm beyond expression.

This realm of truth is the realm of fact. But whereas to Alexander the realm of absolute fact has no reference to consciousness, but is the province of unilluminating space and its indissoluble companion, the unending time, to the teachers of the Upanisads the realm of the absolute fact is ever shining in the native light of intelligence. The universe is more illumined in the centre than at the circumference, for the silent light of the centre is not equally re-

flected at the outskirts of existence. Life in the centre is more serene, free and easy, for it is undivided and integral there and is not agitated by the surface waves. The order of space and time is the structural frame of life in expression, they are the forms of the immanent consciousness and cannot claim the absoluteness which Alexander ascribes to them. They may be intimately related to the Absolute, but to install them in the place of the Absolute is more than what reason and intuition can accept. The Upanisads have confined religious life in the concrete sense to the world of appearance, and though they have laid down a course of fine evolution in spirituality and freedom and an introduction into the finer orders of appearances and absorbing values, still they are clear that the finest intuition surpasses these experiences and reveals the transcendent truth beyond space and time.

The supra-mental vision makes us acquainted with the Absolute of Alexander's philosophy, for its very existence cannot be known unto itself. Alexander makes the dawn of the universe surrounded by an impenetrable gloom, the Upanisads see the dawn in the kindly rays of the light that tarry not. When, therefore, the concrete religious life is sacrificed for this majesty of silence, surely the seeker does not pass into the inconvenient and undesirable existence which the gods forsake and men shun. On the other hand, those who have once tasted it fervently desire it as a state of unique blessedness inasmuch as it frees us from the pangs of a divided consciousness. Life may grow in complexity in the course of evolution, but this complexity is the sign of finitude and imperfection, for complexity is invariably associated with other-reference and other-dependence. The highest existence is the simplest. It denies all externality and all reference. And, therefore, the tendency of seeking spiritual life in its fullest expression in the ever-growing complexity of life is to lose it. The Upanisadic teachers are quite alive to this truth, and, therefore, their quest after the eternal life does not begin with the world affecting the surface life and surface existence, but in the finer currents lying deep beneath the surface. Even the finer order of values cannot be the last in evolution, it must have been working since long from within. The gross cannot give rise to the fine. It is rather the arrested expression of the fine. The sudden emergence of the fine cannot be accepted as a reasonable conclusion. The occasional expression of the fine values cannot prove their sudden emergence in the order of reality, it only proves that the fine can have rare expression. Evolution of the higher values does not mean that the higher develops out of the lower. It implies that the higher is at the heart of things and can express itself under fit and proper circumstances. The law of continuity is never broken in expression, and it is easier to believe in the arche-types of existence than to accept the sudden emergence of the higher concepts of existence and value from the lower ones. The Upanisads teach that the deeper we penetrate into existence, the wider and finer it is and it presents realms of archetypes which are always complete and perfect. The external is shaped according to the internal plan and harmony,—it is always regulated and moulded according to it. The eternal values are always present at the heart of things, shaping things and beings according to the eternal purpose, and they cannot be conceived as coming into being at a period of world's history. The perception of the eternal world of values, therefore, requires a deeper intuition into the finer planes of existence. The order of values is an order in space and time. It is an order in which our ideals are fully realised and we become free from the dualities of the gross life. And the ideal is more real. In the finer intuitions we realise them in their purity and in their transcendence. They are not here mixed with their opposites and their limitations. Life is, therefore, more serene and smooth, intuition more expressive.

The realm of values becomes more evident as we rise above the sense-mentality and dive deep into the silent waters of life. But the values cannot find a place beyond the supra-mental plane of existence. Their right place is the super-mind, they can have no existence in the transcendent reality. They are essentially creative forces, and they can be true on the creative plane. And naturally they suffer the restrictions natural to creativeness. They are dynamic. They mould the initial force. The highest values that we prize and realise in our own creativeness are dim refiections of the eternal values of the ideal world. And, therefore, in the moments of happy visitation of the land of wonders hidden in the bosom of creation, we are overpowered by its symmetry, its orchestral harmony, its creative accuracy, and the vastness of its being. Religious consciousness cannot rise above this form of revelation, and so absorbing is the realisation that the seeker who has attained this height of realisation does not feel the impulse to see the beyond. And it is the common experience of mystic life to be entangled by the richness and the music of this high level of consciousness and life and to mistake this to be the final intuition of religious life. Indeed it is the final realisation in the personal consciousness, and unless the seeker is bold enough to lose the personal hold of life and to forsake its experiences of rapturous delight, it cannot have access into the sublime calm which resides at the centre. The intuition of the Calm is the final illumination of reality, beyond expression, beyond the space and time of empirical metaphysics. The religious life is an expression not beyond space and time of the supra-mental vision, though it is continuous with the supra-mental life. It has, therefore, the intimations of immortality. It is not limited by the empirical time series. The Upanisads perceived the value of the religious ideal, and, therefore, has laid down a path for the aspirant to this ideal; but this ideal has not been insisted upon as the final pursuit after the transcendental truth. Immortality as immortality in time is the invariable consequence that follows the path of light, the path of Devayâna, which allows an access into the realm of light. It is still the personal immortality but it is not the immortality that follows upon the realisation of the timeless Absolute. So long as personality clings to the soul, the world of values has a meaning and a deep meaning too, but when it finally dissolves into the absolute background, the importance of value disappears. Value is, therefore, not a higher category of existence than truth. It looks like presenting an aspect of existence not covered by truth. But it is so when the different phases of existence are emphasised in the relative thinking. It cannot be true when the aspects of existence are lost in the Absolute.

The Upanisads have prized truth more than value, for value has always a concrete reference, and truth has no such reference. When, therefore, the Upanisads welcome delight as the highest promise, they hail it not as a feeling-consciousness, but as a freedom from limitations and restricted urges of life. It is the freedom from concentration. Truth does not imply concentration. Value does. Truth is, therefore, a unique presentation. Nothing of the relative and empirical consciousness can compare to it. The delight of value is essentially personal, the delight of truth is impersonal,—it is the delight of the evenness of existence at the centre of reality and not the delight of the creative order arranged in a hierarchy in order of the fineness and expressiveness of the manifested being.

KARMA YOGA OF THE GITA

By Prakash Chandra Sinha Roy, B.A., Nyayavagisha

The fundamental principles underlying the teachings of the *Gitâ* expressed in a few words are these :

(1) The fulfilment of spiritual life lies in the direct realisation of Brahman, the all-knowing, all-pervading and all-powerful ultimate reality from which the Universe proceeds, on which it rests and into which it dissolves.

(2) There is one and only one way by which that reality can be realised, and that is by moulding life in conformity with its nature, or to express it in the language of the *Gitâ*, by being Brahmabhuta, or in plainer words, by leading a godly life—a life formed with God as the ideal.

(3) The practical exercises prescribed are : (1) Samadarshana—entertaining the same feelings for all beings as one has for one's own self and (2) Vairâgya —living mentally detached from all non-spiritual things.

(4) Samadarshana may be practised by always keeping in mind that God resides in all beings as the soul of their souls.

(5) Vairâgya may be practised either (*a*) by gradually excluding all non-spiritual things from thoughts till the mind is made to rest on nothing—a mental process which is technically called the path of Jnâna or mode of union with Brahman by true knowledge—knowledge of things in their essence, or (*b*) by undivided and uninterrupted devotion to God and God only—a mental process called the path of Bhakti or mode of union with Brahman by devotion, or (*c*) by action—action done in discharge of duties—duties done for duty's sake without being affected by the result, be it success or be it failure—a mental process called the path of Karma—a mode of union with Brahman by action.

The object of this short article is to give the reader a clear and precise idea of the principles underlying the last mentioned mode, Karma Yoga, as it is laid down in the *Gitâ*.

What the aspirant after God-knowledge following the path of Karma has always to remember, is that the promptings for discharging duties come from within—from God—the Upadrashtâ and Anumantâ residing in our heart; and, therefore, all that he has to do, is to try to do them to the best of his ability without being anyway affected by the result—be it success or be it failure. "One discharging duties with this mental attitude," says the *Gitâ*, "is not touched by any sin—any mental excitement, which is so inimical to the acquisition of godly nature, just as a lotus leaf though floating on water is not soaked with it anyway." (5. 10)

Some wise men, specially those following the path of Jnâna, discourage action as inimical to the acquisition of godly nature. "Action," they say, "must be avoided as vice—as anger, jealonsy, covetousness, inordinate desire after worldly things, etc." (14. 3) But the tendency towards action is a natural tendency. "Whether one likes it or not, one is helplessly drawn to it by nature and cannot remain inactive even for a moment." (3. 5) And more, "the maintenance of the body is not possible without action."

Now, as action is natural to man, and therefore unavoidable, and as every man has an inherent right to know God, action cannot hy itself be an obstacle to the acquisition of such knowledge. There must, therefore, be some secret device in action by which the evil apprehended from it can be avoided. The *Gitâ* tells us that "Yoga is that secret device" and Yoga is discharging

duties without being elated by success or depressed by failure. "Do your duty," says Sri Krishna, "being settled in Yoga. Preservation of mental equilibrium both in success and failure is Yoga." (2. 24)

Doing action in discharge of duty without being affected by its fruit, is then the secret device enjoined in the *Gitâ* for attaining godly nature through action. But is it possible to act without being elated by success or depressed by failure? The *Gitâ* says, it is. The source of our sense of duty is the prompting from within, from the Upadrashtâ and Anumantâ residing in our heart. This prompting is our authority for trying our best to do our duty. There is however no promise of success in every case, nor of any security against failure in any. This being the case, the fruit of the acts done in discharge of such duty, whether it is sucess or failure, need not disturb the equanimity of our mind; and this is what the *Gitâ* declares by saying: "When one is faced by a duty, one has every right to do what is necessary for discharging it; but one has no right to expect success in every case." (2. 41)

Another fact which we should remember in this connection, is that if the source of our sense of duty is the divine prompting from within, the real doer of the acts done in discharge of it, is God, and our position in regard to such acts is that of a mere agent. This being the case, the fruit thereof need not interfere with our equanimity. This idea firmly established in the mind goes a great way to minimise Ahamkâra or egoism in action, which is responsible for the mental disturbance caused by its fruits. It is with reference to this mental attitude that Sri Krishna tells Arjuna that "one, untainted by Ahamkâra and unentangled, remains spiritually unaffected by acts done in discharge of duty, even if it be of such a terrible nature as to necessitate the slaughter of men." (18. 17)

It has been said that some wise men advocate giving up action altogether in favour of Sannyâsa or inaction; because, they say, that whether we like it or not, action must of necessity result in mental disturbance. But does mental equanimity as a rule follow bodily inactivity? If not, nothing is gained by suppressing the organs of action, if the mind is allowed to wander about after the objects of the senses. In spiritual exercises, it is the mind that matters and not the mere suppression of the organs of action. And it is in order to draw the attention of the reader pointedly to this fact that the *Gitâ* declares: "One who controlling the organs of action, mentally dwells on the objects of the senses, lives under delusion, and follows a wrong course; but a better course is followed by him who, while controlling the senses by the mind, performs actions with the body in discharge of duty, without being affected by their fruits." (3. 6-7)

It is further added that "one who can see action in inaction and inaction in action is really wise and lives in union with God even though immersed in action." (4. 18) Seeing action in inaction and inaction in action is an important dictum with reference to Karma Yoga, and its full meaning should be clearly understood. Why is action discouraged by the followers of Sannyâsa? Because, they say, it inevitably leads to the loss of mental equilibrium which is so essentially necessary for attaining godly nature. But they forget that the loss of mental equilibrium is not the direct result of bodily action. It arises from elation in success and depression in failure. It is these feelings that should be suppressed and not the normal and natural activities of the bodily organs. The object aimed at by inaction is the maintenance of mental equilibrium. But if, when the body is inactive, the mind gets agitated by dwelling on the objects of the senses, we have, judging by the fruit, action in inaction; and in the same way, when the organs of action are active, but the mind is made to

remain unagitated, we have, judging by the fruit, inaction in action. To be able to appreciate this is to see action in inaction and inaction in action. One who understands it, is certainly wise, because, he sees what the object aimed at is and is not likely to confuse the end with the means. "It is not," says the *Gitâ*, "possible for the embodied being to relinquish action completely; one who relinquishes the fruit of action, is, from a spiritual point of view, a true Sannyâsi." (18. 11)

It is further said that "a Karma Yogi who performs actions in discharge of duty without being affected by their fruits, is a true Sannyâsi and not he who has merely relinquished bodily actions both ordinary and ceremonial." (6. 1)

What the follower of the path of Karma has always to remember is that "one who remains unaffected by the fruit of action done in discharge of duty, is not entangled in the meshes of births and rebirths by such action" (4. 22), and that his ideal is God who, though acting incessantly, "is not affected by the fruit of such actions." "Though," says Sri Krishna, "God is the creator of such wonderful diversities in the universe by causing the Gunas to commingle in an infinite variety of proportion, yet He is not their creator" (4. 13), that is, though incessantly doing acts necessary for such creation, He is not their doer.

So high indeed is the praise bestowed on Karma Yoga that speaking of it in a most poetical but none the less emphatic way, the *Gitâ* declares that "to one who knows its secrets, the *Vedas* are of as little use as are small tanks and wells to a thirsty man when the whole country around is under water." (2. 46)

Karma Yoga as it is laid down in the *Gitâ* is unique of its kind for, in no other sacred book of the world, whether Indian or non-Indian, it has been expounded in so many words and in a way so plain, so elaborate and so exhaustive.

It should be noted here that Karma or action may precede or accompany all kinds of Yogas, namely, Jnâna Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Râja Yoga and Karma Yoga, but Karma Yoga should be distinguished from the rest by the mental attitude of the aspirant, and not by any external criterion. A Karma Yogi must feel that he is not the doer and suppress all sorts of feelings,—feelings of pain as well as of pleasure. He has to put up a heroic fight against the temptations of life, though all are staring him in the face. It is all challenge, aggression and triumph. A Karma Yogi may not have any philosophical doctrine of transcendental reality, or a popular notion of Personal God to guide, guard and inspire. He must have something to do, and in consequence he does not allow his balance of mind to be disturbed by any undue pressure of feelings. This form of self-control leads a man to sovereign power, and that to spiritual perfection.

The special mission of the *Gitâ* was, it seems to me, to teach Karma Yoga, and that, at a time, when Sannyâsa or absolute renunciation of action not rightly understood, was in all probability considered an absolute necessity for the attainment of bliss or Moksha. The *Gitâ* was a reasoned protest against this kind of Sannyâsa which led nowhere, as it was Mithyâchâra or hypocrisy. Repeatedly has it been declared in the *Gitâ* that the true Sannyâsi is he who abandons the fruit of action, that is, is not agitated by the result of action done in discharge of duty, and not he who merely avoids bodily activity, allowing the mind to run after the objects of the senses. By this I do not mean to say that in the *Gitâ* Jnâna and Bhakti have not been dealt with as elaborately as Karma, on the contrary, if the *Upanishads—Swetâswatara*, for instance, is one of them—had not taught Upâsanâ (meditation and worship) before the *Gitâ*, I would have ventured to say, that it was the *Gitâ* that for the first time taught us not

only Karma but also Bhakti as well. To an impartial reader of the *Gitâ*, it will appear clearly, however, that though its treatment of Jnâna and Bhakti is as elaborate as that of Karma, yet Karma is its most prominent and special feature. The reader will now understand why the discourse has been introduced in a field of battle where Karma of a most terrible nature has of necessity to be performed, and why Arjuna has so often been told: "And, therefore, fight, O Bhârata." By this I do not mean to say that before Sri Krishna's time no one had practised Karma, for, that would be contradicting the *Gitâ* itself, which tells us that "Janaka and several others reached their goal by Karma," long before Sri Krishna's time. What I mean to say is that it was Sri Krishna who for the first time defined Karma in clear terms and pointed out the principle underlying it and declared in an unambiguous language that, like Jnâna and Bhakti, it was a third means by which godly nature leading to God-vision could be reached. And moreover, even though some might have followed the path before his time, it was forgotten by the time the *Gitâ* was preached. "Vivasvân," says Sri Krishna, "had the secret of Karma Yoga revealed to him first; but in course of time it has been forgotten; and I am now describing it to you." (4.1-3)

It is true that in the two opening Slokas of the *Ishopanishat*, we find some indication of Karma Yoga as laid down in the *Gitâ;* but it is doubtful, if without the help of the *Gitâ*, the true meaning of the Slokas, written so mystically, could be rightly deciphered.

We have said that, though Karma Yoga might have been known to Janaka and some others long before Sri Krishna's time, its secret was lost to the people who remained ignorant of it till Sri Krishna revived it. But are we sure it has not been forgotten and lost again? Has any one seen a sacred text written after the *Gitâ*, in which Karma as preached therein has been repreached? Has any one heard any Sanskrit preacher speaking of Karma as a practical spiritual exercise for reaching God? It is true that in some of the commentaries Karma has been referred to; but in such cases, by Karma they mean only such actions as are involved in offering sacrifices as preached in the *Vedas*. But the Karma Yoga of the *Gitâ* implies a wider range of actions—all actions how stern so ever they may be—necessary for the due discharge of duty. A true Karmi, according to the *Gitâ*, is he who faces his duties manfully and without wavering. Does not the *Gitâ* practically begin with Sri Krishna rebuking Arjuna, when he, commander of a great army, facing an aggressive and more powerful enemy ready to attack, showed signs of wavering and hesitation? "Do not get faint-hearted," said Sri Krishna to Arjuna. "This is not a mental attitude befitting a man of your position. Give up weakness and stand ready for action—action that the occasion demands." (2. 3)

This then, is the Karma Yoga of the *Gitâ*—a living and driving force for action, a living and driving spiritual exercise for the formation of life with God of action as an ideal. Has not this Yoga been lost to us again? I would ask the reader to pause and answer.

Some people think that old age, when bodily activities begin to ebb, is the best period of our life to keep them under control and to practise spirituality with success. What a delusion! The world has yet to see a man neglecting spirituality during the vigour of life turning spiritual in old age and freeing himself from attachment to non-spiritual things. It is true that for the realisation of the selves—the Universal and the individual—the repose or inactivity of a peaceful mind is a necessary condition. But the inactivity needed is the active inactivity of energy and health, and not the inactivity of paralysis and numbness; the

peace needed is the peace of life and vigour and not the peace of death and insensibility. And this is exactly what those who would console themselves by relegating the practice of spirituality to old age, seem to forget.

There are many people in this country—and some of them are amongst the best educated and otherwise best informed too—who think that the old Rishis of the *Vedas* were all Sannyâsis living on roots and fruits in forests away from society, in severe bodily austerity, reduced to mere skin and bone. I would they knew that there were many amongst these Rishis—such as Atri and others like him—who had to spend the greater part of their life in bodily activities of the severest kind—in hard warfares requiring action of the most terrible nature. And yet, they were amongst the best of the Rishis who ever lived. They regulated their life by promptings from within—the promptings that came directly from the Upadrashtâ and Anumantâ residing in their heart. What can be a better fulfilment of spiritual life than to live, move, and regulate life under inspiration from God and discharge duties accordingly,—honestly, fearlessly and without wavering? This is certainly one of the best ways of living in Yoga—in union with God—and it is only in the life of such persons that the true meaning of the oft-quoted 66th Sloka of the 18th Chapter—which requires the aspirant to leave all the injunctions of Shâstras, both positive and negative, aside and seek refuge in God—is revealed. The Karma Yoga of the *Gitâ* may be practised by all, the wise and the unwise, the rich and the poor, the old and the young, at all times and in all places. "In this," says the *Gitâ*, "there is no useless loss of energy, no fear of transgression; even a little knowledge of it protects from great fear." (2. 40)

The secret of Karma Yoga, it has already been said, was known to the old Rishis of India. In course of time, however, it was forgotten and lost. Sri Krishna revived it and repreached it to Arjuna in the field of Kurukshetra. It is now a long time since then, and it has again been lost and forgotten; and yet the necessity of its revival is not less urgent now than it was in Sri Krishna's time. May God hasten the day when the people of India—of the land where the *Gitâ* was conceived and taught—nay, when humanity at large, will understand, appreciate and follow it honestly and manfully, even in the face of difficulties with courage, or to express it in the words of a saintly poet, "with heart within and God o'er head." Verily to "Act, act in the living present, Heart within and God o'er head" and without being affected by the fruit of such acts, is indeed the essence of Karma Yoga, as it is advocated in the *Gitâ*. May God hasten the day when all and every one of us may, like Arjuna at the end of the discourse, say honestly to the Soul of our souls within :

"My delusion is destroyed, O Immutable Lord, my doubts are removed. I have gained true knowledge by Thy grace. I shall obey Thee and do Thy bidding." (18. 73)

HINTS ON PRACTICAL EDUCATION

By Sister Nivedita

OBJECT-LESSONS

The object-lesson is the very heart of the New Education School. And by perversity of fate, it is the feature which of all others is most easily parodied and reduced to an absurdity.

In the object-lesson the child is to be brought into living communion with Nature as a whole, that Nature which

is the mother of life, the life of the plant and the life of the animal alike, and also of the stone and metal. In the object-lesson, also, the child is to learn the scientific habit of bringing his thoughts back to their source, to be tested and corrected by the fact. Thus sympathy, truthfulness, accuracy, are amongst the qualities which are built up in this lesson. But through all these and behind them is the creative imagination, continually going out and explaining through the form that which is behind the form and finding the unity of phenomena in the course of phenomena. Reverence, even more than sympathy, should be the fruit of the object-lesson.

At the beginning of the week a chosen object must be taken and set before the class. For an hour, it must be observed, examined, handled and played with, and talked about. The children must feel themselves one with it, whatever it is. If it is a living thing, its movements will be mentioned and described, perhaps imitated. If it is not living and moving, its characteristics will be discovered and enumerated. Thought and play will centre for the week around this object as far as possible.

The first hour was the hour of *impression*. All the impressions that fall upon the senses are like seeds falling upon the soil of the mind, ready to germinate there and strike root. As long as they have not germinated our lesson is fruitless. But in order to germinate, their first need is time. That is why all our lessons last only for a limited interval, not more than an hour, sometimes, with very little children, only for ten minutes at a time. Many seeds, however, after beginning to germinate, are checked in their growth and wither away. Those thoughts that we wish to make fruitful have to find expression. For this we must give much encouragement and scope. This is why we continually return to the object, day after day, and bring it into games, drawings, modelling, sewing, composition, and all the forms of activity that occur to us.

By this time we can see that the week is to be dominated by the object. It is a sort of keynote which is to sound again and again through the music of school. A great deal, therefore, depends on the selection of the object. It has to be simple and representative, leading to a wide-spread idea of animals and plants as a whole, giving the child power and impulse to go far in the knowledge and study of Nature and learn for himself.

For the first object, the form that radiates in all directions, can we do better than take an egg? The life of the plant starts from the seed which is an egg, embedded in the fruit, often only a larger and more modified form of egg. We may look, then, at the egg as radiating into life-forms in two different directions, that of the animal, and that of the plant. Thus—

Fish.	Brinjal.
Frog or Tortoise.	Guava.
Bird.	Bulb or Onion.
Mouse or Squirrel.	Lotus.
Cat, Dog, or Cow.	Flower.
Monkey.	Cocoanut or Palm-fruit.

The difficulty in dealing with Indian Nature is its profusion. It is hard to select. One has no idea how much easier this is in a cold country, where winter is strongly marked and all the roots and flowers begin to wake up gently and slowly with the first touch of warmth.

We cannot exhaust Nature in a year's Kindergarten lessons. We can only allow ourselves to feel that we have led the child to run its fingers over the keys. Nor must we give it these elements in their ultimate order, but we must lead and stimulate the child by comparing and tracing out resemblances to form an order of itself. When the child is young, in the first stage of observation, it must be led to interest itself in form and life. Here there must be no destruction, no cut-

ting up. Afterwards, in the late stage, we come to structure, and for this we must examine. The animal that is alive should be the teacher of the child, as it ought to be the teacher of the artist. Even when, later, we cut up a fish to learn how it is made, it should be a fish already dead—not killed before our eyes for the purpose of our knowledge. Even fruits and seeds, in this early stage, must be kept whole and not cut up.

But there are other animals also that might be studied. There is a whole class of animals that it would be good for us to know. Amongst these are spider, mosquito, dragon-fly, butter-fly, snail, prawn, worm, centipede. There ought to be no such thing as disgust or horror in our minds of any living things, and to overcome this we ought to create in the very young a warm love and feeling of being a playmate.

In a somewhat later stage, say, the second term of the school year, we may take details or parts of the organisms which we first approached as a whole. Thus we may take a feather (hair, scale, bony case), a shell, a pot with seed in it, a wing, a flower, a leaf, a shell of nut or seed. Or we may decide to avoid even as much anticipation of order as this implies, and may decide to mix our course of objects from the beginning, taking in one week an animal object, and the next something belonging to the plant. The interest and the curiosity of the child is to lead us. Our only part is to select elements of expression in order to make sure that he has the chance of including them.

As the week begins with the *impression* of the object, so it should end with *expression*. This is why the ideal time-table ends with clay-modelling models of the week's object. Again we might take purely physical objects, with a later stage of learning, such as a burning lamp, flowing water, a moving ball, a pair of scales.

All that the child learns by the object ought to form part of a larger knowledge of Nature. The teacher ought to be the greatest student of all, teaching herself about botany, zoology and physics. She will be reading and watching to satisfy fifty questions where the child asks only one. Until you have begun, you have no idea of the infinite joy and thirst that these object-lessons can waken in teacher and taught alike.

THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY

In all teaching we must be guided, not so much by that we have to teach, as by the thought of what the child's mind needs. Everything depends upon the child. The true teacher follows: she does not lead. The child will be happy and interested if the lesson is right, just as we are hungry when we are properly fed.

The best class is one in which the children are much heard. We have to make them long for knowledge before the knowledge reaches them. We have to bring work to them little by little, seeking to offer them that difficulty which they are fitted to surmount. We teach in order to create *intellectual muscle* in the taught, far more than to give them information. If we succeed in developing their faculty, they might be left to acquire knowledge for themselves. This would be the ideal.

It is a law which cannot be too deeply understood and believed by the teacher, that thought proceeds from *concrete* to *abstract*, that knowledge grows by experience, and that experience begins with senses, that two senses are more than twice as good a foundation as one. Therefore where we want the young mind to acquire a new kind of knowledge, we have always first to sit down and consider: How can we make this subject concrete? How can we bring it home to sensation?

Watch the play of children. It is always with *things*. That play is really self-education. Their activity is spontaneous. It obeys some impulse within themselves. But it is the means by which they lay hold of the world out-

side. That teacher is most successful, whose lessons are most full of the spirit of play. The one study that never fails is the early play of mother and grandmother.

How can we bring geographical ideas to a level where they come within the range of the play of a child? How can we set the child to play amidst them? When we know this we shall have solved the problem of geographical education. What is usually wrong with our knowledge is that *we are not properly prepared for it.* Every act of the mind would be rich and joyous and full of ease to an extent we cannot now dream, if only the mind itself had been developed up to it by the right stages of growth,—growth of the idea, growth of the mind itself.

When we ask how we can concretise geographical ideas, so as to make them accessible to the mind of a child, there is one field of observation to which we may turn for our answer. The education of a child is designed to teach him in a short period what he could otherwise only hope to learn in the course of life. It quickens the process that it may add to it. Geographical ideas are ideas of *place.* Even an uneducated man learns to find his way, learns the relation of one place to another. What is the process by which he does so? Can we possibly learn the process, and reapply it to the education of the child?

Again, a child learns by his own *act.* What action can we give him that may enable him to lay hold of ideas of place, and bring them as it were within his command?

I. The place that even the uneducated man comes to know, in his own neighbourhood, is his own home. Let the child, similarly, study the place he knows—his school and the vicinity of his school. And can we turn this study into play? Every good teacher will answer differently. She is no teacher who does not *invent* ways of playing out knowledge. But the *act* by which, in the spirit of play, the geographical faculty can be made to grow, is map-making. In a true education the use of the map will never need to be explained to the student, for the simple reason that the truly-educated began himself to make maps before he was six.

This is the first stage of geographical education—the making of maps of the schoolroom, the school garden, the rooms in the school-house, the streets and lanes and houses and gardens in the neighbourhood. Incidently, one may seek to train the public spirit of the child by teaching him to talk of what he saw on the road to school, of whether the streets were clean or dirty, of what was beautiful, of how noble it is to create beautiful things for the public good. Maps need not always be made, with paper and pencil. Any of the material abundant in the country can be used, beads and sticks, clay, sand, wet thread, or any thing else that pleases the child. But the power to make and use a map is assuredly growing nevertheless. This is the first stage of geographical teaching.

II. In the second stage we go a little further afield, and observe such of the geographical features of the neighbourhood—the river and its flow, a lake or tank, an island, peninsula, isthmus, as may enable the children to form strong and fresh associations with all these words. Instead of the old learning by heart of more or less meaningless terms, we have thus established a personal expcrience as the basis of future thought. And whole lessons may be given, in which the children are encouraged to find out such things as, Where is the river going to? Where did it come from? How did it grow? The ideal river, with source, mouth, tributaries, *prayâgas,* and enclosing watershed, may be made in clay, as a relief map. Such a map might well take a whole term to make.

III. In the third stage of geographical ideas we have to take note of the fact that the human mind proceeds from the *whole* to the *detail.* If we notice the picture made by a young child, we shall find that he always begins by

making a whole man. It is the maturer mind that seeks to render a face, or a hand, or what not.

In the same way, there comes a time when the child has to be led to consider the world as a whole, the world we live in. Here we enter on such conceptions as those of mountains and plains, land and ocean, climate, north and south, and so on. By this time, the notion of the map—the markings that mean mountains or rivers, and so on, —is well understood, and the child, with maps or a globe before him, can read off a description of any given country. It is always best to lead him to do this for himself. Remember that he learns by his own effort. He proceeds from known to unknown. He reads what maps express, in consequence of his own effort to express the same thing. Gradually, reasoning from what he has to what he has not experienced, he builds up the great idea of the world as a globe, with snow-caps, north and south, and a hot belt midway.

If possible even this idea of the world as a globe should be puzzled out by himself. If we could only carry each individual mind in its education along the path the race has travelled in getting knowledge, the whole of our lives would be changed, for the whole world would be a world of genius, so rich and strong and many-coloured would our thought become. So we must reach the child's deepest faculties by a problem or a picture. We must start him thinking and guessing for himself. He knows what east and west mean. He knows where Calcutta stands, and where is Bombay. Picture a sailor setting forth from Calcutta, in a boat and sailing on and on for months and years. At last after infinite struggle, but always going east, he arrives at Bombay. How is this explained? Even in the end it cannot be guessed if he has to give it up. The roundness of the world, after this work of the child's own mind upon the problem, will be realised and remembered. Until this has been gone through, he ought never to see a globe. The symbol, the picture, or the story ought always to come *as the reward* of effort made.

What will be the climate of this particular country, hot or cold? Why? The effects of seas, mountains, plain, desert, latitude can be worked out, in case after case, from a few simple principles, easily deduced from experience. There ought to be very little learning or memorising, and a vast amount of reasoning and impression-building throughout this education.

The most fruitful of all considerations in connection with this question of general distribution of areas, is that of the nature of the work imposed by place and the character of the community and civilisations that grow in them. To work out the fact that coast-lines produce fishers, and fishers become sailors, that fertile valleys make peasants, that mountain-sides or deserts make shephards, and to receive as reward for this some little knowledge of strange races or old civilisations and their history—this is to give a breadth to geographical ideas, that can never be forgotten.

IV. On coming to the fourth stage, that of a definite knowledge of given countries, beginning with his own, we shall find that the child's mind is not wholly a blank. The process that was begun with map of school-house and garden, has been going on silently, and ideas have been accumulating as to the relation of the places about him.

Here again, it must be the whole before the particular—India before Bengal, and yet the homeland first amongst the countries of the world. And the book must only come *at the end* of learning, in order to fix the impressions given. We must return upon sensation, and try to picture the whole country in a series of journeys. In the old days these journeys would have been made by river, to-day they are made by railway. But in any case the journey ought to be imagined, the cities passed, the mountains and lakes seen, the forests, flowers and climate

thought out, with the map before him. After the journey, after many journeys, the province may be described and pictured. Finally, the learning of the lists that books contain may be demanded. Geography ought now to be a passion. Instead of learning the facts being a difficulty, it will be a delight. The mind of the taught has made a beginning. It can be left to teach itself the rest.

THE TEACHING OF HISTORY

History is very much more difficult to reduce to concreteness than is geography. But on the other hand, it has the advantage of the child's natural passion for a story. We may be able to *play* tales of wars and migrations with bricks or with sticks, or what not; but on the whole we shall have to go to story-telling, and study the child's own methods there in order to deal with history.

We all know the earliest stories that please the child. The very first consists of such statements as that the cat mews, the dog barks, and these over and over again. This is far below the stage of history. Gradually the child comes to the period of grown-ups, and calls for story-telling proper. He listens for hours to tales of Krishna slaying demons, or Sita and Rama wandering in the forest, those wonderful fairy-stories that only the Indian child possesses.

This is the time when a few historical ideas begin to make their appearance. Amongst all the stories will be one or two names and tales taken from the country's narrative. The child begins to have friends and favourites amongst the great men and women of the past. This is the point at which history proper begins, and the teaching of it in the school.

I. The first point that we have to realise is that a very young mind cannot sustain a complicated story. The stories by which we at first build up the idea of history are such in name only, they are in fact word-pictures. We have always to go back to sensation, always to strike again the note of colour, form, movement, costume, act, word. The things seen must be brief, striking, clearly-defined, strongly-grouped. And there must at this stage be no subtle idea to bind the parts together. All must be simple, forceful, primitive and clear in motive as well as outline.

It is true, in many senses, that the history of India has never yet been written. And here is one of them, that it has never yet been reduced to a series of concrete moments. This needs doing. It can only be done by one who studies Indian history with the *heart*. Mere head-knowledge will not do. All history centres in a succession of vivid moments. We must be made to witness those moments. Having done so, the root of the matter is in us. Indian history is as capable as any other of such treatment. We know that Asoka sent out decrees to be carved on rocks and pillars, for these exist to the present day. Would it be difficult to think out the scene itself, the despatching of the orders, the carving of the message?

A second point about these word-pictures is that they need not be told in their historic order. The child will create order, later, amongst his own impressions. In the young mind there is no order, no correlation. One of the greatest of mental delights is to feel the growth of this. A child I know was given a flower to model. It carefully pulled the flower to pieces, and modelled each separate part separately, enclosed the whole in a match-box and handed it in, with perfect self-satisfaction as a model of the flower. There was here no perception of connection or co-ordination. The same applies to our ideas of history. We must first acquire a quantity of impressions, and then afterwards see the sequences spring up amongst them. This perception of sequence and and succession is the true development of the historical sense. Our notion of time is derived from our idea of things that have happened in the course of time.

So we must make word-pictures, and we must give them in anything but their true order, only taking care to make them vivid and distinct. Buddha leading the goats up to Rajgir and pleading for their lives may be the history-lesson one day, and the very next may be Humayun breaking the musk-bag at the news of the birth of Akbar. Or we may picture the arrival of the Chinese pilgrim, Hiouen-Tsang, at a Buddhist monastery, say Nalanda or Ajanta, one day, and the next day we may go back to Skanda Gupta and his victory of the Huns. History that is not seen as pictures is not history at all to the childish mind, and is better not attempted.

II. The next stage of history groups itself, not round vivid movements but round favourite characters. This is *social history*. Word-pictures of all old cities and the life lived in them, of old *âshramas* or universities, of pilgrimages, of wars, all these have to be attached to personalities, to great men and women, and the idea, not of their lives at first, but of their personalities. We like them. We like to be with them. Beautiful things happen round them. This should be the feeling of the child. Here the teacher has most to discover what new meaning we begin to find out in old books when we search them for this kind of knowledge. In these early stages of history, the teacher should remember that the bent she gives the children's sympathies will stay with them probably for life. Therefore one should be careful to base one's feeling, and one's praise and blame, on the strong and simple outlines of right and wrong, leaving the judgment free as far as possible for later formation of personal opinion.

III. Again, there is the question of the *expression* of its knowledge by the child. When these two stages are past, we shall find that we have built up two kinds of elements in the mind of the taught, which together make the historical imagination. We have built up the idea of events, and the idea of persons.

We are now ready for the swing and drift of history. Behind them we shall be ready to see the significance of persons and moments. We can watch the Rajput giving place to the Musalman; or the Buddhist monasteries emptying in Gandhara; or the life and labours of Asoka or of Sankaracharya or of Aurangzebe; or the Mahratta overturning the Mogul; or the French struggling with the English in the South. And here the well-taught student will show his quality by startling us with wonderful questions. Encourage him to find out his own answers,—for original questions and original answers make works of genius.

Not until we are thus prepared, ought we to be asked to face the learning of dreary facts and talk about facts that are now so apt to be called history. Only the lover of India can write the history of India. Only the lover of India can teach the history of India.

India is the music of the song, the theme of her own drama. Throughout our teaching we have it in our own hands to determine the thirst that shall reverberate with their country's name through our children's lives. We have it in our power to create those elementary associations that shall forbid them to think other than that.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

This last issue of the year begins with *Christianity in India* by SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. It is a rather imperfect report of a lecture delivered by the Swami at Detroit (U.S.A.) in March, 1894. This is published in *Prabuddha Bharata* for the first time and is not included in *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*. . . . Next follow two *Unpublished Letters of Swami Vivekananda*

which are extremely interesting. The second letter has reference to certain remarks in his famous speech in Madras, *My Plan of Campaign*. . . . *Discourses by Swami Premananda* is taken from the diary of a disciple. . . . S. RADHAKRISHNAN who contributes *Philosophy and the Life-values* to this issue, needs little introduction to our readers. He occupies the King George V Chair of Philosophy in the Calcutta University and is the author of several well-known works, such as *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, *The Hindu View of Life*, *Indian Philosophy*, 2 volumes, *Kalki*, etc. He enjoys international reputation as a thinker, writer and speaker. He delivered the Upton Lectures at Oxford in 1927 and the Hibbert Lectures (for 1929) at Manchester and London in the beginning of this year, and has shortly returned from England after having occupied the chair of Comparative Religion in the Manchester College, Oxford, for some time. The professor, who is well-versed in the Eastern and Western lore, can certainly speak with authority on the comparative values of the two civilisations. . . . We are glad to be able to publish *The Mexican Analogy* by K. B. MADHAVA, M.A., A.I.A. (LONDON), and hope it will move interesting and instructive to Indian readers. Mr. Madhava is a brilliant professor of the Mysore University in which he occupies the chair of Statistical Economics. He is an Associate of the Institute of Actuaries, London, and has many thoughtful works to his credit. . . . *Karma Yoga of the Gita* is a thoughtful study by PRAKASH CHANDRA SINHA ROY, B.A., NYAYAVAGISHA who is a retired Government official and the author of, among other works, a treatise on logic and an essay on the *Gitâ*. . . . We have no doubt our readers will appreciate the *Hints on Practical Education* by SISTER NIVEDITA, which we include in this number. The Sister was an expert in the theory and practice of education, as our readers may know. The present article forms part of a work on education by the Sister, which is still unpublished. . . . . We regret we have to omit *Ashtavakra Samhita* by SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA from the present issue. The chapter to be next published is a very long one and we want it to be begun in the first number of the next year for the convenience of new subscribers.

ANECDOTES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

We present our readers with a few anecdotes of Swami Vivekananda, which we think are hitherto unknown.

Here is an incident which tells of the large heart of Swami Vivekananda. When Swamiji was about to return from England for the first time, his friends in London were raising by subscription some money to present him as a purse. When the collection was going on, some one handed over a petition to him for helping a batch of poor and homeless persons. As soon as he got the petition in his hand, Swamiji gave away the whole amount of the collection to the man. When he was asked by one of his friends why he did so, Swamiji replied: "These men are suffering for want of shelter. What is my money good for, if not for helping these people?"

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Mr. Alan Leo wrote:

"I met Swami Vivekananda many times in London in 1895, also at the house of Mr. E. T. Sturdy with whom he was staying in Berkshire, and whenever I asked him for his birth-hour, he invariably said he had forgotten when he was born, and on one occasion when pressed, he smilingly replied: 'My dear Mr. Leo, I have taken a through ticket, and have forgotten I was ever born.' "

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One Mr. Athwale happened to go to America just about the time the Swami Vivekananda had got a firm footing in New York. As he had gone there without any introduction, learning that the Swami had made a name for himself

and had secured a circle of influential followers and friends, he naturally went to seek his assistance. Athwale met him in the afternoon when he was sitting in the midst of a large number of ladies and gentlemen. As soon as the Swami saw his friendless countryman before him, he treated the latter as an old friend. He asked the visitor if he knew Hindustani. On receiving an affirmative answer, a cordial talk ensued, in course of which sound advice was given. At the end of the conversation, the Swami asked Athwale to remember two things which would ensure him success. "Avoid," said he, "the temptation of woman. And whether you are able or not, show that you can spend money freely and you will succeed." With this advice, he introduced the enterprising Indian to an influential lady friend of him, who at last managed to get him an entrance into one of the greatest factories in America.

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The Reporter to *The Rutherford American* wrote in conclusion, after hearing Swamiji's lecture on "Indian Religious Thought," as follows :

"As my companion and I wended our way homeward, the vast vault of the blue sky was studded with stars, and the blessed fragrance of Christmas still lingered in the streets of the great city. We thought of the old and beautiful legend of the Eastern Magi who followed the star which led them, with their homage of Frankincense and Myrrh, to the Babe lying in the manger of Bethlehem. And we wondered if this Oriental wanderer was not one of the same high caste, who nineteen hundred years later had come to our Western Continent to throw light upon the inner meaning of that pure gospel, which that noble soul had preached and illustrated."

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Thus said Swami Turiyananda about Swamiji :

"Sri Ramakrishna used to say of him that he was truthful,—a naked, unsheathed sword. As regards his food he said : 'He is like a blazing fire; whatever is thrown in, would be consumed.' On our first meeting, Sri Ramakrishna introduced us to each other. At the very first sight I felt that he was a great hero, but also somewhat proud. He had a strong tendency to argue. He did not easily accept what Sri Ramakrishna said. On our way home we had a talk. Swamiji said : 'The more far-sighted a man, the more intelligent we consider him. . . . Because we are not having nectar, why should we eat dirt? Why should we live in the world because we are not having God?' When I asked him about Sri Ramakrishna, he said : 'If you ask me, I say he is L—O—V—E personified.' . . Evidently he was conscious of his powers. At the Baranagore Math, there would often be talks about preaching. He said : 'Every one preaches. What others do unconsciously, I shall do consciously. If you obstruct me, I shall go to the pariah villages and there preach. Preaching means expression. You think that Trailinga Swami is silent. No, his silence itself is preaching. Plants and trees also preach.' "

VICARIOUS ATONEMENT

It may legitimately be said that we know little of the details of the lives of great sages and prophets. The accounts that are available are more or less mere outlines. The Hindu saints and prophets are no exception. Yet these details are often specially helpful. The life of Sri Ramakrishna, lived so near to us, reveals thus great many truths which otherwise would have been hidden. This is no place to estimate the help that we have received from him in this respect. We shall mention here only one point. We have been always familiar with the idea that spiritual men, if they like, can take away our *Karmas* and free us from their bondage. But where was the proof? Could this actually take place? Common sense would tell us that it was impossible. The life of Sri Rama-

krishna, however, gives us clear evidence of its possibility. There were cases in his life, in which he suffered for others and made them free. He himself repeatedly declared that his last illness was due to taking the sins of others on himself. Now we can believe in its possibility, though we may not explain how it is done.

An American gentleman once wrote us that though Christ also cured diseases, raised the dead and did other such miracles, he is never said to have suffered in consequence,—how do we explain the difference?—Sri Ramakrishna suffered, but Christ did not. Our reply to this is that we know very little of the actual details of Christ's life. How do we know that he did not suffer? One point we have to remember in this connection. The word "suffering" as applied to persons like Sri Ramakrishna, bears a different connotation. When *we* suffer, our self-consciousness is overwhelmed by the pangs of suffering. But when *they* suffer, it is only the body and the surface mind that are affected; their self-consciousness remains unaffected. When a Sri Ramakrishna's body becomes diseased, it does not indicate that the *Karmas* of others have overwhelmed *him*. The correspondent referred to above says that Christ possessed the full mastery over Nature and was, therefore, not liable to suffering even when he cured disease or raised the dead. The point is not whether one has mastery over Nature or not. The point is, whether the laws of *Karma* should have sway or not. Even in Christ's life we find the recognition of the law of *Karma*. It is this which explains the need of Christ's vicarious atonement. God wanted that some one must suffer for man's sin. Sin must pay its penalty. There was no escape from this. Therefore Christ came forward and atoned on behalf of mankind. The law of *Karma* is completely justified in vicarious atonement. We do not call Sri Ramakrishna's suffering for others' *Karma* as vicarious atonement, for the phrase has a special theological significance. We would only point out that Sri Ramakrishna recognised that if there were *Karmas*, these must have their way.

Now this idea that another may suffer for one's *Karma*, is a very deep-seated one among the Hindus. Even ordinary villagers believe that highly spiritual persons can relieve people of their evil *Karmas* and take them upon themselves. They often approach *Sâdhus* and *Sannyâsins* for such relief. They also believe that spiritual persons can change the course of man's *Karmas*. As a result we have the *Guru-vâda*,—the idea that if a spiritual person accepts one as a disciple, he not only gives him spiritual instruction, but takes away all obstructing *Karmas* from the disciple's mind, so that the disciple has not to suffer for his sins and has an unimpeded spiritual progress. It is believed that the *Karmas* will be suffered by the *Guru* himself,—for no *Karma* can go without having an effect. The belief that by touching a holy person one can get rid of one's sins, is also very common. Not that such beliefs are always justified. Not all spiritual persons have such redeeming power. But some surely have, and hence the prevalent belief.

Nor is this a mere popular belief. There are references in Hindu books, testifying to the truth of this belief. We shall here mention some of them.

(1) The *Kaushitaki Upanishad*: "He gives up both good and evil *Karmas*. His dear relations get the good and the enemies the evil *Karmas*." (1. 4)

[The theory is that even a man of God-realisation has his good and evil *Karmas*. These are called *prârabdha karmas*, which were acquired in previous lives, and as a result of which he had to be born on earth. When a man realises the highest Truth, all his other *Karmas* are destroyed, but these *prârabdha karmas* remain with him, though they cannot bind him anyway. This reference shows that one's *Karma* can be inherited by another.]

(2) We have in the *Mahâbhârata, Adi Parva,* Chapter 84, the story of a king named Yayâti who became old and yet wanted to have more sense-enjoyment. Puru, his son, took his old age on himself and gave him back his youth.

[Here also the possibility of taking another's conditions on oneself is recognised.]

(3) In the *Mahâbhârata, Shânti Parva,* Chapter 281, the following story occurs: By killing a demon called Vritra, Indra incurred sin. To get rid of this sin, he went to Brahmâ. Brahmâ sent for several other gods, and having divided Indra's sin into several portions, asked them to take a portion each. They accepted them and thus Indra was set free.

(4) The *Manu-Samhitâ*: "The man of realisation, having given his good *Karmas* to his dear ones and his evil *Karmas* to his enemies, attains the eternal *Brahman* through meditation." (6. 79)

[See reference No. 1.]

(5) Buddha said: "May all sins and sufferings of the world come to me, and may all the world be happy!"

[Here also the possibility of taking others' *Karmas* is recognised.]

(6) The *Kulârnava Tantra*: "Often the sin committed by the disciple, entails on the *Guru.*"

(7) An incident in the life of Sri Chaitanya: It was in the fifteenth century A.D. It is mentioned in *Sri Chaitanya Bhâgavata, Madhya Khanda,* Chapter 13, that Sri Chaitanya said to two arch sinners, Jagâi and Mâdhâi: 'I am responsible for all the sins that you have committed in your past millions of lives, if you do not commit any more sin. . . . I have taken all your sins. Just see with your own eyes.' In order to prove to them that they had indeed been freed from their sins, he became dark-coloured. And he said to others: 'Do you no longer consider them sinners. I have taken their sins on myself.'

REVIEW

THE MYSTERIES OF THE BIBLE. *By Sital Chandra Chakravarty, M.A., Vidyanidhi. 43 pp. Price as. 8.*

This booklet is intended to throw light on some principal doctrines of the Bible such as (1) The origin of the serpent-idea, (2) The forbidden tree, (3) The temptation, (4) The fall from heaven,—the original sin, (5) Crucifixion, Resurrection, Holy Ghost. Mr. Chakravarty has brought his studies to bear upon the fact that these Biblical notions have been borrowed from the Hindus.

The serpent-idea: "The Vedic Ahi (Vritra the veritable prototype of Satan) passed almost unaltered into the Iranian Avesta, where it became known with the descriptive epithet 'dahak' as 'Azidahaka' which is equivalent to Sanskrit 'Ahi dahaka'. Ahi reappears in the Greek Echis, Echidna."

The temptation: Adam and Eve are taken from the passive Purusha and the active Prakriti of the Samkhya Philosophy, and the serpent signifies the Samkhya Tamas. The Vedic picture of two birds gradually changed into the Samkhya-picture of Purusha and Prakriti.

The fall from heaven—the original sin: "The Samkhya parallelism to the Bible would be more vividly brought out, if we should understand Adam standing for Sattva, Eve for Rajas and the Serpent for Tamas. Then Tamas or Evil with the help of Rajas or motive power would overcome Sattva or goodness and thus the degeneracy of the world would set in. The preponderance of Tamas ingrained in the very constitution of the universe is the original sin."

The crucifixion—Resurrection—Holy Ghost: By crucifixion Christ is said to have purged the earth of the original sin. It is just the idea of Shiva swallowing poison for the good of the world. Shiva conquered death (Mrityunjaya). So Christ too reappeared after his death all triumphant. His spirit was undying and holy.

Creation of Eve: Eve was drawn out of Adam and the same took place in his deep sleep. The deep sleep of Adam finds corroboration in the sleep of Narayana (Purushottama) from which he is roused being actuated by the desire of creation. Prakriti, the counterpart of Eve, stands for

this desire which is inside and not outside Purusha.

We observe certain inconsistencies in these remarks of the author. In the Svetaswatara Upanishad two birds stand for the doer and the spectator, the Jiva and Atman in one and the same being. Jiva is not Prakriti alone, it is rather a mystical mixture of both Purusha and Prakriti. Moreover, Tamas is a part of Prakriti, while Satan is not a part of Eve. Again Adam, Eve and Satan stand for Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. How is it that Adam is Purusha at one place and Sattva, *i.e.*, Prakriti in the other? The fall corresponds more to the Vaishnava conception of Jivatma being subject to the force of Maya (ignorance), a free soul becoming bound. Purusha does not suffer for the cosmic evolution of Prakriti and Prakriti does not constitute the whole of man. Finally Adam is Purushottama and Eve is his desire for creation. Has Purusha according to Samkhya any desire? If so, is Prakriti the desire of Purusha?

However the author opens a discussion which is original and thought-provoking. His suggestions may help some researches along this line. The Vedas of the Indians, the Avesta of the Persians and the Genesis of the Jews have got many traditions in common and they bear family likeness, and undoubtedly the Vedas come first in order of time. Yet in the absence of any direct evidence, it is difficult to prove whether one race borrows its ideas from the other. For according to the Psychological theory, as against the Historical one, every race-mind evolves similar ideas at certain stages, a little modified by environments. It cannot be denied that at a ripe stage, when ideas are imported from outside, they receive ready acceptance and find a permanent place in the records of the race.

INDIAN IDEALS. *By Annie Besant, D. L. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 138 pp. Price Re. 1/- (board), Re. 1/8/-* (cloth).

The book contains the Kamala Lectures for 1924-25 delivered by the author at the Calcutta University on Indian ideals in (1) Education, (2) Religion and Philosophy and (3) Art. It is an interesting study of Indian spirit, its glorious manifestation in the past and the part it is destined to play in near future. The author's interpretation of Indian thought and life is considerably coloured by her Theosophical views. The book is nicely printed. The get-up is also good.

NEWS AND REPORTS

R. K. MISSION, BARISAL

The report for the years 1928 and 1929 is to hand, giving a nice record of work done.

There were weekly classes on the *Gitâ*; 140 sittings in all were held to expound the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda and other great teachers; there were birthday celebrations of these two great teachers with lectures and feeding of the poor. The Mission has a library and it helps other educational institutions by monthly grants. It maintains a students' home where 16 students lived in 1929. The home is making fine progress.

199 persons were given temporary help; 46 patients were picked up and carried to local hospitals, 20 patients were treated with medicine and diet, and 76 patients were nursed in their own homes. The Mission also did valuable service during small-pox and cholera epidemics in several parts of the district.

The work of the centre is growing apace. It wants at least Rs. 20,000 for the construction of a house for the accommodation of the students' home, Mission office, library, an outdoor dispensary, and a technical department.

All contributions may be sent to the *President, R. K. Mission, Barisal, Bengal.*

R. K. ASHRAMA, RAJKOT, KATHIAWAR

The report of the above institution from March, 1928, to February, 1930, giving a fine record of work, is to hand. The Ashrama which is the only one of the R. K. Order in Kathiawar, completed its third year of existence in 1930.

Regular discourses on the Upanishads and the works of Swami Vivekananda were held several times a week in the Ashrama; a series of class talks were given to High School students; there were 21 public lectures, celebrations of birthdays of Prophets; a free library and reading room

were maintained in the Ashrama ; several publications were brought to disseminate religious teaching ; and *Bhajanas* were held twice a fortnight, which were highly appreciated by people. The Ashrama also helped poor students and others.

The needs of the Ashrama are: (1) a building for its accommodation, estimated at Rs. 30,000 ; (2) help for the maintenance of *Sâdhus* and workers ; (3) books for the library ; and (4) help for a students' home.

PREMANANDA LANTERN LECTURES

The Ramakrishna Seva-Samiti Sangha which has been carrying on an educational propaganda in the villages of Vikrampore,—a well-known section of the Dacca district—has associated its lantern lectures with the hallowed name of Swami Premananda, a disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, who had visited Vikrampore three times. In course of five months 20 lectures were delivered in 11 villages. An appeal has now been sent out by the headmasters of several high schools for funds for the help of the Sangha. We also join with them in their appeal and hope the public will do generous help to the Sangha in its noble work of welfare.

All contributions may be sent to *Secretary, R. K. Seva-Samiti Sangha, P.O., Kalma, Dacca, Bengal.*

R. K. ASHRAMA, ASANSOL

It is with great pleasure that we went through the report of the above institution for the years 1927 to 1929. The Ashrama maintained an Orphanage with 4 orphans, an L. P. School with 50 pupils against 15 in the beginning, a Night School with 40 students from the depressed classes, a Library and a Charitable Dispensary ; carried on Social and Philanthropic works, such as, cremating the dead, giving occasional pecuniary help to needy persons, coming to the rescue of stranded or destitute boys or girls, and doing relief in times of fire and flood. It also arranged to bring some Sannâyasins of the Belur Math who delivered lectures and held discourses on various occasions. The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna were duly observed and on each occasion the *Daridra-Nârâyanas* were sumptuously fed.

The Ashrama is badly in need of a Shrine room and a well in its own premises. It is sincerely hoped that these wants will be removed before long by the generous gentlemen of the locality.

It is also proposed to open an artisan school for the labouring class. But the resources at the disposal of the Ashrama are not sufficient to meet the expenses. It, therefore, appeals to the generous public to help the cause. Contributions, however small, will be thankfully accepted and acknowledged by the *President* or *Secretary, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Asansol, E. I. Ry.*

R. K. SEVASHRAMA, CHITTAGONG

The report of the above institution for the year 1929-30, gives a humble but useful record of work done. The members of the Sevashrama nursed patients in their own houses, attended some small-pox and cholera patients, cremated dead bodies, picked up helpless patients and sent them to the hospital, gave temporary relief in the shape of money and rice to some helpless and invalid persons, collected and distributed some warm clothings to the poor people, picked up an old helpless invalid woman and attended her in the Sevashrama, gave Homœopathic medicines to the outdoor patients, and did relief work on the occasion of the *Siva-Chaturdashi-Melâ.* Towards spreading true education the institution conducted a Primary School for girls with facilities for religious and technical training, and also for Sanskrit study for the elderly girls, arranged for imparting religious, technical, and hygienic instructions among the women, conducted a students' home and a library. It also organised several centres in villages for religious and physical culture, celebrated the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, as well as the *Durgâ-pujâ* and the *Jagaddhâtri-pujâ,* and held weekly discourses with *Kirtana.*

The Ashrama stands in need of purchasing the land in which it stands and of constructing the necessary houses, which will cost at least Rs. 4,000, and hopes its appeal in the cause of the noble work will be generously responded to.