

Prabuddha Bharata

OR AWAKENED INDIA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

VOL. XXXVI

JANUARY—DECEMBER, 1931

Editorial Office :
MAYAVATI, ALMORA, HIMALAYAS

Publication Office :
4, WELLINGTON LANE, CALCUTTA

Subscription: Inland Rs. 4
Foreign 3\$ or 11sh.

Inland: Single Copy
Annas Seven.

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PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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JANUARY, 1931

No. 1



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY SISTER CHRISTINE

Now and then, at long intervals of time, a being finds his way to this planet who is unquestionably a wanderer from another sphere; who brings with him to this sorrowful world some of the glory, the power, the radiance of the far distant region from which he came. He walks among men but he is not at home here. He is a pilgrim, a stranger, he tarries but a night.

He shares the life of those about him, enters into their joys and sorrows, rejoices with them, mourns with them but through it all, he never forgets who he is, whence he came, or what the purpose of his coming. He never forgets his divinity. He remembers that he is the great, the glorious, the majestic Self. He knows that he came from that ineffable, supernal region which has no need of the sun or moon for it is illumined by the Light of Lights. He knows that he *was*, long before the time when—“all the sons of God sang together for joy.”

Such an one, I have seen, I have heard, I have revered. At his feet I have laid my soul's devotion.

Such a being is beyond all comparison, for he transcends all ordinary standards and ideals. Others may be brilliant, his mind is luminous, for he had the power to put himself into immediate contact with the source of all knowledge. He is no longer limited to the slow processes to which ordinary human beings are confined. Others may be great, they are great only as compared with those in their own class. Others may be good, powerful, gifted, having more of goodness, more of power, more of genius than their fellowmen. It is only a matter of comparison. A saint is more holy, more pure, more single-minded than ordinary men. But with Swami Vivekananda, there could be no comparison. He was in a class by himself. He belonged to another order. He was not of this world. He was a radiant being who had descended from another,

from a higher sphere for a definite purpose. One might have known that he would not stay long.

Is it to be wondered at that nature itself rejoices in such a birth, that the heavens open and angels sing paeans of praise?

Blessed is the country in which he was born, blessed are they who lived on this earth at the same time, and blessed thrice blessed are the few who sat at his feet.

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH SEVIER

The news of the passing away of Mrs. Charlotte Elizabeth Sevier in London on the 20th of October last, just two days after her eighty-third birthday, will cast a deep gloom on all who had the good fortune to know her. She was one of those blessed souls who dedicated themselves to the furtherance of the cause of India and Vedanta. The turning point in her life was the meeting with Swami Vivekananda, which came about in London in the spring of 1896, when the Swami in the course of his second visit to England was delivering the famous lectures on Jnana-Yoga. She and her husband Captain J. H. Sevier, a non-commissioned officer in the British army, attended those lectures and were at once struck by the remarkable quality of the utterances. They had been earnest seekers after truth, but the hunger of their soul was not appeased by what they received from the churches. There was too much of doctrines and dogmas and too little of life, they thought. But when they met Swami Vivekananda they immediately felt that here was the man they had been searching for so long. The idea was deeply imprinted on their mind that the pursuit of the Advaita (Monistic) philosophy, without any compromise with dualism and its rituals, was alone sufficient to lead to the highest goal. Says Miss Josephine MacLeod: "Coming out of one of the Swami's lectures Mr. Sevier asked me,

'You know this young man? Is he what he seems?' 'Yes'. 'In that case one must follow him, and with him find God.' He went and said to his wife, 'Will you let me become the Swami's disciple?' She replied, 'Yes'. She asked him, 'Will you let me become the Swami's disciple?' He replied with affectionate humour, 'I don't know. . . .' As they associated with Swami Vivekananda they came to know more and more of his wonderful personality and within a very short time made him their spiritual guide, placing themselves and their resources unreservedly at his service. The Swami, with the unerring vision of a seer, knew their hearts and accepted them as his disciples.

At the end of his strenuous summer work the Swami badly needed rest, and the Seviers arranged a six weeks' trip for him to Switzerland, themselves accompanying him and bearing the expenses of the journey. It was there that the Swami, amid Alpine scenery, told them of his desire to found a monastery in the Himalayas for the training of students and preachers of Advaita. The idea appealed to them, and their whole life henceforth was devoted to the fulfilment of it. In the winter of that year the Swami left for India, through historic Italy, and the Seviers accompanied him. They landed at Colombo on the 15th of January, 1897.

The unique ovation that greeted the Swami on his return to his motherland after four years of indefatigable work in the West is well-known. Wherever he went he was received with unprecedented enthusiasm. The Seviers accompanied him in most of these trips, and often bore the entire expenses of these journeys for the Swami and his whole party. The Swami was careful not to tax them overmuch, but they would volunteer to shoulder all expenses.

In the course of their travels the Seviers came to Almora in April, 1899, where they were shortly joined by the Swami. The question of choosing a suitable site for the proposed Himalayan centre was uppermost in their minds. The *Prabuddha Bharata*, which had been started two years ago in Madras under the inspiration of Swami Vivekananda, had, on the death of its gifted editor, Mr. Rajam Iyer, just ceased publication. The Swami told them that here was an opportunity for a great work—the kind of work that they contemplated doing. Accordingly the Seviers undertook to revive the journal, and at a rented house a Press was set up. Swami Swarupananda, one of the most brilliant disciples of the Swami, became the editor of the paper and Captain Sevier its manager.

The Seviers wanted the proposed Advaita centre to be as secluded as possible, and Almora, which is a district headquarters, was not quiet enough for it. So the search was carried on, and an isolated tea plantation, 50 miles east of Almora and 6,800 ft. above the sea level, was chosen. The place is one of the beauty spots of the world, commanding a magnificent view of the Snow Range extending for some 300 miles, and cut off from the outside world by a wall of imposing forests on three sides. There was (and still is) no

habitation within a mile and a half, and the nearest railway station, at that time, was 60 miles off, about four days' journey on horseback. Here then was a retreat after their heart. The property was purchased, the preliminary additions and alterations to the buildings were made, and in March, 1899, the Advaita Ashrama was started and the *Prabuddha Bharata* office with the Press removed to Mayavati, as they rechristened the place.

The pioneer's lot is always a hard one. The sturdy band of monks, with Swami Swarupananda at their head, cheerfully underwent the hardships and privations to make the place a centre of work as well as contemplation. The Seviers, leading a life of Brahmacharya (continence), shared these in full. They attended the scriptural classes conducted by Swami Swarupananda. The Captain in his manager's work was sometimes worried over the accounts, when Mrs. Sevier would tactfully extricate him from his difficulties by paying up the little discrepancies! She had the mortification of losing her husband in October, 1900, while Swami Vivekananda was in the West for the second time. His body was cremated in the Hindu fashion, with Vedic hymns chanted and everything. The Swami returned to India in December, and to console Mrs. Sevier he, in spite of his indifferent health, hastened to Mayavati and spent three weeks amid the winter snow. He was vexed to see the worship of Sri Ramakrishna going on at the Ashrama, which he had intended to be reserved for "Advaita and Advaita alone," and sharply reprimanded Swami Swarupananda.

The great Swami passed away in 1902 at the early age of 39. One can imagine Mrs. Sevier's grief over this bereavement. But she patiently bore it all. When in 1903 Mrs. Sevier exe-

cuted a Trust Deed for the Mayavati Ashrama, she in deference to her Master's wishes, made a distinct stipulation in it that no ritual except the Viraja Homa—the ceremony for the vow of renunciation of the world—should be performed on the Mayavati estate.

With the exception of two visits to England in 1901 and 1908, Mrs. Sevier lived mostly at Mayavati, paying occasional visits to Calcutta, Benares and other places, where she had the companionship of Western fellow disciples also working in India for her uplift or on a visit to this country.

Swami Vivekananda held Mrs. Sevier in special esteem, and from the very first interview she had with him, he addressed her as mother. That was the name by which she was known in the Ramakrishna Order. Captain Sevier was called Pitaji (Father). Mrs. Sevier also referred to him by this name. Since the death of the Captain Swami Swarupananda took special care of Mrs. Sevier. So it was another tremendous blow to Mother when the Swami suddenly died of pneumonia in the year 1906. Swami Saradananda, the then Secretary of the Order, went to Mayavati to comfort her. Swami Virajananda, the second President of the Mayavati Ashrama, was as devoted in his services to Mother as Swami Swarupananda, and her life at Mayavati, as also at Shyamla Tal, another lovely retreat in the Himalayas which she helped to found in 1914, was made happy in all ways. She finally left India for considerations of health in March, 1916.

In England she led a very strenuous life, as she had to look after her sister who needed her help. It was War time, and she had to do much hard work, which had its inevitable effect on her health. Nevertheless she kept herself in close touch with the Ashramas

and the movement that were so dear to her, sending regular contributions for the maintenance of the Mayavati Ashrama (the other Ashrama she had endowed), until recently, when failing eye-sight and persistent heart troubles made communication with the outside world impossible for her. In her letters she signed herself "Old Mother."

Her life at Mayavati was a unique one. It was a life of consecration and service. She combined in her life the best of Eastern and Western nunhood. She was an out and out Advaitin (Monist)—as she signed herself in her articles—and not only believed in it as a creed, but also translated it into practice. She was intensely active, and wished the Ashrama members also to be so. Despite her comparatively frail body she was seen engaged in something or other. Her cheerful countenance was an index to the serenity of her mind. Her very presence was a continual benediction.

The Mayavati Ashrama, in her early days, had three buildings situated at different heights. The topmost one was the Ashrama proper, a double-storeyed building where the monastic inmates lived and worked. Each had a cubicle to himself on the upper storey and downstairs on one side was the sitting room with a large fire-place, and the Press and the book-binding department on the other. The sitting room also served as the *Prabuddha Bharata* office and as the dining room. Of the other two buildings, the upper one, being sunnier, was Mother's winter residence. It was also the guest-house in summer. Many distinguished guests, both Western and Indian, monastic and lay, availed themselves of Mother's invitation. Dr. and Mrs. J. C. Bose (now Sir Jagadish and Lady Bose), the late Sister Nivedita and Sister Christine, the late Mr. Ananda Mohan Bose and

the late Mr. C. R. Das with family were among the number. The lower building, a bungalow, was Mother's summer residence. For safety's sake it was arranged that she should sleep at night in the Ashrama building, where she occupied a corner room on the upper storey fitted with a bath. Subsequently two more buildings were added, one the *Prabuddha Bharata* office, and the other the Mayavati Charitable Dispensary.

At the Ashrama she dressed herself in the Indian Saree, but when going out visiting—as she did occasionally—she put on her English dress. She got up quite early, and after meditation left her room at daybreak for her bungalow. With the help of a servant she attended to her household duties, keeping the whole place spotlessly clean, cooked something for herself, while some of the things cooked at the Ashrama were sent down to her at noon. Everyday one of the Ashrama inmates was invited by turn to her afternoon tea, after which she came up to the Ashrama for joining in the game of croquet. Latterly, owing to her heart condition she had to be helped in making the ascents. In the intervals of household work she assisted in the editing of the Complete Works, or the Life, of Swami Vivekananda, or in reading proofs of these or the *Prabuddha Bharata*, while sometimes she contributed articles to this magazine. Two little brochures, *A Breath from the Himalayas* and *In the Land of the Mummies*, were subsequently published out of these articles. She wrote a delightful style. The evening at the Ashrama was devoted to meditation, after which there was supper in which Mother joined. Before retiring to her room she would read out to the Ashrama members, by the fire-side, interesting portions from books or

periodicals. She was a charming conversationalist.

She was sweetness and love personified. All who came in contact with her testify to this. The poor rustic folk of the neighbouring villages as well as old Ashrama servants speak of her as “a goddess.” It was a fitting tribute to her kindness and active sympathy for all. She would present them with some fruits of the orchard, or some vegetables from the kitchen garden—in which she herself worked—and in cases of need give them substantial pecuniary help. This last she would manage in secret if there was opposition. She would prescribe simple medicines for the sick poor—an office which was afterwards taken over by the Charitable Dispensary which she helped to start. This Dispensary with its Indoor Ward is now a great boon to thousands of village people for many miles around.

Even animals had a share in her love. The Ashrama cattle would run to her and form a ring around her as soon as they heard her familiar voice, and she would talk to them as if they were human beings. The pony Mongal got also his due. Not even the goats were forgotten. She would keep vegetable peelings for these dumb creatures and distribute them among all. Her special favourite was Glama, a plain looking Bhotia dog, whose death later on visibly moved her. She remembered the animals in her letters from England, and every letter mentioned “pats to Glama!”

Her kindness to the Ashrama inmates was exceedingly great. Many a time she helped them through their difficulties with motherly advice and guidance. Such also was her attitude to other monastic members of the Order who were guests of the Ashrama. Mayavati being on one of the principal

routes to Manasarovar and Mt. Kailas, the Ashrama has always drawn some of them. She would look to their comforts during their stay, and saw to it that they were provided with the necessities of their journey when they left. It was a habit with her. Swami Suddhananda, the present Secretary of the Ramakrishna Order, relates the following anecdote pertaining to the Almora days: "One afternoon I went to visit the Seviers when it was tea time. I was rather shy with them. Mrs. Sevier eagerly pressed me to join them at tea, and coming to know that I was unaccustomed to the use of knife and fork earnestly requested me to use my fingers, and after the tea gave me a towel to wipe my hands." Again, speaking of his first visit to Mayavati, he says: "I had my turn at the afternoon tea twice. As far as I remember she prepared *blanc mange* for us, and expressed regret that she could not in that jungle feed me with the delicacies of Calcutta." Every year she made Christmas presents to the Ashrama inmates and servants, and this tender practice was continued even while she was in England.

She had deep veneration for Sri Ramakrishna. One day she was asked how, as an Advaitin, she looked upon him. Without a moment's hesitation she said, "Of all the perfect men that have appeared on earth I consider him the greatest." No wonder that she contributed a large sum towards the construction of the Belur Math, the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Order. Well might Swami Vivekananda write of the Seviers, "Mrs. Sevier is a jewel of a lady, so good, so kind. The Seviers are the *only* English people who do not hate the natives, Mr. and Mrs. Sevier are the only persons who *did not come* to patronise."

The following lines from Swami Suddhananda neatly sum up her character: "From the little opportunity I had of associating with Mother I noticed in her a boundless devotion to Swami Vivekananda and a profound sympathy for every kind of work inaugurated by him. Particularly she was enthusiastic about the preaching of Advaita Philosophy. In spite of her age she took great pains to regulate her life according to its principles, and practised rigorous self-discipline, austerity and self-sacrifice for its sake. She spent money unstintedly for the cause of Swami Vivekananda, specially for the preaching of Advaita, and gave herself up heart and soul to it. She had no issue; so her maternal instincts naturally flowed in abundance towards the disciples and admirers of Swami Vivekananda and towards all those who had associated with him. Such an example of complete transformation at the Swami's touch is rare."

The qualities of head and heart were equally well developed in her. She was exceptionally intelligent and could size up a man at a glance. Her opinion on contemporary events was always sound. The day the mails brought her news of the outbreak of the Great War she gravely remarked that it was the beginning of a world-wide conflagration. She exactly predicted which side each of the great powers would take and which side would win. She was capable of deep emotions, but she always kept them under restraint. She was a lover of beauty in nature and would not allow the Ashrama trees to be cut, or flowering plants to be denuded of their floral wealth. There was a natural dignity in her bearing, and everything about her was sweet and graceful. She loved humour, and used to see the sunny side of life.

She was forgiving to a degree. A

young man staying for some time at the Mayavati Ashrama had the foolishness to abscond with a few hundred rupees of the Ashrama money. He was arrested by the police and hauled up for trial. Mother looked at the unfortunate incident from quite a different angle, and sincerely wished that he might be let off. The boy, she pleaded, had committed the offence through mistake, but it would be blasting his life if he was branded with a jail sentence at such an early age. There were scores of such instances of her forgiveness. She believed in moral conquest rather than in brute force.

Of late she was suffering from distressing heart attacks, though she was being lovingly taken care of by her nieces. It was her remarkable vitality that enabled her to pull on so long. The following extract from a letter of one of her nieces describes the closing episode of her life :

“You will be surprised to hear from me again so soon and it is indeed strange that I should have written only on October 18th to give you an account of Mrs. Sevier’s health and to tell you about her bad heart attacks, for, the next day the attacks came on more severe than before and on Monday the 20th a bad attack started about a quarter to 11 a.m. and she passed away at a quarter to 2 p.m. Mrs. Sevier was quite conscious up to within 10 minutes of her death, and she suffered a lot from the commencement of the attack until within 10 minutes before the end, when she passed peacefully

beyond our care. We miss our dear Aunt more than we can ever say, but for her—we cannot wish it to be otherwise. The funeral was on Thursday October 23rd. We had a short service in our Church (where Mrs. Sevier always enjoyed coming with us, as long as her health permitted). Then we went to Goldess Green where her body was cremated and her ashes thrown to the winds as was her own special wish (and *not* ours)! My Aunt left a wish for no flowers, she had often told us she did not want a lot of money spent on flowers, but of course she always loved nature in every form and we got one lovely Cross made of white Chrysanthemums and Harissei lillies which we wanted to be from everybody, for every soul she met was the better for having met her. . . . I had a letter from someone this morning who knew Mrs. Sevier very well and she says, ‘Mrs. Sevier never preached religion, she lived it,’ and what better could we say or hear of anyone.”

The death of Mrs. Sevier takes away one of the most prominent benefactors of the Ramakrishna Order and a true, yet silent worker for the welfare of India. To the members of the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, and the Vivekananda Ashrama, Shyamla Tal, and to all those who had the privilege of associating with her, her demise is a personal loss. Her memory will be lovingly cherished by the Ramakrishna Order as of one who lived what she professed, who was a friend of the poor and needy, and who, above all, was in every sense of the word a Mother.

A FRESH RESOLVE

BY THE EDITOR

I

To walk in the path of truth is not only like walking on the edge of a sharp razor, but is also a succession of falls. To succeed in that we must be prepared to meet with hundreds of failures, innumerable difficulties and various disappointments. The higher the ideal, the greater the struggle and the more tenacious must be the pursuit. We should be always alert that in the midst of darkness, we do not lose sight of the goal—we do not miss the ideal. Storms and struggles there must come on the way—but if we can keep our helm all right, there will come a time, when all of them will vanish and we shall safely reach the goal.

For that what is most needed is that we must be greatly introspective. Every now and then we should ask ourselves what we should do, what we are doing, and how far we fall short of the ideal. We should not let a single day pass without fully examining if we could not pass it better and where lay the mistakes, and should make a fresh resolve that we may be more careful the day following and thus go an inch nearer the goal. In the same way every new month should make us ponder over the activities of the one gone by, and as we reach the end of a year, we should look before and after to keep the vision of our goal clear before our eyes. For only by the renewal of efforts and by thus constantly making fresh resolves can we hope to realise the ideal in life. Anyone who has not been content with the material comforts of life, any one who has not been satisfied with a drifting life, will bear testimony to this fact.

Not only ordinary men, but even saints and sages, prophets and seers, persons who moulded the destinies of the world, had to go through tremendous struggles in life and pass through a long period of weary despair, before they became what they afterwards were.

As we are stepping into the threshold of a new year, we should also ponder for a moment to have again a clear vision of our ideal, so that we may thereby get fresh inspiration and fresh strength for struggle. Now, what is our ideal, what is the highest consummation of human life, what is the goal which should inspire one and all, in comparison with which all other purposes dim into insignificance?

In India, in the past, the question was asked, What is that by knowing which everything else will be known, what is that by getting which there will be no hankering for any other thing? Thus even in the hoary past, there was an attempt to realise the ultimate truth—to obtain the summum bonum of life. For the Aryans would say there is no happiness in small things—only by getting the highest can one expect to have real happiness.

We are afraid, if now in this age we say that the realisation of God is the highest goal of man—if we say that we may be busy with other things because we are incapable of attuning our mind to that high pitch, but that is the highest goal, which we should try to realise through all our baffled efforts and repeated failures, we shall be faced with a chorus of opposition from all sides. We live in an age when people are out to banish God and religion from their daily life, when it

has been the sign of enlightenment and refined culture to disown God. Whatever might be the reason which has resulted in such a dismal reaction and revolt, it is a fact that it is so. No one likes to hear about God, much less will a person try to know Him. God and things religious have been relegated to the region of fables and stories. We would like to give no more serious thoughts to them, than to myths and legends—nay, many will view with alarm any idea of God and religion entering into society. Let them be the monopoly of some professional people, who want to live in the dark or medieval ages; but the infection should not be spread over the society—that is the modern thought. In some countries legal measures have been taken to minimise the scope of religious activities, so that (should we say) all people cannot be religious. It may be that such reaction is the thoughtless outcome of many abuses that religion has met with in the hands of persons who outwardly profess to be all religious, but whose real life is just the reverse. In any case, the present situation is greatly to be deplored.

Mere ignorance is not so dangerous as when it allies itself with self-conceit. Not to know is the beginning of wisdom. But the person who knows not and yet thinks that he knows more than enough, is totally doomed. Not that the persons who decry religion or shudder at the name of God in the modern age, have given any serious thought to either; yet like the most frivolous dilettante, they will criticise them. Does it not prove that the less we know of a thing, the more vehemently we can criticise that? To talk about any subject requires at least some preliminary and fundamental knowledge of that—no man dare open his lips to talk

about science, history, politics, art, etc. in any decent society without knowing at least something about them, but the present age tolerates anyone passing any presumptuous remark about God or religion. Criticism is the conscience of truth, but in order that it may be really so, it must be sagacious and based on much thinking and preparation.

II

Three things which have given rise to 'Theophobia' in the modern age are, according to an American writer, Darwin's theory of Evolution, Freud's theory of psycho-analysis and Copernicus's discovery of the vastness of the universe. Now, to take them one by one, Darwin's theory has demolished the theory of creation as described in the Bible. It shows that man did not come to earth all on a sudden, but had to pass through a gradual process of many stages from the non-living to the living and even amongst the living beings it was after a long process of gradual development that man came into existence. Granting that Darwin was perfectly right in his theory, does that mean that we can ignore the divine factor in the process of creation? Does Darwin explain the whole of creation? Granting that the physical body of human beings is the outcome of gradual development, what about the principle which is the cause of this development? Supposing that we have explained the whole mechanism of the universe, what about the master-mechanic? The more we can reduce the whole universe to a fixed process, the more we should be filled with awe and reverence that there is something behind, which could be the author of this. And after all science has been as yet able to touch but the fringe of the magnitude of wonders

amidst which we are to live. Darwin himself said, "The births both of the individual and the species are equally parts of that grand sequence of events which the mind refuses to accept as the result of blind chance. The understanding revolts from such a conclusion." Every thoughtful man, though refusing to believe in God, has been compelled to admit the existence of something which is weaving the net of mysteries in the universe in which we find ourselves enveloped to our great dismay.

Freud is said to have given a death-blow to all higher pursuits, based on self-control and self-restraint. If Freud is to be believed, man is no better than an animal living mainly on erotic impulse and any higher destiny of mankind is impossible. To our great relief long before the days of Freud there had been people on earth who transcended the scope of Freud's theory and showed to us that the cultivation of moral virtues is not as impossible as to arrest a will-o'-the-wisp and that even on earth man can aspire after qualities which make him divine. It is said by one writer that Freud's was an exploded theory, even when first propounded, that it did not receive so much attention then as now and this is due to the ever-growing perverted instinct of man in the modern age—due to "lurch to immorality, which is receiving benediction from erudition." One famous writer says: "For psychologists, in general, psycho-analysis was still-born, and has ever been as dead as a doornail. Only owing to the propaganda of psycho-analysis in the press, the general public began to take interest in the subject. . . ." According to a leading psychiatrist of Australia "On the very insecure foundation of a half-truth, Freud has built up a veritable woolworth tower of untruth.

. . . Freudianism has blazed its way around the world; but what good has come out of it?"

As to Copernicus standing in the way of our belief in God, the argument is much more wonderful. It is said that ever since the days of Copernicus, the universe has been found to be so vast, containing as it does between 20 to 80 billions of planets, that man is too trifling a being to expect to have any relationship with the Maker of the Universe. This logic is too puerile to require any refutation. The vaster the universe is found, the greater should be our awe and reverence for its author, in which our little ego will melt into nothingness and we shall have complete self-effacement to stand face to face with Truth.

III

We live in a scientific age. As science takes nothing for granted, but wants to prove everything by experiments and observation, we want to put God also under the scalpel and microscope before we shall believe in His existence. Besides science is so much flushed with conceit at the little discoveries it has made that it is dreaming of explaining the whole of universe and of even creating life, on the mystery of which religion lives its lingering life. As life has not been as yet created in the laboratory, we leave that question out of consideration. But why God does not submit Himself to examination with test-tube and crucible, the obvious answer is: for a particular branch of science, particular sets of instruments are necessary—so to understand God also we require not keen intellect but deep intuition. As the telescope serves no purpose to a chemist, the surgeon's knife is of no use to an astronomer, similarly anything except intuition is of no avail to understand God.

To deny God and religion altogether is to deny the past experience of the whole humanity. Of all the experiences of the human race, that of religion has been the profoundest. From the dawn of human history, when the first-created man was faced with the mystery of the universe, till now, through all failures and successes, sometimes even through blind and blundering experiences, men have been trying to find out the Reality behind the world. And we cannot say there have not altogether been persons who have been able to unfathom the mystery in which we are enveloped at least to some extent, who have succeeded in getting a glimpse of the Beyond. In spite of all acts of irreligion that have been done in human history in the name of religion, there have been born persons in the world who are the salt of the earth, and who have compelled admiration and reverence from the proudest atheists. In every religion there are saints and sages who conjure up visions of another world, where nothing but Truth, Justice, Love and Charity reigns, and their lives have been blessings unto humanity. From time to time when we are too much absorbed in our worldly pursuits and are unable to extricate ourselves, they have come to our rescue and by following their lead many have found the peace that passeth understanding. These saints and sages are a living protest against the assumption that God and religion are no better than myths.

We cannot forcibly convince a man of anything, if he is determined not to understand, and we cannot show anything to a man who is incapable of seeing. Why many are incapable of knowing God, the Upanishads give the reason: "God in His inscrutable ways has made the senses of man outgoing. So he looks to the outside

material world and not within himself. Only few blessed persons will turn their eyes inward and look within themselves to find out the ultimate Truth." That we do not turn to God indicates that we have not sufficient experience of the world. After enjoying the sweets and bitters of the world, when a man gets weary of life and all its transitory things, he naturally seeks if there is really any permanent object behind all the vanishing phenomena. Then goaded from within, he will seek God and religion and not wait for their proof at the hands of an erudite scholar or a veteran scientist. When an ignorant baby cries for its mother, it does so instinctively, and when the mother comes it recognises her invariably, though through no power of reason and discrimination. In the same way there come moments in our life, when we feel like crying for the Mother of the Universe and *believe* that She can come to our rescue and help. None of the religious men went to a laboratory first to experiment whether God exists or not—they instinctively felt that there is a Presence which nothing but our Ego and Self-conceit can hide, and they wept bitter tears to be purged of them. However much we question the validity of their experiences, to them they were as real as anything in the world, and they stood on them as on firm rocks and ignored the whole world.

But there is no use in theoretically believing in the experiences of the saints and sages, no use in taking for granted that God and religion are true—this attitude is worse than nothing and is born of mental inertia. If we say, God exists, if we admit that there is as much need for religion in our life as of food and air for bodily maintenance, we ought to prove by our personal experience that

what we say is really true. For sincerity is the sauce of life and an inconsistent man will simply drift like a piece of straw before a wind. If God is true, we need rush headlong to realise Him, and simply by the mere force of earnestness we shall be able to carry everything before us. Even for those who cannot summon up so much strength all at once, it is not that there is no hope altogether. For in every scripture we find the mention of gradual processes as to how the lukewarm people can be goaded to earnestness. And even though we fail to realise God after trying our best, what does that matter? Is it not more heroic to give ourselves to the love of God without absolutely expecting the reciprocation of the same from Him? The Bengali saying goes, "It is better to enjoy the taste of sugar than to become sugar itself"—meaning thereby that the struggle to realise God is much sweeter than the actual realisation. It is exactly what the great German philosopher, Leibnitz said: that if God asked him whether he desired Absolute Truth or the search for Truth, he would answer: "The Search for Truth. Absolute Truth for Thee alone."

IV

Now, if there is any need for the cultivation of religious principles in individual life there is need for that even in national life. For the sum total of individuals goes to form the nation. Therefore what is found in the individual life influences the national life, and the ideas which are strong in the nation permeate individual life. So it is necessary that our collective life also be guided by high moral virtues and noble thoughts. It is true we cannot make a man moral or religious forcibly by extraneous efforts: but that holds good as regards all other

things also—educational, political, social, etc. It is very difficult to impart education to a child, if there is totally no response from it from within—it is almost impossible to make a man patriotic, if the well-being of his motherland finds no consideration from him, and so on; but nevertheless we try to create an atmosphere wherein ideas of patriotism will be fostered, where people will find stimulus to value culture and the fruits of education. Similarly we should try to create an environment where people will appreciate the higher ideals of human life, though they may not all be able to follow them in practice. National thoughts should be given a new turn, and the whole outlook should be changed. Instead of scrambling for power and trying to live at the expense of other nations, a nation should see that it can contribute its quota to the leading the human race to higher goals and nobler purposes of life. Man is not born simply to live an animal life. He possesses higher instincts, he has got power to discriminate, will to choose and strength to regulate his action according to the higher laws of life. If he ignores these, what is there to differentiate him from an animal? Man through negligence may go down to the level of brutes and on the contrary may also raise himself to the plane of the divine, if he tries. So those who are at the helm to guide the destinies of a nation should seriously see that their energies are not spent simply with political activities but that their action is guided by higher motives.

Here, we are afraid, a school of politicians even in India, will raise the alarm that we have enough of religion and the like, that we want them no more, that religion has been the cause of the decline of India and the less attention we pay to it in

our life of political struggle, the better. These people do not know what they say—nor do they express their own independent opinions, but simply repeat and echo the thoughts of Western nations. They are dazzled by the material success of the free countries of the West and are in consequence blind to the good points of their own nation. In the West though persons are not altogether absent who are capable of turning their life to a higher level of thoughts, generally the ideas of “might is right,” “personal aggrandisement at any cost” rule the national life. All noble considerations are stifled in the pursuit of material prosperity. But it was in India that the material prosperity of the nation did not check the growth of spiritual life and all material activities were actuated by sublime principles.

Those who say that religion has been the cause of the degeneration of India, betray a lamentable lack of the knowledge of Indian history. If religion is the cause of India's political servitude, how was it that the Non-Aryans were conquered by the Aryans, how was it that the vast Mahomedan empire fell to pieces? In the history of the world many prosperous nations have sunk down to abysmal depths from the heyday of glory. Religion did not find an important place in the life of all of them. Can there be no other causes except religion for the downfall of a power? Why not try to find those causes? And is it not to be pondered over deeply that in India when spiritual thoughts reached the highest level, material prosperity also was at its best? History furnishes enough proof for that.

Yudhisthira who was called the “embodiment of virtues,” performed two sacrifices, Ashwamedha and Râjasuya and came out victorious in that great war in which almost

all the states of the then India took part joining one side or the other. His religious nature did not let him shrink from the kingly duties or even in taking part in the bloody warfare, in which he saw his own kith and kin fall. To come to the historical period, Asoka who lived as a monk though occupying a kingly throne, inherited a vast empire and successfully maintained it during his long reign of 41 years. There is proof “beyond doubt that the empire reached the high watermark of greatness and glory under him.” Yet he was an ideal king, and all his activities were actuated by very high standards. With reference to this one historian says, “India's greatness lies in the fact that she produced at least one Asoka, who still remains without a parallel in the history of the world.” And it is strange that though a ‘Bhikshu’ Emperor could successfully administer the vast territory which stretched from the borders of Persia to Assam, and from the sources of the Ganges to beyond the banks of the Kistna, his successor fell a victim to internal dissensions and invasions from abroad and the Maurya dynasty fell within 50 years of the death of Asoka. Kaniska who was also known for his love of religion, could rule over an empire which, according to one tradition, “included the whole of Northern India including Kashmir and Magadha and his power extended to the borders of the desert of Gobi in Central Asia.” Coming to the Christian era we find king Harshavardhana, who though a successful administrator was of an eminently religious temperament. Every five years he would perform a solemn religious ceremony at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna, in which his charities were beyond proportion. It is said that on one of these occasions, all being given away, “he begged from

his sister an ordinary second-hand garment." Yet the great king could maintain peace in the empire and protect it against foreign invasion. During the reign of these kings, not only the people lived in peace and prosperity, but art, literature, architecture, etc. received great attention—so much so that some of them still remain as monuments of the glory of ancient India.

And what is more wonderful is that these kings could successfully elevate the moral tone of the whole country. Though they did not lag behind in taking stringent measures to ensure peace and sometimes taking part in military activities and in fact doing all what even a modern king needs to do, they raised the moral standard of the nation to a higher level and the cultivation of nobler virtues did not fall into disuse. In the present age there is a general feeling of doubt whether material prosperity can be had without stifling our nobler instincts: for to gain our selfish end, collective or individual, we are ready to throw all higher considerations to the winds. But in ancient India, though the people were not all free from vices, generally their actions were pitched to a high standard. Many foreign travellers bear glowing testimony to this fact.

The fact is that religion is not the cause of degradation of India—as a matter of fact, it cannot be so of any country. If anything has hastened the degeneration of the country, it is irreligion. For when religion was active, there was life in the society. It was only in latter days that society became hide-bound by rigid laws—caste system became oppressive, women's activities were limited and their freedom curtailed, and gradually in every respect national life was at a low ebb. Formerly as much stress was given on Moksha (salvation) as on Dharma (duty), Artha

(wealth) and Kâma, (material enjoyment), so that people of all temperaments might find freedom for growth in their own way and ultimately be in a position to aspire after Moksha. But when religion lost its vitality, people fell into fixed ways of life in the name of religion, and there was much travesty of religion. If that be so, instead of denying and blaming religion, we should rather try to revive it, so that the elixir of religion may vitalise the nation again.

V

Any thoughtful man who observes the forces that are at play in the modern world becomes pessimistic about its future. Where is the world being led to? In the individual life self-aggrandisement has become the law, in the collective life also there is a vicious play of the same thing. A nation tries to live at the expense of another nation and exploitation is applauded as a national virtue. It seems all the forces of evil are at play to stifle all the forces of good. If man is the result of evolution from a lower animal, nowadays it seems his mind is undergoing atavism, and men are vying with one another to develop their animal instincts to the greatest measure. Is there no remedy for that? If a remedy is to come from anywhere to check the forces of destruction in the world, it will come from India; for India has once shown in history that the highest spirituality may live side by side with great material prosperity and even high military achievements of the nation. Not that material prosperity is by itself an evil, but the question is, to what use it should be put. Not that there will come a time when all people will be so perfect and virtuous that there will be no necessity for any military power, but it should be used to ensure peace and protection rather than as an instrument of

disruption. In short, the main idea which should guide the activities of the nation and to which her heart should beat, would be that the moral standard of the people is to be raised and an atmosphere is to be created in which our nobler instincts and higher virtues may grow and thrive.

One thing must be said here to make clear what we mean by religion. By religion we do not mean any credal religion or any particular dogma or form of worship, but that which is the essence and aim of all religions. By religion we mean that we should so clearly realise our unbroken and unbreakable relationship with the Maker of the Universe that we shall be high above the reach of all earthly sorrows or the temptation of any worldly joy; we shall be strong as adamant, pure as purity itself, invincible against all tyranny, unbend-

ing against any injustice; our love will transcend all personal considerations of loss or gain to overflow the whole creation and our unselfishness will reach such a limit that our little ego will be completely washed off. If this be our aim, there will be no quarrel between religion and religion, there will be no scope for any bigotry—religion will not stand in the way of national progress, but on the contrary will hasten it. And if we can mould our life according to this, we shall be a power and blessing to the country, the nation and humanity.

May we renew our zeal to realise this ideal in our life, both individual and collective, will be our prayer, as we ring out the old and ring in the new. And may also *Prabuddha Bharata* be an unfailing aid to the nation and all people concerned in this respect.

SO-CALLED CONTRADICTIONS IN SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S TEACHINGS

BY SWAMI SUDDHANANDA

“Each soul is potentially divine.

“The goal is to manifest this divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal.

“Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one, or more, or all of these—and be free.

“This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details.”

In the above pregnant words breathing a most catholic and all-embracing spirit, the Swami Vivekananda has put forth his ideas about the methods of individual spiritual culture for all mankind. These sentences came out spontaneously in course of the explanation of an aphorism of Patanjali, incor-

porated in his monumental work on Raja-Yoga, and they apparently appealed so much to the Swamiji himself that he placed them as the motto of his book called *Raja-Yoga*. His four books on the four Yogas, viz., Jnana-Yoga, Raja-Yoga, Karma-Yoga and Bhakti-Yoga, into which he wanted to roughly classify the different methods of spiritual culture, are but the amplification of the above sentences, giving emphasis to each, when that was dealt separately.

This is, in short, what may be termed Swamiji's scheme of individual salvation; but besides the above four books many epistles of Swamiji, some at least of which he never intended for publication, and many interviews with different individuals have been publish-

ed and recorded, as also many public lectures addressed to vast gatherings, specially of his own country-men, in which we find here and there instructions for individual spiritual culture, but mainly his ideas of collective advancement, social uplift, national regeneration and so forth. The latter class of books are much more widely read by the general public, and through that reading they form an estimate of what Swamiji wanted for the world in general, and for his country in particular. Especially his idea of the Seva of Narayana in different human forms has caught the imagination of his countrymen and it is the mainspring of many charitable and educational organisations under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Mission and of other bodies. Many of the suggestions put forth in the above-mentioned writings have not as yet been attempted to be translated into action by any individual or organisation, though we hope, as time rolls on, attention will be drawn also to those aspects of Swamiji's teachings and big institutions will spring forth from them. The mainspring has given rise to innumerable diversified currents and sometimes perhaps it is difficult to recognise their original source. It is difficult, for instance, for many to find out, whether Swamiji was a champion of orthodoxy or social reform; whether he was a staunch advocate of political freedom—whether he was a nationalist or an internationalist; whether he was an advocate of the caste system or against it; whether he was a supporter of vegetarianism or meat-eating; whether he advised meditation in solitude or work in the bustle of society as the best method of realising God; whether he favoured organisation or wanted individual spiritual culture in preference to any organisation, etc., etc. As one traverses the pages of the big

seven volumes of his works, one is rather apt to be puzzled.

We, who had the good fortune to be in close touch with Swamiji from 1897—the date of his triumphant entry into Calcutta, his birth-place, after his spiritual conquest in the West, to 1902—the date of the giving up of his physical frame, had also occasions to be puzzled by his apparently contradictory teachings, but Swamiji himself supplied us with the key to his proper understanding. There were also many who did not even hesitate to affirm that his teachings were against those of his revered Master, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

I will quote here several utterances of Swamiji and describe several incidents from his life, which will probably help the reader to find out the master-key to all the apparently contradictory teachings of the great Swami. The one conclusion to which I have arrived regarding them is that they are all of them true under different circumstances, as being addressed to different individuals or groups of individuals: their difference lies only in the emphasis laid on particular occasions on particular ideas or courses of action.

Now I will try to record the different incidents, not in any systematic order, but as they come in my mind.

It was the May of 1897. I had joined the Alambazar Math only a few days ago. Swamiji had just returned from Darjeeling where he had gone with some of his Gurubhais and Madrasi disciples. In the monastery then lived only three or four senior Swamis—his Gurubhais, and about a dozen newly initiated junior Swamis and Brahmacharins. Up to that time there was no hard and fast rule of discipline in the Math. His Gurubhais were perfectly free and they practised Sadhana individually or jointly as the spirit prompted them. But now some

new elements were admitted and one of the junior Swamis, an old person, suggested to Swamiji that it would be good if he framed some rules and regulations for the training and discipline of the new-comers before he departed for Almora. Swamiji at once consented and calling all the members to the parlour of the monastery dictated a few rules as to meditation, study, work, physical exercise, etc. But before he dictated those rules, he prefaced them with a short lecture to the following effect :—

“Our aim is to go beyond all laws—beyond all rules and regulations. That is the ideal—specially of a Sannyâsin. Still I remember a pregnant saying of our Master : ‘If you are pricked by a thorn, it is advised that another thorn should be secured with which you will try to extricate the former. But as soon as it has been done, there is no need of keeping the thorn you have procured. You may throw away both as you have got rid of the trouble.’ Similar is the scope and necessity of rules and regulations. You have to go beyond all laws—beyond all rules and regulations. You are Atman—ever free, blessed and eternal; you are to live a spontaneous life, urged by the perfect freedom and the purity of spirit. But, my children, unfortunately you are at present under some bad laws—bad rules and regulations of your life; you are under the sway of some bad habits. In order to extricate yourself from your evil nature—this thorn of bad laws—let there be framed some good laws for the present; but always remember that you are ultimately to go beyond them both.”

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A few months after, about the end of 1897, Swamiji was travelling in Rajputana with a few of his Sannyâsi and Brahmachari disciples. With the excep-

tion of one or two, none had any objection to meat-eating. We were the guests of the Raja of Khetri (about 90 miles from Jeypore) at his Jeypore house. The Raja who was then at Khetri had made all arrangements for Swamiji and his disciples through his men. Of course, meat diet was arranged for Swamiji himself. When the Raja's man asked Swamiji as to what kind of food was to be arranged for his disciples, he at once replied that they were all vegetarians. So all the disciples were obliged to take vegetarian diet while at Jeypore. One of the Brahmacharins, who was older than the others, and being fortunate enough to see Sri Ramakrishna himself and being acquainted with his direct disciples for a long time used to take liberties with Swamiji who, however, instead of being offended thereby rather enjoyed them playfully, requested Swamiji that he be pleased to allow them meat diet at least twice a week. Swamiji was inexorable and did not change the routine. He, however, occasionally called that Brahmacharin and also another to partake of his Prasad consisting of meat. At Khetri the rule was relaxed. But one Brahmacharin who was a vegetarian for a long time past, never broke his vow of not taking meat, and Swamiji one day praised him with the remark that if he could stick to that vow for twelve years continually, he would become perfect—a Siddha.

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It was more than a year since Swamiji had returned from the West for the first time. It was the beginning of the year 1898. The monastery had been removed from Alambazar to Belur and was situated at the commodious rented house belonging then to the late Babu Nilambar Mukherji of Kashmir fame. The present site of the permanent monastery had just been purchased. After the return of

Swamiji from the West, the life of the monastery had undergone some revolutionary changes. New ideas had been introduced, and new sorts of activities had been initiated as the outcome of Swamiji's Western experience. The old ideas of Pujas and festivals were, as it were, in the melting pot.

It was the Shivaratri day—dedicated to fast and the worship of Shiva and vigil in the night. In the olden days, the monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna observed this occasion with special Pujas, music and enthusiastic Sankirtan throughout the whole day and night. But this year none—neither the old Swamis nor the new Brahmachari and Sannyasi disciples—had fasted, and everyone had come to partake of Prasad at the call of the bell. A young Brahmin Brahmacharin was a little late. In the meantime Swamiji suddenly remembered that this was the holy Shivaratri day and noticed also that none had fasted. He had begun to talk about the matter, when the above-mentioned Brahmacharin appeared there and was going to sit with the others to partake of Prasad, but Swamiji intervened and asked, "Are you accustomed to fast, my child?" "Yes, holy Swami," replied he. "Then, observe Shivaratri. Of course, you need not fast totally, you may partake of some fruit Prasad, if there is any and you need not also keep vigil for the whole night. You may partake of your meals after midnight, when you have finished the first two Pujas (one at 9 p.m. and the other at 12 p.m.)." The Brahmacharin obeyed his Master's directions and was assisted only by another Brahmacharin who though himself unable to fast on account of poor health, helped him in the Puja and kept the vigil up to midnight.

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A young man joined the monastery

and lived with Swamiji for a considerable period at the newly constructed Belur Math. His devotional side was then not much developed. He happened to halt at Benares for a few days on his journey further up. It was the year 1900. The Benares Home of Service was then just started by a few ardent youngmen who at that time read much of Swamiji's teachings but did not come into intimate personal contact with him. They were very much impressed by Swamiji's exhortations about the service of poor 'Narayanas' and started the institution which was then known as "Poor Men's Relief Association" with the help of a few kind friends. They all naturally asked the new comer as to Swamiji's real views about the respective merits of the different paths of realisation when the latter gave out the following:— "Swamiji's real views are that image worship and such other things are absolutely useless and Jiva-Seva is the only method of attaining to the highest." Most of them were very much pleased as it tallied perfectly with their activities at that time. One of them, however, who was of a devotional and rather vacillating temperament, was not perfectly satisfied; he put the same question to another monk, who happened to be at Benares on a short visit some time after the other had come and who lived a longer period with Swamiji and was of a rather liberal outlook having known varying forms of religious practices such as Yoga, Bhakti, etc. The monk answered, "I have found Swamiji advocating different kinds of religious practices for different natures—such as Yoga, Jnana, Bhakti and Karma." At this the Benares workers divulged to the new Swami what the other represented as the Swamiji's views. Some time after both these Swamis who represented the Swamiji's

views to the Benares boys were sitting in a question class held at the Belur Math with Swamiji himself as the teacher to solve the doubts of his disciples. Swamiji was expressing himself in a liberal strain, saying that all paths—whether Yoga, Bhakti, Jnana or Karma, led to the same goal. The Swami with the liberal outlook remembered the Benares incident and being encouraged by Swamiji's utterances thought of administering a rebuke by Swamiji himself to the other Swami, who, he thought, totally misrepresented his real views to the Benares boys. He said to Swamiji, "Swamiji, this Swami has told the Benares workers that you hold the view that image-worship and such other things are absolutely useless and that it is Jiva-Seva alone which leads to the highest goal." He was sure that Swamiji would reproach the other Swami with misrepresenting his views, but he was totally disappointed. Swamiji did not directly answer him; he rather said aside, "At present one must, of course, give stress on Karma," and did not say anything further on the matter.

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Swamiji, some of his Gurubhais and some newly initiated Sannyasins and Brahmacharins were sitting in the visitors' room in the Belur Math. One of his Gurubhais asked Swamiji:—"Swamiji, your sayings and teachings contain so many apparently contradictory things that these youngmen are often at a loss to understand what to do or what not to do." Swamiji not replying directly to his Gurubhai said to the disciples present:—"You see, my children, I am a religious preacher. So I have to say different things to different persons according as the occasion arises. Why should you feel yourself obliged to act according to all

my different instructions? Do you not see, my Gurubhais do not always follow me though I tell them many things? Whenever anyone of you feel puzzled as to how to act on a particular occasion or need guidance in your personal spiritual culture, come to me in private and ask my opinion and advice."

* *

Once when the monastery was situated at the Nilambar Mukherji's garden house, Swamiji was exhorting the young Swamis and Brahmacharins thus: "Throw away all books and scriptures. What benefit can accrue to you from them regarding your spiritual life? Live an intense life of Sadhana so that you may realise God even in this life. Those of you who are inclined to Jnanam, let them try to discriminate between the real and the unreal according to the teachings of the Vedanta—let them be engaged in Vichar (discrimination) day and night—let them not take part in Puja, Bhajan or Kirtan. Let also those inclined towards Bhakti not mix at all with these would-be Jnanis, but let them perform Bhajan, Kirtan and have all the paraphernalia of worship day and night. Let some of you make a hundred clay images of Shiva, and going to the side of the Ganges with a towel on the head as a protection against the heat of the sun, worship them the whole day. In this way, try to develop your respective spiritual nature as quickly as possible by special methods according to the temperament of each individual and waste no more time, my children." One young Brahmacharin was so much impressed by these daily exhortations that he felt strongly inclined to shortly leave the monastery and go to some lonely place, such as the Himalayas, for practising Sadhana, as he considered the monastery too crowded a place for acting according to Swamiji's advice. He secured also Swamiji's permission

and blessings to go away from the monastery. Previous to his departure, however, he had to make some preparation; he had to finish some important work at the Math, which Swamiji had entrusted to him. But at times, he would feel strongly inclined to leave the work unfinished and fly away, though by the sheer force of will he controlled himself and wanted to finish the work as soon as possible. This and some other things regarding arrangements about his departure took some time. In the meanwhile there was a panic at Calcutta on account of the bubonic plague and the strict measures taken by the Government to prevent its spread. Swamiji who was on a short trip to Darjeeling for his health, hastened to the monastery to start plague relief work. He wrote a short Bengali pamphlet and arranged for its distribution. It contained appeals to the citizens of Calcutta asking them not to be carried away by the panic, but to have faith in God, to be strict in observing hygienic rules and to seek any help from the Math whenever necessary. Swamiji even thought and talked of selling the newly purchased site of the monastery, if necessary, to finance any practical measure for combating the scourge. Arrangements were made to cleanse some *bustees* of Calcutta with the help of volunteers recruited from amongst the monastic disciples. Swami Trigunatita, a Gurubhai of Swamiji, was enlisting volunteers for that plague service. One day he told the Brahmacharin who had secured Swamiji's permission for Tapasya that he had also been chosen as one of the volunteers and Swamiji himself had approved of the selection. The young Brahmacharin was greatly taken aback by the announcement. He told Swami Trigunatita that since Swamiji had ordered like that

he must obey, but his mind was so much fixed upon Tapasya that he felt inclined to pray that the work of the plague relief might come at once for him, so that after finishing it as soon as possible, he would be free to go out for Tapasyâ. At this Swami Trigunatita consulted the Swamiji and gave out that Swamiji had exempted him from the plague service.

* *

A short time before Swamiji's passing away, he received a letter from a young Swami, who was then away from the Math practising Tapasya, that he had been written by the head of a certain centre of the Order to the effect that Swamiji had ordered him to join that centre immediately as a worker. But as he had an ardent desire to visit Amarnath in Kashmir he wanted permission for that. If Swamiji, however, so desired, he was quite ready to obey him and join the centre immediately as ordered. Swamiji at once instructed a member of the Math to write to him as well as to the head of the centre referred to. The Swami who had desired to visit Amarnath was told that Swamiji never ordered anyone to do any work, so he might visit Amarnath and also make pilgrimage to any other holy place he liked; and afterwards if he felt so inclined he might go to the centre as a worker. And the head of the centre was written that he had totally misrepresented Swamiji by using his name in the matter and writing to the young Swami that he was ordered to join the centre immediately. The Swami in question, visiting Amarnath as also some other holy places, joined that centre shortly after as a worker and served it very usefully for about four years.

* *

Swamiji was talking at the Nilambar Mukherji's garden house about his ideas and methods of social uplift in

India. He said that the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas had at present forgotten their duties enjoined by the Shastras. So an earnest attempt should be made to elevate their condition by preaching to them their respective duties as enjoined by the Shastras and inducing them to follow them. Swamiji did not mention the Sudras. One Brahma-charin at once asked, "Swami, you do not mention the Sudras. What harm have they done that you are not thinking of their regeneration also?" At this Swamiji related some anecdote of his boyhood: "Then my father was living. Myself and some of my young friends in our zeal for social reform started a small school for the pariahs in a certain *bustee* of Calcutta and began to teach the pariah boys and girls. The school worked smoothly for some time and the guardians did not object to their wards coming under our influence. But some time after, a trouble arose. The husband of one of our girl pupils had to stay away from home for a long time. Her guardians asked the girl to live with her husband's brother as his wife as was their custom from time immemorial. The girl who had assimilated our advanced ideas refused. It was then that the pariahs became furious with us, as they understood that we were the source of the mischief—of putting such revolutionary ideas into their wards' heads. They wanted to teach us a good lesson if we again attempted to teach their wards. My father heard of the matter and was very anxious on my account." "What do you intend to do, my boy?" continued the Swami, "who are you that you presume to reform them at once? I am afraid that one day you will have a bitter experience at their hands and then the matter will end. Do you understand the lesson of the above story? Even the Sudras we

should indeed try to raise, but slowly, my boy. We must work in the line of least resistance."

Indeed an attempt was made by the Swami on the birthday of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna to act according to his conviction. Some boys of Kshatriya and Vaishya castes were invested with the sacred thread and their heads were touched with the sacred volume of *Hundred and Eight Upanishads*. Orthodoxy however prevailed and most of them asked Swamiji's permission to throw away the sacred thread into the Ganges after an expiry of three days. Only one Vaishya Bhakta, we observed, kept the sacred thread for a long time, though even he put it on his neck most privately in order to avoid the adverse remarks of his orthodox relations and neighbours. It was only at the Math that he dared to put it on openly.

* *

Another incident happening a little earlier is worth mentioning. It occurred towards the end of 1897. After his brilliant lectures on Vedanta at Lahore, Swamiji had come to Dehra Dun with some of his Gurubhais and monastic disciples. A garden house had been rented for him. The Mayavati Ashrama in the Himalayas had not been then started. Swamiji was trying to find a suitable place in the hills to found an Ashrama with the financial help of Captain and Mrs. Sevier. A young boy servant had been engaged on a small pay to cleanse the utensils and do other domestic works. After about eight or ten days we moved to Saharanpur. No suitable place was found near Dehra Dun to start an Ashrama. At that time there was no railway line up to Dehra Dun. The only means of transport from Saharanpur to Dehra Dun, a distance of 40 miles, was *tonga* service. Some four of us came beforehand to

Saharanpur on foot. When some hours later Swamiji with the remaining party reached Saharanpur, we found to our astonishment that the boy-servant had accompanied him. As soon as he reached Saharanpur, he told us, "Don't call the boy a Nôkar (servant) but call him a Brahmacharin and behave with him as such." To the local gentlemen assembled he said, "I went to Dehra Dun in search of a suitable place for an Ashrama and I have failed in my special object of visit there. But the Mother has given me this boy so that I may train him and make of him a real man." At Delhi where we soon removed, the boy who was dirty in the extreme was washed and cleaned by a Sannyasi disciple of Swamiji with his own hands with soap and hot water. He was supplied with decent clothes purchased from the Delhi bazar, was given the sacred thread and Gayatri (as the boy gave out that he belonged to Kshatriya caste) through a Brahmin Brahmachari disciple of Swamiji and a Hindi primer was purchased and put into his hands. From Delhi the boy accompanied us to Alwar, Jeypore and Khetri and was treated in all respects as equal to any of our party. But all this kindness and attention of Swamiji was of no avail. We found to our regret that his past Samskaras prevailed to an extraordinary degree. He could himself never forget that he was a mere servant boy and scarcely understood the significance of the sacred thread. All these, however, Swamiji overlooked 'probably' in the hope that gradually the influence of better environments would prevail over his old Samskaras. But at Khetri when he told a deliberate lie to Swamiji, he could not tolerate it any longer. He instructed us as soon as we came back to Delhi to send him back to his native place of Kashmir. And it was done.

* *

Very little did I hear personally about politics from Swamiji's own lips except a few stray remarks. About the scope and significance of politics for India, one day I heard Swamiji say, "Our idea of politics is this :—Under the present social and political conditions of India, it has been possible for the advent of only one Ramakrishna Paramahansa. We shall have to adjust our social and political environments in such a way, that it will be possible for many such Ramakrishna Paramahamsas to arise from the soil of India." At another time Swamiji remarked, "The political bondage of India has suppressed many would-be geniuses and have condemned them to mediocrity. If India were politically free, many great personages and geniuses would have sprung up from the soil like mushrooms." He laughed at the optimism of the politicians of the day, who apparently believed that the British had come to India with the most altruistic object of ameliorating its conditions, and so their only programme was the passing of some pious resolutions and petitioning the Government to do this or that without even thinking of any constructive work for the people and by the people independent of Government aid." He said, "These simple politicians—how can they persuade themselves to believe in a preposterous proposition which is altogether against human nature? However noble the professions of an alien Government may be, can a man of common sense believe that a foreign Government can be carried on with only altruistic principles as its motive? If we want to be free, we must depend on ourselves and not on the goodwill of the Government." And Swamiji was ready to undergo the greatest hardships, even imprisonment, if necessary, for the good of his country. At the end of the year 1897, Swamiji was living at Srijut

Nagendra Nath Gupta's house at Lahore, who was then the editor of the *Lahore Tribune*. Only myself had the good fortune to live with Swamiji under the same roof. The other disciples lived in another house. There was a large settlement of Bengalees who lived at Meean Meerat, a short distance from Lahore town, in order to earn their livelihood by serving in various offices. Swamiji was one day invited there with his disciples and companions. Nagen Babu also accompanied us. On the way back from Meean Meerat to Lahore, Swamiji, Nagen Babu and myself came in a carriage. Swamiji was talking with Nagen Babu who, I believe, was his class-friend, on various topics, almost all of which has totally escaped my memory. One thing, however, I distinctly remember and it is this. In the course of the conversation, I heard Swamiji remark, "If I am arrested by the Government, I know that India will be much benefited thereby."

As I go on writing, a thousand reminiscences come rushing to my memory. The incidents narrated above seem very insignificant in themselves, but judging them at their true perspective they seem to me to throw a great flood of light on the real significance of Swamiji's teachings. A man is the servant of his nature and he is always prompted to act according to that. A man perhaps comes across a work of Swamiji which appeals to him very

much, and he goes on acting according to its teachings as understood by him at that time. He goes on with his career. New experiences come, and he then perhaps reads a new meaning in the very teachings which he understood at the beginning otherwise. Reader, if you have patiently gone through all the seven big volumes of Swamiji's writings, have read his *Life*, and at the same time if you have also studied his revered Master, and after all that if you still feel puzzled as to the path you should travel, I will advise you to go to a corner of your room and pray earnestly for light and I am sure it will be vouchsafed unto you. Remember Sri Ramakrishna's words—"Make your thought and speech one—do earnestly whatever you feel sincerely in your heart. Even though you pursue a wrong path, if you are sincere, the Lord Himself will help you to find out the right direction. You want to visit Jagannath but you do not know the way. You have in your anxiety started towards the North when you should have gone to the South. But on your way you are asking every one who comes across you, to show you the proper way. By this process you are sure to find at last some one who will show you the way—and you will be blessed at long last with the holy vision of Jagannath—the Lord of the Universe."

Om, Shantih, Shantih, Shantih.

THE UNIVERSAL SCIENCE-RELIGION*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

Of a truth, religion, as Vivekananda understood it, had such vast wings that when it was at rest it could brood over

all the eggs of the liberated Spirit. He repudiated no part of sincere and sane forms of Knowledge. To him religion was the fellow citizen of every thinking man, and its only enemy was intolerance.

"All narrow, limited, fighting ideas

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of religion must be given up. . . . The religious ideals of the future must embrace all that exists in the world and is good and great, and at the same time, have infinite scope for future development. All that was good in the past must be preserved; and the doors must be kept open for future additions to the already existing store. Religions (*and sciences are included under this name*) must also be inclusive, and not look down with contempt upon one another, because their particular ideals of God are different. In my life, I have seen a great many spiritual men, a great many sensible persons, who did not believe in God at all, that is to say, not in our sense of the word. Perhaps they understood God better than we can ever do. The Personal idea of God or the Impersonal, the Infinite, Moral Law or the Ideal Man—these all have to come under the definition of religion. . . .”¹

“Religion” for Vivekananda, is synonymous with “Universalism” of the spirit. And it is not until “religious” conceptions have attained to this universalism, that religion is fully realised. For, contrary to the belief of all who know it not, religion is a matter for the future far more than for the past. It has only just begun.

“. . . It is said sometimes that religions are dying out, that spiritual ideas are dying out of the world. To me it seems that they have just begun to grow. . . . So long as religion was in the hands of a chosen few, or of a body of priests, it was in temples, churches, books, dogmas, ceremonials, forms and rituals. But when we come to the real, spiritual, universal concept, then, and then alone religion will become real and living; it will come into our very nature, live in our every

moment, penetrate every pore of our society, and be infinitely more a power for good than it has ever been before.”²

The task awaiting us to-day is to join the hands of the two brothers who are now at law with each other over a field, the perfect exploitation of which needs their united efforts—religion and science. It is a matter of urgent necessity to re-establish “a fellow-feeling between the different types of religion . . . and between types of religious expression coming from the study of mental phenomena,—unfortunately even now laying exclusive claim to the name of religion—and those expressions of religion whose heads . . . are penetrating more into the secrets of heaven . . . the so-called materialistic sciences.”³

It is hopeless to attempt to turn one brother out for the benefit of the other. You can dispense with neither science nor religion.

“Materialism prevails in Europe to-day. You may pray for the salvation of the modern sceptics, but they do not yield, they want reason.”⁴

What then is the solution? To find a *modus vivendi* between the two. Human history made that discovery long ago, but forgetful man forgets and then has to refind his most precious discoveries at great cost.

“The salvation of Europe depends on a rationalistic religion.”

And such a religion exists; it is the Advaita of India. Non-Dualism, Unity, the idea of the Absolute, of the Impersonal God, “the only religion that can have any hold on intellectual people.”

“The Advaita has twice saved India from materialism. By the coming of Buddha, who appeared in a time of

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *The Absolute and Manifestation*, Vol. II of *Complete Works*, p. 139.

¹ *The Necessity of Religion.*

most hideous and wide-spread materialism. . . . By the coming of Sankara, who, when materialism had reconquered India in the form of the demoralisation of the governing classes and of superstition in the lower orders, put fresh life into Vedanta, by making a rational philosophy emerge from it.” “We want to-day that bright sun of intellectuality, joined with the heart of Boddha, the wonderful, infinite heart of love and mercy. This union will give us the highest philosophy. Science and religion will meet and shake hands. Poetry and philosophy will become friends. This will be the religion of the future, and if we can work it out we may be sure that it will be for all times and all peoples. This is the one way that will prove acceptable to modern science, for it has almost come to it. When the scientific teacher asserts that all things are the manifestations of one force, does it not remind you of the God of whom you hear in the Upanishads: ‘As the one fire entering into the universe expresses itself in various forms, even so that One Soul is expressing itself in every soul and yet is infinitely more besides.’”⁵

The Advaita must be superadded to science without yielding anything to the latter, but without demanding that it should change its teachings. Let us recall once again their common principles :

“The first principle of reasoning is that the particular is explained by the general—until we come to the universal. A second explanation of knowledge is that the explanation of a thing must come from inside and not from outside. . . . The Advaita satisfies these two principles,”⁶ and pursues their

application into its own chosen field. “It pushes it to the ultimate generalisation,” and claims to attain to Unity, not only in its radiation and its effects, rationally deducted from experiments, but in itself, in its own source. It is for you to control its observations. It does not avoid control, rather it seeks for it. For it does not belong to those religious camps who entrench themselves behind the mystery of their revelations. Its doors and windows are wide open to all. Come and see! It is possible that it is mistaken—so may you be, so may we all. But whether it is mistaken or not, it works with us to build the same house on the same foundations.

At bottom, although its Mission is to unite, the stumbling block to mutual understanding, the great obstacle to the coincidence of mankind is the word “God,” for that word embraces all possible ambiguities of thought, and is used oppressively to bandage the clear eyes of Freedom. Vivekananda was fully aware of this fact: “. . . . I have been asked many times, ‘Why do you use that old word God?’ Because it is the best word for our purpose,’ . . . because all the hopes, aspirations and happiness of humanity have been centred in that word. It is impossible now to change the word. Words like these were first coined by great saints, who realised their import and understood their meaning. But as they become current in society, ignorant people take these words, and the result is, they lose their spirit and glory. The word God has been used from time immemorial, and the idea of this cosmic intelligence, and all that is great and holy is associated with it.” If we

⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. II of the *Complete Works*, p. 140.

⁶ *Reason and Religion*, Vol. I of the *Complete Works*, pp. 372-73.

⁷ At the end of this chapter will be found the final definition of his purpose by Vivekananda.

reject it, each man will offer a different word, and the result will be a confusion of tongues, a new tower of Babel. "Use the old word, only use it in the true spirit, cleanse it of superstition, and realise fully what this great ancient word means. . . . You will know that these words are associated with innumerable majestic and powerful ideas; they have been used and worshipped by millions of human souls and associated by them with all that is highest and best, all that is rational, all that is lovable, and all that is great and grand in human nature. . . ."

Vivekananda specifies for us that "it is the sum total of intelligence manifested in the universe," concentrated in its own centre. It is "the universal intelligence." And "all the various forms of cosmic energy, such as matter, thought, force, intelligence and so forth, are simply the manifestation of that cosmic intelligence."⁸

This "cosmic intelligence" is tacitly implied in scientific reasoning. The chief difference is that with science it remains a piece of mechanism, while Vivekananda breathes life into it. Pygmalion's statue comes alive. Even if the learned man can accuse the religious man of an induction not scientifically proven, the induction itself is not necessarily antiscientific. It is as easy to say that Pygmalion modelled the statue as that Pygmalion was modelled by it. In any case they both came out of the same workshop: it would be surprising indeed if life was only to be found in the one while the other was an automaton. Human intelligence implies universal intelligence (to a higher degree than it can either deny or prove). And the reasoning of a religious and learned man like

Vivekananda does not seem to me very different in scientific quality from that "Logic of the Infinite" which admits one part of science, and which Henri Poincaré maintains against the Cantorians.

But it is a matter of indifference to the calm pride of him who deems himself the stronger whether Science accepts from Religion, in Vivekananda's sense of the term, or not: for his Religion accepts Science. It is vast enough to find a place at its table for all loyal seekers after truth. It has its dreams of Empire, but it respects the liberties of all, provided that there is mutual respect. One of Vivekananda's most beautiful visions, the one to which he devotes the final Essays of his *Jnana Yoga*, is his invocation to a "Universal Religion."

Now that the reader has learnt so much about him, he will not apprehend any Taylorism of thought that seeks to impose its own colour upon the rainbow of the world, not even perfect white, the only one that could claim to replace the other colours since it contains them all. Vivekananda could not have too many spiritual modes for the music of Brahman. Uniformity for him spelt death. He rejoiced in the immense diversity of religions and ideas. Let them ever grow and multiply!

"I do not want to live in a grave-like land: I want to be a man, in a world of men. . . . Variation is the sign of life. . . . Difference is the first sign of thought. . . . I pray that they (sects) may multiply so that at last there will be as many sects as human beings. . . . Whirlpools and eddies occur only in a rushing, living stream. . . . It is the

⁸ *Jnana Yoga*: "The Cosmos: The Macrocosm." (New York, Jan. 19, 1896.)

* I. *The Way to the Realisation of a Universal Religion*; II. *The Ideal of a Universal Religion*. (Lectures given in Pasadena, California, Jan. 1900, and in Detroit, 1896.)

clash of thought that awakes thought. . . . Let each have his individual method of thought in religion. . . . This thing exists already. Each one of us is thinking in his own way, but this natural course has been obstructed all the time and is still being obstructed."

And so unsilt the souls of men! Open again the "Bysses,"¹⁰ as my neighbours of Valais say, when they release the running water to irrigate their fields. But it is different from the thirsty Valais which has to economise water and pass the pitcher from hand to hand, turn and turn about. . . . The water of the soul is never scarce. It flows on all sides.' In every religion in the world a mighty reservoir of life is contained and accumulated, however much those who deny it in the name of the lay religion of reason may seek to deceive themselves. No single great religion, said Vivekananda, throughout the course of twenty centuries has died, with the possible exception of Zoroastrianism. (And was he sure of this? On the contrary he was certainly mistaken on this point.)¹¹ Buddhism,

¹⁰ This is a system of irrigation used by the Swiss peasants in the mountains. The water is released at fixed times over the fields by each peasant in turn.

¹¹ Within the last months a very interesting study by Dr. J. G. S. Taraporewala has appeared in the beautiful Review published by Rabindranath Tagore's University at Santiniketan: *The Visva-Bharati Quarterly*, January, 1929, which vindicates "The Place of Iran in Asiatic Culture," and traces the evolution of Zoroastrianism and the schools founded upon it not only in the East but in the West. It would appear that in the first century B.C. several currents flowed from their source in Asia Minor, where the cult of Ahura-Mazda was preserved. From one of them in the age of Pompey sprang the cult of Mithra, which almost conquered the West. The other, passing through the south-west of Arabia and Egypt, influenced the beginnings of the Gnostic school, whose capital importance for Christian metaphysics is well-known; and this same current gave birth in Arabia to a school of mystics, known to Mahomet; Musulman Sufis have their

Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, continue to grow in numbers and quality. (Further the religion of science, of liberty and of human solidarity is also growing.) What is growing less in mankind is the death of the spirit, absolute darkness, negation of thought, absence of light: the very feeblest ray is faith, although it is unaware of itself. Each great system of faith, whether "religious" or "lay," "represents one portion of Universal Truth and spends its force in converting that into a type." Each, therefore, should unite with the others, instead of being mutually exclusive. But petty individual vanities due mainly to ignorance, upheld by the pride and interest of priestly castes, have always in all countries and all ages made the part claim to be the whole. "A man goes out into the world, God's menagerie, with a little cage in his hand, and thinks he can shut everything inside it. What old children they are! Let them chatter and mock at each other. Despite their foolishness, each group has a living, beating heart, its own mission, and its own note in the complete harmony of sound; each one has conceived its own splendid but incomplete ideal: Christianity its dream of moral purity; Hinduism, spirituality; Islam, social equality etc. And each group is divided into families each with a different temperament, rationalism, Puritanism, scepticism, worship of the senses or of the mind. . . . They are all of diverse and graded powers in the divine economy of

origin in this mixture of Zoroastrianism and Islam. Hence the vital energy possessed by these religious germs, which seemed to have been stamped out and to have vanished becomes apparent.

[This, however, does not show that Zoroastrianism has not dwindled away. Zoroastrianism survives only in India where "a handful of Parsis is all that remains." This is the fact and cannot be denied.—Ed.]

the Being, as it ceaselessly advances. Vivekananda uttered this profound saying, which one we should do well to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest :¹²

“Man never progresses from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from lesser truth to higher truth.”

If we have understood him properly, our watchword should be : “Acceptance,” and not exclusion—“not even toleration, which is an insult and blasphemy” : for each man grasps what he can of Truth. You have no right to “tolerate” him, any more than he has the right to tolerate you or me. We all have equal rights, and equal shares in truth. We are fellow workers : let us fraternise.

“I accept all religions that were in the past, and worship with them all : I worship God with every one of them. . . . Is God’s book finished or is it still a continuous revelation going on ? It is a marvellous book,—these Spiritual Revelations of the world. The Bible, the Vedas, the Koran and all other sacred books are but so many pages, and an infinite number of pages remain yet to be unfolded. . . . We stand in the present, but open ourselves to the infinite future. We take in all that has been in the past, enjoy the light of the present and open every window of the heart for all that will come in the future. Salutation to all the prophets of the past, to all the great ones of the present, and to all that are to come in the future !”

These ideas of universalism and spiritual brotherhood are in the air to-day. But each man, consciously or unconsciously, seeks to turn them to

¹² It goes without saying that there he has emphasised only the characteristic aspects of much more vast and complex structures of thought. The responsibility for this simplification is Vivekananda’s.

his own profit. Vivekananda had no need to live in the age of the memorable “War of Right and Liberty,” to denounce and expose the exploitation of idealism, and the colossal hypocrisy, which has culminated in this modern age in Geneva, Paris, London, Berlin, Washington and their satellites, either allied or enemy. “Patriotism,” he said, “is a phase of a profession of quasi-religious faith.” But it is too often a mask for selfishness. “Love, Peace, Brotherhood, etc. have become mere words to us. . . . Each one cries : ‘Universal Brotherhood ! We are all equal. . . .’” And then immediately afterwards : “Let us form a sect !” The need for exclusivism reappears at a gallop with a badly concealed fanatical passion, which makes secret appeal to all the wickedness in men : “It is a disease.”¹³

° Do not then be deceived by words ! “The world is too full of blustering talk.” Men who really feel the brotherhood of men do not talk much about it ; they do not make speeches to the “Society of Nations,” they do not organise Leagues : they work and they live. Diversity of ritual, myths and doctrines (both clerical and lay) does not trouble them. They feel the thread passing through them all, linking the pearls into a necklace.¹⁴ Like the rest, they go to draw water from the well, each with his own pitcher or receptacle whose form is taken by the water. But they do not quarrel about the form. It is all the same water.¹⁵

By what practical means can silence

¹³ For all the preceding and following portions cf. *The Ideal of a Universal Religion*.

¹⁴ “I am the thread that runs through all these different ideas, and each one is a pearl,” said the Lord Krishna, (quoted by Vivekananda in his lecture on *Maya and the Evolution of the Conception of God*.)

¹⁵ Vivekananda took this beautiful figure from his Master Ramakrishna, who clothed it in still more picturesque colour.

and peace be secured among the brawling throng squabbling round the well? Let each one drink his own water and allow the rest to drink theirs! There is plenty for everybody. And it is stupid to want everyone to drink God out of the same pitcher. Vivekananda breaks in in the midst of the hubbub and tries to make the disputants listen to at least two maxims of conduct, two provisional rules :

The first: "Do not destroy!"—Build, if you can help to build. But if you cannot, do not interfere! It is better to do nothing than to do ill. Never speak a word against any sincere conviction. If you have one, serve it, but without harming the servants of different convictions. If you have none, look on! Be content with the role of a spectator.

The second: "Take man as he stands, and from thence give him a lift" along his own road. You need not fear that that road will take you out of your way. God is the centre of all the radii, and each of us is converging towards Him along one of them. And so, as Tolstoy says, "We shall all meet again, when we have arrived." The differences disappear at the centre—but only at the centre; and variety is a necessity of nature: without it there would be no life. So, help her, but do not get it into your head that you can produce or even lead her! All that you can do is to put a protective hedge round the tender plant. Remove the obstacles to its growth and give it enough air and space so that it can develop, but nothing else. Its growth must come from within. Abandon the idea that you can give spirituality to others.¹⁶ Each man's master is his own

soul. Each has to learn for himself. Each has to make himself. The only duty another can have is to help him to do so.

This respect for human individuality and its freedom is admirable. No other religion has possessed it to this degree, and with Vivekananda it was part of the very essence of his religion. His God was no less than all living beings, and every living being ought therefore to be free to develop. One of the most ancient *Upanishads* says :

"Whatever exists in this universe, is to be covered with the Lord."

And Vivekananda explained this saying thus :

"We have to cover everything with the Lord Himself, not by a false sort of optimism, not by blinding our eyes to the evil, but by really seeing God in everything:" in good and evil, in sin and in the sinner, in happiness and misery, in life and in death. "If you have a wife it does not mean that you are to abandon her, but that you are to see God in your wife." He is in her, in you, in your child. He is everywhere.

Such a sentiment does not rob life of one of its riches; but it makes its riches and its miseries the same.

"Desire and evil itself have their uses. There is a glory in happiness, there is a glory in suffering. . . . As for me, I am glad I have good and many things bad, glad I have done something good and many things bad; glad I have done something right, and glad I have

¹⁶ I think that it is necessary to add the following correction to the phrase—which corresponds to the intimate thought of Vivekananda :

"Spirituality is in everybody, but more or less latent, suppressed, or freely poured out. He who is a fountain of it is by his presence alone, by the very music of his gushing waters, a call, an awakener of hidden springs, which did not know of their own existence or were afraid to avow it. In this sense there is certainly a gift—a living communication of spirituality."

committed many errors, because everyone of them has been a great lesson. . . . Not that you should not have property, have all you want only know the truth and realise it. . . . All belongs to the Lord, put God in your every movement. . . . The whole scene changes, and the world instead of appearing as one of woe and misery, will become a heaven."

This is the meaning of the great saying of Jesus: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." Heaven is not beyond. It is here and now. Everything is heaven. You have only to open your eyes.¹⁷

"Awake, arise and dream no more!

Be bold, and face

The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease,

Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,

Which are Eternal Love and Service Free."¹⁸

"Each soul," he commented again, "is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divine within, by controlling nature external and internal. Do this, either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy,¹⁹ by one or more or all of these—and be free: This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas, or rituals or books, or temples or forms are but secondary details."²⁰

(To be concluded)

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ABOUT HIMSELF

[FROM THE DIARY OF M.]

I

The Math at Baranagore. After the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna, Narendra and other devotees have joined together: they have got a resting place at Baranagore under the auspices of Surendranath. That place has now become a Math. In the shrine is performed the daily worship of Sri Ramakrishna,—the Master. Narendra and others say, "We will no more return to the world. Did he not ask us to give up lust and gold? How then can we go back home." Sasi is in charge of the worship. Narendra takes care of his brother-disciples,—they also in their turn look to him for everything. Narendra said, "We must have spiritual practices, or else God cannot be realised." He himself and his brother-disciples began various practices. Led by a great spiritual discontentment,

they engaged themselves in various practices mentioned in the Vedas, Puranas and Tantras. Sometimes under a tree in solitude, sometimes all alone in cremation-grounds, sometimes on the banks of the Ganges, they underwent Tapasyâ. Sometimes they would be found passing their days in lonely prayers and meditation in the meditation room of the Math and sometimes they would join together singing and dancing in ecstatic moods. Everyone—especially Narendra is hankering after the realisation of God. Sometimes he would be saying, "I shall starve myself to death, if I cannot realise God. How to realise Him?"

¹⁸ This undated poem of Vivekananda, embraces within these five lines all the principal forms of Yoga: the abstract Advaita, and in the last two verses the Yoga of Bhakti and of Karma.

¹⁹ Hence by one of the four Yogas, Karma, Bhakti, Râja, Jnâna, or by all four.

²⁰ Raja Yoga, (Complete Works, Vol. I.)

¹⁷ The preceding belongs to the seventh lecture on Jnana Yoga: "God in Everything." (London, October 27, 1896).

Latu, Tarak and Gopal senior—they had no place to live in. It was primarily for them that Surendra started the Math. Surendra said, “Brothers, you will install the throne of Sri Ramakrishna here, and we shall now and then come to your place panting for peace.” Gradually the place became the resort of young devotees burning with renunciation, and they did not think of returning home. Narendra, Rakhal, Niranjana, Baburam, Sarat, Sasi, Kali remained at the place, and Subodh and Prasanna joined them shortly after. Jogin and Latu visited Vrindavan, but they came back to the Math in a year. Gangadhar would be constantly coming to the Math—he could not remain without seeing Narendra. He brought the hymn beginning with “Glory to Shiva, glory to Om,” and it was also he who introduced in the monastery the practice of uttering “Wah Gurujiki Fateh,” words which would be now and then found on the lips of the brother-disciples. After his return from Tibet he joined the monastery. Two other devotees of Sri Ramakrishna—Hari and Tulasi—would come very often to see Narendra and other brothers at the Math. Some days after they also joined.

EARLY DAYS OF NARENDRA AND LOVE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

It was Friday, the 25th March, 1887. M. has come to see the brothers at the Math accompanied by Devendra. M. comes to the Math every now and then and sometimes stays for the night. Last Saturday when he came, he stayed for three days. The brothers of the Math—especially Narendra—are now possessed with a spirit of intense renunciation. So M. often comes with great eagerness to see them.

It was evening. M. will remain to-night at the Math.

At dusk, Sasi was sweetly uttering names of God while lighting lamps and burning incense in the shrine room. He brought the burning incense before every picture in every room and bowed before them.

Then the evening service began, conducted by Sasi. All the brothers, M. and Devendra with folded palms were witnessing it and also singing in chorus the evening hymn—“Glory to Shiva, glory to Om. Worship Shiva, worship Om, etc.” The service over, Narendra and M. joined in a conversation. Narendra was giving to M. the reminiscence of himself since his meeting with Sri Ramakrishna. Narendra would be now 24 years 2 months.

“During my early visits he once said, ‘Are you come, dear boy?’

“I thought, What a wonder! He seems to be knowing me for a long time. Then he said, ‘Do you see a light?’

“I said, ‘Yes, I do. While going to sleep something like a light begins to wheel round before my forehead.’ ”

M. : “Do you see that even now?”

Narendra : “Often would I see that before. In the house of Jadu Mallik he one day touched me while muttering something to himself, and I became unconscious. The effect lasted for about a month.

“On hearing about my marriage he wept at the feet of the Divine Mother, and prayed, ‘Mother, give a turn to the whole thing. Please see that Narendra is not ruined.’

“After the death of my father, when my mother and younger brothers had to go without meals, I saw him once along with Annada Guha.

“He said to Annada Guha, ‘Narendra’s father is dead and the family members are in great distress. It would be well, if friends and relations now help them.’

“When Annada Guha went away, I

began to reprimand him saying, 'Why did you tell all these to him?' The rebuke brought tears in his eyes, and he said, 'Well, you do not know that I can even beg from door to door for you.'

"His love made us slaves. What do you say?"

M.: "No shred of doubt about that. To speak of his unselfish love!"

Narendra: "One day he told me a thing in private. Nobody else was there. Please don't tell it to anybody else (amongst us)."

M.: "No, I won't. What did he tell?"

Narendra: "He said, 'You see, I am debarred from exercising (supernatural) power; I shall work through you. What do you say?' I replied, 'No, that won't be.'

"I would throw aside all his words. Perhaps you have heard that from him. He had God-visions: regarding them I would say, 'These are all hallucinations.'

"He said, 'From the roof of the Kuthi I would often cry out, 'Well, who are the devotees, where are you?—come to me. I die because of not seeing you.' The Divine Mother said, 'The devotees will come.' So you see they all have come for me.'

"What could I say to that? I kept quiet."

NARENDRA BELONGS TO THE ABSOLUTE. THE PRIDE OF NARENDRA

"Once within closed doors he said to Deven Babu and Girish Babu regarding me, 'If I say to him the class he belongs to, he won't keep his body.' "

M.: "Yes I have heard of that. He told that to me also many times. While at Cossipore, once you got into that state; is it not?"

Narendra: "In that state I felt as if I had no body and was seeing only the face. He was in a room upstairs, and

down below I was in that state. In that predicament I began to weep and say, 'What has happened to me?' Gopal senior ran upstairs and informed him, 'Narendra is weeping.'

"When I met him afterwards, he said, 'Do you now understand? Henceforth the key will remain with me!' I asked, 'What about me?'

"Looking at other devotees he said, 'If he knows himself, he will not keep his body. I have kept him in self-forgetfulness.'

"Once he said, 'If you so desire, you may see Sri Krishna at the seat of your heart.' I replied, 'I don't believe in any Krishna or the like.' (M. and Narendra both laugh.)

"Another thing I find—some place, some object, some men, if I see, they seem to have been seen by me before, in a past life—as if they are known to me. When I went to Sarat's place in the Amherst Street, I told him point-black, 'This house seems to be all known to me—the paths inside the house, the rooms—as if they are known to me for a long time.'

"I would go my way—he would not say anything. You know perhaps that I became a member of the Sadharan Brahma Samaj?"

M.: "Yes I do."

Narendra: "He knew that one cannot have meditation in such a congregation, so he would condemn that. But to me he spoke nothing. Only once he said, 'Don't tell Rakhal all these—that you have become a member of the Samaj. Then he will also have a similar desire.' "

M.: "You have greater strength of mind; so he would not prevent you."

Narendra: "This state has come to me as a result of much suffering. Sir, you have not suffered, hence you do not understand it; I admit without undergoing any suffering or afflictions one

cannot have Resignation—Absolute Dependence on God.

“Well, . . . so humble, so modest—so free of any conceit. Can you tell me how I shall have humility?”

M. : “He said with reference to your conceit, ‘This conceit is based on what?’ ”

Narendra : “What does it mean?”

M. : “It refers to a story : Once Radha was told by a companion of hers—‘you are seized with conceit—you have insulted Sri Krishna.’ To this another companion replied, ‘Yes, she had conceit, no doubt, but this conceit is based on what?’—meaning that the conceit proceeded from the idea,—Sri Krishna is my husband; Krishna himself kept this pride.’ Sri Ramakrishna meant that God Himself had kept that pride within you, because He would get much work done through you.”

Narendra : “But I have no suffering as I am boisterous.”

M. : (smiling) “But then your boisterousness is all fun.” (Both laugh.)

Now the topics turned to other devotees—about Vijaya Goswami, etc.

Narendra : “Regarding Vijaya Goswami, he said, ‘Knocking at the door.’ ”

M. : “That is, has not yet entered within the house.

“But at Shyampukur Vijaya Goswami told Sri Ramakrishna, ‘I have seen you at Dacca in this your form—in this physical form!’ You, too, were then present?”

Narendra : “Devendra Babu, Ram Babu—they will give up the world—they are trying hard. Ram Babu told me in private, he would do that in two years.”

M. : “In two years? That is after making arrangements for the children?”

Narendra : “And that house he will

let—and buy a small one. Others will think of the daughter’s marriage.”

M. : “The state of Gopal is very high. Is it not?”

Narendra : “What state?”

M. : “So much ecstasy at the name of God,—sheds tears, body thrills.”

Narendra : “Does ecstasy alone indicate a very high state?”

“Kali, Sarat, Sasi, Sarada—they are in a much higher state than Gopal! How much renunciation they have! Does Gopal revere Sri Ramakrishna?”

M. : “He said indeed, ‘He (Gopal) does not belong to this place.’ But I have seen him showing great respect to Sri Ramakrishna.”

Narendra : “What have you seen?”

M. : “During my early visits to Dakshineswar one day, after all had left the room of Sri Ramakrishna, I saw Gopal in a kneeling posture with folded palms on the red road of the garden—Sri Ramakrishna stood there. There was bright moonlight. Just to the north of the veranda, i.e. on the north of Sri Ramakrishna’s room was that red road. Nobody else was there. It seemed Gopal sought refuge in him, and he was holding out hopes.”

Narendra : “But I have not.”

M. : “And now and then he would say, ‘He is in a Paramahansa state’ But this also I remember, Sri Ramakrishna asked him not to mix with lady devotees. Many times he was warned.”

Narendra : “But he told me, ‘If he is in a state of Paramahansa, why this love for money?’ Further he said, ‘He does not belong to this place. Those who belong to me, will come to me constantly.’

“Hence it was that he would be angry with —Babu. Because he would be his constant companion and would not come often to Sri Ramakrishna.

“He told me, ‘Gopal has realisation—but accidental realisation. He does

not belong to this place. If he would belong to me, why did I not weep for him?"

"Some have made him a Nityâ-nanda. But he (Sri Ramakrishna) has many a time said, 'I am Advaita, Chaitanya, Nityânanda—three in one.'"

In the monastery in the room of Kali are sitting two devotees—one is a monk and the other a householder. Both of them would be about 24 or 25 years in age. They were in conversation, when M. came. He means to stay at the monastery for three days.

It was Good Friday, the 8th April of 1887; about 8 in the morning. M. went to the shrine room to offer salutation to Sri Ramakrishna. Then after seeing Narendra, Rakhal, etc., he came to this room, took his seat and bidding the two devotees good morning began to hear the conversation. The lay devotee was thinking of renouncing the world, and the monastic one was giving him advice that he should not do that.

Monk: "Why don't you finish off the work if any left? Do that and there will be an end of the matter.

"One heard that he would have to go to hell. He asked a friend as to what hell was like. The friend took a piece of chalk and began to draw a picture of hell. As soon as the drawing was finished, the man rolled down upon it and said, 'Now I have passed through the sufferings of a hell-life.'"

Lay Disciple: "I have got a distaste for the world; how happy you are!"

Monk: "Why so much talk about it? If you want to give up, do it forthwith. But then why don't you have some enjoyment of the world, just for the fun of it?"

After nine, Sasi went to the shrine to perform worship.

When it was about eleven, the

brothers in the monastery returned from a bath in the Ganges. After bath putting on a fresh cloth they all went to the shrine and bowing down before the image began meditation.

Food having been offered to Sri Ramakrishna, the brothers partook of that, shared also by M.

It was evening. Incense was burnt and evening service performed. In the common room (which the monks would call as a room of the Demons—for they styled themselves as devils and demons in fun) sat Rakhal, Sasi, Gopal senior and Harish. M. also was there. Rakhal was advising caution with regard to the food to be offered to Sri Ramakrishna.

Rakhal: "(To Sasi) Once I took a little from the tiffin before it was given to him. He noticed it and said, 'I cannot look at your face. Why did you do such an act?'—I began to weep."

Gopal senior: "While at Cossipore garden my long breath fell upon his food, whereon he said, 'Leave that off.'"

In the veranda were M. and Narendra pacing up and down and talking on many things.

Narendra: "I would not, in fact, believe anything at all,—"

M.: "What, as regards the vision etc. of God?"

Narendra: "For sometime in the beginning I would not believe a good deal of what he would be saying. Once he said, 'Why do you come then?'"

"I replied, I come to see you and not to hear your words."

M.: "What did he say in answer?"

Narendra: "He was very glad."

Next day was Saturday, 9th April, 1887. After food was offered to Sri Ramakrishna, the monks had their meals and were now taking rest. Narendra and M. sat under a tree in the garden on the west of the monastery and were talking together in solitude.

Narendra was narrating so many past things that happened after his meeting with Sri Ramakrishna. Narendra was 24 and M. 82.

M. : "You clearly remember the incidents of the first meeting?"

Narendra : "That was in the Temple house at Dakshineswar. In his own room. That day I sang these two songs :

(1)

"O, my mind, let us go to our own
abode.
In the foreign land of this world of
change
Why roamest thou uselessly in a
foreigner's garb!
Senses and their objects five, they all
are thy enemies—none thy friend.
Fallen in love with enemies, why dost
thou forget them who are really
thine own?
Go up the path of Truth, walk cease-
lessly with the Light of Love
burning
And for support keep the treasure—
Purity in secret and with care.
Robbers like Greed and Delusion
infest the path to rob the travellers
of their all;
With great care hence keep as guards
Self-control and Self-restraint.
Holy association is the resting place
on the way;
Rest there a while when tired,
And if the path is missed, seek
direction from the men there.
In case of fear invading the way,
have an earnest appeal to the name
of the King
Who over the path has a supreme
sway and whom the very Death
fears."

(2)

"Will my days, O Lord, pass in vain?
Day and night I look Thy way in
anxious waiting.

Thou art the Lord of worlds three,
I am a person hapless and poor,
How can I ask Thee to come to my
heart?

But ever its doors are kept open;
May you kindly come and my sorrows
dispel?"

M. : "What did he say on hearing the songs?"

Narendra : "He went into ecstasy and asked Ram Babu etc., 'Who is this boy? How nice the song!' He asked me to see him again."

M. : "Where did you see him next?"

Narendra : "On the next occasion at Rajmohan's place. After that again at Dakshineswar. On seeing me that time he in an ecstatic mood began saying hymns to me. In the course of that he said, 'Thou Narayana, come in human form for me.'

"But please don't say these to anybody else."

M. : "What more did he say?"

Narendra : "You have come in human body for me. I told Mother, 'Mother, how can I go! If I go, with whom shall I talk? If I do not get devotees who are pure and have renounced gold and lust, how shall I live on earth?' He continued, 'Coming at night you awoke me and said, 'I am come.' I on my part knew nothing—I was fast asleep at our Calcutta residence."

M. : "That is to say, you are at the same time present and also absent; as God is with and without form at the same time."

Narendra : "But don't say this to anybody."

NARENDRA DUBBED AS A TEACHER

Narendra : "At Cossipore garden he infused power into me."

M. : "During the time, when you would sit for meditation before fire under the trees; is it not?"

Narendra : "Yes, so it is. I asked Kali, 'Just hold my hand.' Kali said that he felt a certain shock in his body at touching me. Don't say this to anyone. Please give me a promise."

M. : "He infused power into you—there is a special purpose. Much work will be done through you. One day he expressed in writing on a sheet of paper, 'Naren will teach.'"

Narendra : "I on the other hand said, 'I won't be able to do all that.'"

"He said, 'You shall have to do in spite of yourself. He put me in charge of Sarat. He has now got a great religious thirst: his Kundalini has awakened.'"

M. : See that no leaves gather. Sri Ramakrishna would say that in the ponds fishes make holes where they come for rest. In the holes where leaves gather, fishes do not come to live."

NARENDRA BELONGS TO THE ABSOLUTE

Narendra : "He would call me Narayana."

M. : "He would call you Narayana—that I know."

Narendra : "During his illness he would not allow me to bring him water for washing purposes."

"At Cossipore he said, 'Now the key is with me. If he knows himself, he will give up his body.'"

M. : "When once you had that state, is it not?"

Narendra : "That time I felt as if I had no body—and only the face existed!"

"I was reading Law at home to sit for the examination. Then all on a sudden it occurred to me, 'What am I doing?'"

M. : "Was it at the time when Sri Ramakrishna was at Cossipore?"

Narendra : "Yes, like one gone mad, I rushed out of home! He

asked, 'What do you want?' I replied, 'I like to remain merged in Samadhi.' He said, 'You are so poor-minded! Just go beyond Samadhi, Samadhi is but a trifle.'"

M. : "Yes, he would say, 'Vijnana is beyond Jnana. Just like going up and down the stairs, when once the roof has been reached.'"

Narendra : "Kali talks about Jnana often and often. I chide him for that. How great the price one has to pay for Jnana! Let Bhakti first mature."

"And to Tarak Babu he said, 'Ecstasy and devotion—they are not after all the end.'"

M. : "Just say what more he said about you."

Narendra : "He had so much faith in my words that when I told him, 'Visions and all that you see are but hallucinations', he went to the Mother and asked, 'Mother, Narendra says this. Are these then delusions?' Then he told me, 'Mother has said, these are true.'"

"Perhaps you remember he would say, 'When I hear your songs, the one that is here (pointing to his heart with the hand) at once starts up like a snake raising its hood and steadfastly begins to listen.'"

"Well, dear M., he said so many things, but what has actually come about me!"

M. : "Now that you are in the rôle of Shiva, you cannot receive money. You remember the story Sri Ramakrishna would say?"

Narendra : "Which one? Why not narrate it please?"

M. : "A magician took the rôle of Shiva. Those, to whose house he went, offered him a rupee. He refused it. But after washing his hands and feet he came back and demanded the money. People of that house asked, 'Why did you not take it then?' He

replied, 'I was then a Shiva—a Sannyasin—debarred from touching money.' " (Narendra had a long and hearty laugh over it).

M.: "Now you are in the rôle of an Exorcist. You are in charge of everything. You will have to train the brothers of the Math."

Narendra: "What religious practices we do is all because of his advice. But it is strange, Ram Babu criticises us for that. Ram Babu's opinion is, 'We have seen him, what more religious practice do we need?'"

M.: "Let everyone follow his own conviction."

Narendra: "To us his instruction was to have religious practices."

Narendra raised again the topic of Sri Ramakrishna's love.

Narendra: "How many things he would pray to the Mother for me! When I could not get anything to eat—father was dead—and the family was in great distress—he prayed for money to the Mother for me."

M.: "Yes, I know that, I heard from you."

Narendra: "Money did not come. He told, 'Mother has said, Bare food and clothing—bare necessities of life may be had.'"

"So much love for me,—but as soon as any impure feeling would come to me, he would at once know! When I was associating with Annada, some-

times I fell into evil company. And when I returned to him, he did not eat the food given by me; the hand was lifted only a little and no further could it be raised. During the illness up to the lips it was raised—but no further. He said, 'Not yet for you.'

"At times a great disbelief comes. At the house of Baburam, I felt as if nothing existed—no God—nothing."

M.: "Sri Ramakrishna would say he also had such experiences at times."

Both are silent. M. then says, "Fortunate you are! Day and night you are thinking of Him."

Narendra replied, "But then where is the feeling to give up the body, if He is not realised?"

It was night. Niranjan has just returned from Puri. At his return the brothers of the Math and M. are happy. He began to describe his experience of the pilgrimage. Niranjan would be now 25 or 26. . . . The evening service over, some were in meditation. Because of the return of Niranjan many came into the big room (Demons' room) and began talking about many good things. At nine in the evening Sasi after offering food to Sri Ramakrishna closed the shrine.

The brothers sat for their night meals in company with Niranjan. For food they had bread, one curry, some molasses and a very small quantity of porridge offered to Sri Ramakrishna.

PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA

BY SHIV CHANDRA DATTA, M.A., B.L., F.R. Econ S.

'ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT'—ITS MEANING, AIM AND TREND

The economic development of India, according to Prof. Sarkar, means the industrialization and commercialization

of the country.¹ And industrialization is interpreted to include the introduction and promotion of modern scientific

¹ Article on "The Earnings and Social Values of Clerical Labour," *Journal of the*

agriculture.² Hence, economic development is made to mean the development of India's industries, agriculture and commerce.

The aim of the economic development is to be the promotion of 'national welfare.' What is 'national welfare?' Prof. Sarkar's idea of national welfare would appear from the following sentence—"one could understand it (national welfare) as soon as one began to measure the number of men and women in a country who were getting square meals and decent clothing and living a sound healthy life."³

It should be noted in this connection that, so far as economic questions are concerned, he does not believe in an abstract entity called a nation. A nation consists of different classes and professions and a measure intended to benefit one may be harmful to another. Hence, according to him, the aim of the economist is to be to try for measures which would serve the interests of the greatest number of the various classes and professions.⁴ "Such a thing as 'country's welfare' or 'national good' hardly exists in the mentality of the inhabitants. The interests are diverse, multiform and heterogeneous. . . . Every economic legislation has to undergo modifications in order to meet the requirements of hundreds of different interests. On each occasion the problem is to organize a system that is likely to be the least harmful to the greatest number of interests."⁵

What should be the lines of India's economic evolution? Prof. Sarkar thinks that India has no new path to tread on, her evolution will be along

the lines laid down by the advanced countries. This idea occupies a prominent place in his ideology and has been reduced into the following formula : "Whatever has happened in the economic sphere in Eur-America during the last half-century is bound also to happen more or less on similar and even identical lines in Asia, and of course in India, during the next generation or so."⁶ It should be noticed then that, according to him, India has no choice in the matter, her economic evolution is bound, as a matter of course, to be on the lines chalked out by the advanced countries.

The questions may be raised,—has India nothing original to contribute? Why should her evolution be on the lines of the West? His reply to the first question is that India's opportunity for making original contribution, if any, in the sphere of the economic achievements of mankind, would come when India has fully absorbed and assimilated the best of the economic teachings and achievements of modern Eur-America.⁷ The reply to the second question will be found in Prof. Sarkar's interpretation of the relation between Oriental and Occidental civilizations.

PROF. SARKAR'S THEORY ABOUT EAST AND WEST

Eminent scholars too numerous to mention, of both the East and the West, have held to the idea that the East and the West (i.e., Asia and Europe) represent two different types of culture, the East being spiritual and the West materialistic. On the basis of this idea it is urged either that the East has an innate superiority over the West or

Bengal National Chamber of Commerce, June, 1928, p. 156.

² *Greetings to Young India*, p. 74.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-62.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁶ *Economic Development*, preface, p. IX.

⁷ Interview on 'The economic development and Arthasastra of New Bengal', *Arthik Unnati* for Aswin, 1886, B.S. p. 437.

that the West has that superiority over the East.

Till 1914 Prof. Sarkar used to subscribe to this traditional idea about the relations between the two civilizations. He used to think that Asians, especially the Hindus, are spiritually superior to the moderns. Even then, however, he used to lay stress on the materialistic, secular, constructive and activistic elements in Hindu civilization.⁸

Since the year 1914, however, his ideas have gradually undergone a total transformation. At present he does not believe in any division of human civilization into the Oriental and the Occidental. According to him, the foundations and the ideals of both the civilizations are equally spiritual and materialistic. The East and the West are in his opinion thoroughly identical in spirit and outlook on life.⁹ The Eur-Americans are as essentially human as the Asians.¹⁰

The grounds on which Prof. Sarkar bases the above idea have been elaborately discussed throughout most of his works and cannot possibly be fully presented in the course of the present article. We would remain content with briefly touching upon the nature of the arguments advanced in support of the above-mentioned theory.

The arguments are mainly of the following character :—

1. That the Occidental civilization is not a materialistic civilization alone. It has spiritual elements not less important than those in the Oriental. "There have been in Europe also mystics or 'seers' of the Infinite as many and as great as in Asia, from the earliest times till to-day. The very first speculations of Hellenes were

embodied in the teachings of Pythagoras. He believed in the transmigration of the soul and preached the esoteric doctrine of numbers. He was a vegetarian and believed in general abstinence and ascetic mortification of the flesh. Plato's idealism also was mystical as much as the Monism of the contemporary Upanishadists of India and Taoists of China"¹¹. . . . "Who has been a greater occultist than Jesus? His message was : 'My kingdom is not of this world.' His other-worldliness and pessimism are undeniable. Indeed, the greatest passivist and submissionist among the world's teachers has been this Syrian Saviour of Europe and America."¹² "Plotinus (third century A.D.) the greatest neo-Platonist was a mystical pantheist. He actually practised Yogic exercises by which he hoped to attain union with the 'ultimate principle', the highest God of all. The monasticism, celibacy, nunnery, and notions about 'the world, the flesh and the devil', the 'seven deadly sins', etc., of Christianity have been practically universal in the Western world. They have had too long a sway to be explained away as accidental or adventitious or imported or unassimilated overgrowths. Spiritualistic self-realization was the creed of many a transcendentalist denomination in Europe during the Middle Ages. To the English Puritans, even music and sports were taboo. The painters of the Romantic Movement in Germany, e.g., Cornelius, Overbeek and others fought shy of women and preached that all artists should be monks. The race of Jacopone da Todis, Rosicrucians, Ruysbroecks, and Boehmes is not yet a thing of the past in Eur-America. And now that the philosopher of the *clan vital* has enunciated his doctrine of intuition,

⁸ This attitude is typified in *Vartaman Jagat*, Vol. II, (on Great Britain).

⁹ Greetings to *Young India*, p. 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹¹ *The Futurism of Young Asia*, p. 277.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 277-78.

mysticism is going to have a fresh lease of life."¹³

2. That the civilization of Asia is not a spiritual civilization alone, but is as materialistic, militaristic and secular as that of Europe. This point has been sought to be established with the instances of the materialistic achievements of the Hindus, the Chinese and the Japanese. We might here discuss the case of Hindu civilization, in particular. Chap. IV of the *Futurism of Young Asia* contains innumerable examples showing the genius of the Hindus for martial exploits, naval organization and colonizing adventure, their capacity for capturing the markets of the world by the promotion of industry and commerce, and also their capacity to conduct public affairs in a corporate and organized manner. "From the age of Chandragupta Maurya (fourth century B.C.), the first Hindu emperor of a united India, down to the epoch of Baji Rao, the great Maratha Statesman-General of the nineteenth century, the Hindus had exhibited their genius in industries and commerce, martial and naval exploits, construction and management of forts, maritime and colonizing enterprise, administration of civic and other public interests, as well as the overthrow of the country's enemies."¹⁴ "The evidence of India's achievements in secular endeavour had been furnished by the European themselves. Portuguese, French, Italian, and English tourists and traders came to India during the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What influence did the country and its people have upon these visitors? They whole-heartedly admired the municipal arrangements, the general health and economic prosperity of the people in town and country, as also the

vast river-traffic and the excellent roads and canals. The city of Murshidabad was brighter and more sanitary than the London of those days, according to Clive. Baltazar Solovyus, the French observer wrote even so late as 1811 that the Indian sea-going vessels were more durable and elegant than those of the English and the French."¹⁵

3. That, prior to the industrial revolution, conditions of life in India, China or Japan were not fundamentally different from those of contemporary Eur-America. "By the rigid test of measurable positive phenomena it appears to me that in classical times or in the middle ages down to the industrial revolution the relations between landlords and tenants, the laws of property in regard to the women and the serfs, the social morphology of the village, and the industrial organization of the guilds were governed in the main on similar and almost identical lines both in the East and the West."¹⁶

4. That the introduction of the elements in modern economic life such as factories, mills, railways, etc., in India, China, Japan or anywhere else in Asia is creating the same problems and conditions as have already appeared in the West and the latter are being tackled in the same manner in which they have been and are being solved in Eur-America. "During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, whenever and wherever in Japan, China, India, or Turkey a modern workshop has been established—no matter whether under foreign or indigenous initiative, the same modernism in labour conditions, business organization, economic legislation and social welfare movements—as well as in the so-called philosophical attitudes or out-look on life and the universe has manifested

¹³ *The Futurism of Young Asia*, p. 278.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 165,

¹⁵ *The Futurism of Young Asia*, p. 165-166.

¹⁶ *Greetings to Young India*, p. 69.

itself in these countries as in the West."¹⁷

5. That there is no fundamental distinction even in the folk-psychology of the Orient and the Occident. "Even the folk-customs, folk-superstitions, and folk-beliefs of the different parts of the world bear on them the marks of a common mentality. The popular May festivals of Europe and the Spring celebrations all over India are born of a common need and satisfy the same hunger of the human heart. The agricultural observances, harvest rites, ceremonial songs, and rustic holidayings of the Christian are akin to those of the Hindu. The history of medicine and surgery in Europe from the earliest times exhibits innumerable superstitions of which the analogues are to be found in the Orient."¹⁸

On the above grounds Prof. Sarkar seeks to prove the falsity of the traditional division of human civilization into the Oriental and the Occidental—and in place thereof he seeks to establish a new division on the basis of "time", viz., that into the medieval and the modern.¹⁹ Modern civilization, according to him, is more or less industrial and is but the consequence of the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century.²⁰ The East has not been able to keep pace with the West in respect of this phase of culture,²¹ that is, with respect to modern materialism. Different countries of the East are in different stages of backwardness.²² India, in particular, is behind Europe by about fifty years, i.e., India is where Europe had been near

about 1848-1870.²³ The problem before India is to catch up to the most advanced modern countries.²⁴

The idea that the contemporary Eur-American civilization is heading towards a ruin is wholly disbelieved. It is admitted that the moderns are meeting with many serious problems. But it is stressed that the rise of those problems does not necessarily show that Europe is heading for disaster. Prof. Sarkar seeks to emphasize that the exposure of the defects of modern civilization by the Eur-Americans does not necessarily prove that civilization to be a failure and that it does not become those living on a lower plane of social, economic and political life to denounce modern civilization because of the exposure of its defects by some of the Eur-Americans.²⁵

Why should modern civilization be said to be ahead of us? Prof. Sarkar says that that claim to superiority is very well justified because of some of the achievements of modern countries which we cannot even now conceive of. Some of the achievements²⁶ instanced in this connection are :—(1) Compulsory education of young men up to 18; (2) Control over factories enjoyed by the workers, e.g., in Austria; (3) the solution of the widow problem by endowing widows with pensions on the death of their husband; (4) the recognition of working men's insurance as one of the inevitable items in the minimums of state functions; (5) the compulsory expropriation by the state of land held by the landlords in order to endow the peasants with economic holdings; (6) the virtual capture of the states by the

¹⁷ *Greetings to Young India*, p. 69.

¹⁸ *The Futurism of Young Asia*, p. 115.

¹⁹ Article on 'The Fundamentals of the Banking Business', *Arthik Unnati*, 1333 B.S., pp. 627 and 629.

²⁰ *The Futurism of Young Asia*, p. 144.

²¹ *Greetings to Young India*, p. 101.

²² Article on "Comparative Industrialism" *J.B.N.C.*, March, 1929, p. 189.

²³ Article on "Comparative Industrialism" *J.B.N.C.*, March, 1929, p. 189.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

²⁵ *Greetings to Young India*, pp. 25-26.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

Socialists and the different denominations of the labour parties, etc.

India, however, is not in a state of stagnation. Her modernization has commenced already. The modernism that has made its appearance in India till now in the social, political or economic sphere is, according to him, mainly attributable to the contact with modern Eur-American civilization mainly because of the appearance of the British in India and the spread of Western education in India.²⁷ Prof. Sarkar does not discount the influence of a patriotic appreciation of the past as a factor in the making of modern India.²⁸ But he holds that the influence of the past in the making of the India of to-day is of the same character as the influence of ancient and mediæval Europe in the making of modern Europe.²⁹ Besides, he points out that it is Western education that has made possible the discoveries which have brought to light the missed glories of India's past.³⁰

As regards the future, Prof. Sarkar wants us to take a leaf out of the books of the Turks and the Japanese.³¹ The Turks and the Japanese have frankly accepted the West as their *guru*. The Japanese are always on the alert to notice and to learn any advance in any line wherever made in any country of Eur-America. He advises us to give up our sneering attitude towards the achievements of the moderns and to sit at their feet in the true spirit of disciples.

It will now be evident from what has been said above as to why Prof. Sarkar thinks that India's economic evolution

is bound to be on the lines of that of the advanced countries.

THE BENEFITS OF INDUSTRIALISM

Prof. Sarkar attaches the very greatest importance to the industrialisation of India. India, according to him, must be industrialised by hook or by crook. The reason why he is so very anxious for the industrialization of India will appear from the benefits which he expects to be derived from that consummation. The benefits expected by him are the following :—

1. India's poverty is not due to any iniquity in the distribution of wealth but is due to the lack of a sufficient number of employments. "The Indian poverty problem is to be envisaged as, essentially speaking, a question of unemployment on a vast, continental scale."³² The problem of the poverty doctor is therefore to suggest ways and means 'to create myriads of employments.' Industrialism is expected to add to the number of employments by providing work in the factories for the unemployed and underemployed peasants and also by providing the intelligentsia with posts of engineers, chemists, bank-managers, insurance agents, office-clerks, etc. Industrialism thus is a cure for the poverty problem.³³ But it is expected not only to banish poverty, but to add substantially to the wealth of the country. An industrialised India is expected by Prof. Sarkar to have at least four times its present capacity for producing and consuming goods.³⁴ An industrialized India would be a power in the world's economic system.

2. Agriculture in India to-day has many superfluous hands. By drawing

²⁷ Article on "The Earnings and Social Values of Clerical Labour," *J.B.N.C.*, June, 1928, p. 147 and *Greetings to Young India*, pp. 124 and 97.

²⁸ and ²⁹—*Greetings to Young India*, p. 2.

³⁰ Article on "Comparative Industrialism," *J.B.N.C.*, March, 1929, p. 139.

³¹ *Greetings to Young India*, p. 97.

³² *Economic Development*, p. 392.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

away the surplus hands from agriculture and through mitigation of the force of competition in agriculture resulting therefrom, it would enable the peasants to raise their earnings and hence their standard of living.³⁵ In this way the further industrialization of India would be an important step in furthering the development of Indian agriculture.

3. Industrialism would make true village reconstruction possible. Prof. Sarkar points out that the self-contained character of the Indian villages has ceased to exist. For example, the positions of even the pettiest jute grower in Bengal are governed by world-wide factors. The whole world is, in a sense, present even in the tiniest hamlet. In view of this state of things it is useless to talk of reviving the self-contained character of the villages. Village reconstruction hence can only mean the destruction of the semi-mediæval villages of to-day and the replacement thereof by modern municipal towns. In other words, village reconstruction means, according to Prof. Sarkar, the increasing urbanization and municipalization of the country. The culture and sanitary conditions of the people are expected to improve infinitely as a result thereof. The establishment of mills, factories, railways, etc., in the interior would lead to that organization. Hence, the importance of industrialism from that standpoint.³⁶

4. The further industrialization of India would result in further development of commerce. The industrialism that has been already established in India has led to a phenomenal increase in the volume of India's exports and imports. Further industrialization

would add even more to India's power of production and consumption and hence to the volume of exchange of goods and services. In this way Indian commerce, whether internal or international, would receive tremendous impetus.³⁷

5. Industrialism would lead to the expansion of the labour class. This is welcomed from the political point of view. According to Prof. Sarkar, a modern democracy can only arise when there is a large, strong and self-conscious labour force. The expansion of the labour force in India would provide the foundations for a modern democracy in India.³⁸ That is why the working class alone—and none other—is viewed as the backbone of the future society in India.³⁹

THE EVILS OF INDUSTRIALISM—NOT TO BE DREADED

Industrialism has no doubt its evils. But it is sought to be borne in upon as that it is not wise to put up with the grinding effects of poverty merely because of the dreaded evils of industrialism. There is hardly any stage in economic evolution which is absolutely without its evils. Hence, instead of putting up with the evils of poverty, we should try to remove them by resorting to industrialism, taking recourse, of course, to as many safeguards as possible in order to counteract dangers. His exact words on the point are set forth very vigorously and would bear mention—

“Industrialism indeed has its dangers and pitfalls. No stage in the history of economic evolution is without its evils.

³⁷ *Economic Development*, p. 850.

³⁸ Article on “The Earnings and Social Values of Clerical Labour,” *J.B.N.C.*, June, 1928, p. 162.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 168 and *Greetings to Young India*, pp. 122-28.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 898 and *Greetings to Young India*, p. 86.

³⁶ *Greetings to Young India*, p. 87 and *Economic Development*, p. 893.

But it would be sheer thoughtless obstinacy to practise blindness to the miseries and evils of to-day and yesterday or even glorify and cling to them as virtues, in the fear lest the next stage should bring in new and unheard of troubles.

“There is a limit to cautiousness. One has to be reasonable in regard to the problems of to-morrow; and while not neglectful in the matter of safeguards such as, humanly speaking, may be foreseen both in technique and organization, the strategist or statesman has to plunge boldly into the immediate future. And this future will take care of other futures. It is not expected of man to achieve impossible feats and to be forearmed against the eventualities of millenniums.”⁴⁰

What are the safeguards suggested in order to counteract the evils of industrialism? Prof. Sarkar does not systematically discuss the ways and means for fighting the evils of industrialism. His general attitude is that these evils would be fought when and as they arise. But he gives certain hints from which it is possible to infer as to how he would like them to be fought. He does not

seem to prescribe any extreme programme of the rationalization of the means of production, distribution and exchange—though he does not definitely place out of consideration the adoption of any such programme at some distant time in future. He rather concentrates on what the capitalistically organized Eur-American countries are doing to remove the evils of industrialism. The factory-workers are the persons who are very much affected by the introduction of industrialism. And Prof. Sarkar advises them to realize their just dues (such as the rights to elastic wages keeping pace with the prices, better conditions of work, control over the factories, a share in the profits, better treatment, etc.) through organization and strikes.⁴¹ The various kinds of workmen’s insurance (unemployment, accident and sickness insurance), the workmen’s compensation and other acts intended for the protection of the workers and the old age, widows’ and orphans’ pensions, etc.⁴² are some of the measures adopted in Western countries to combat the evils of industrialism and these are repeatedly mentioned in order that they may be adopted in India.

ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

CHAPTER XVIII

PEACE

अष्टावक्र उवाच

यस्य बोधोदये तावत् स्वप्नवद्भवति भ्रमः ।

तस्मै सुखैकरूपाय नमः शान्ताय तेजसे ॥ १ ॥

अष्टावक्रः Ashtavakra उवाच said :

यस्य Of which बोधोदये with the dawning of knowledge तावत् all भ्रमः delusion स्वप्नवत् like dream भवति becomes सुखैकरूपाय which is bliss itself by nature शान्ताय calm तेजसे effulgence तस्मै to That नमः salutation.

⁴⁰ *Economic Development*, pp. 393-94.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 406.

⁴² Article on “The Beginnings of Social Insurance in the World” *Arthik Unnati* for Aswin, 1335 B.S. pp. 458 to 468.

Ashtavakra said :

1. Salutation to That which is bliss itself by nature, calm,¹ and effulgence,² with³ the dawning of the knowledge of which all delusion⁴ becomes like a dream.

[¹ *Calm*—the Transcendental in which there is no change.

² *Effulgence*—The Atman is self-effulgent: Nothing else can perceive It. Unknowable though, It can be known to Itself by Itself.

³ *With etc.*—The world which now appears so real to us, changes its nature with the realisation of the Self, and appears unreal as a dream. It then loses all its charms and attractions for us, even as the alluring visions in a dream cease to have any charm for us in our waking state.

⁴ *Delusion*—the phenomenal universe which is illusory.]

अर्जयित्वाऽखिलानर्थान् भोगानाप्नोति पुष्कलान् ।

न हि सर्वपरित्यागमन्तरेण सुखी भवेत् ॥ २ ॥

(कश्चित् One) अखिलान् all अर्थान् worldly objects अर्जयित्वा acquiring पुष्कलान् abundant भोगान् enjoyments आप्नोति attains सर्वपरित्यागमन्तरेण without the renunciation of all हि surely सुखी happy न not भवेत् becomes.

2. One gets abundant enjoyments by acquiring all worldly objects. Surely¹ one cannot be happy without renouncing all.

[¹ *Surely etc.*—That renunciation alone removes all fear and makes us truly happy is very beautifully illustrated by Bhartrihari in a verse in his *Hundred Verses on Renunciation*. It says: “In enjoyment, there is the fear of disease ; in social position, the fear of falling off ; in wealth, the fear of (hostile) kings ; in honour, the fear of humiliation ; in power, the fear of foemen ; in beauty, the fear of old age ; in scriptural erudition, the fear of opponents ; in virtue, the fear of traducers ; in body, the fear of death. All the things of the world pertaining to men are attended with fear ; renunciation alone eliminates all fear.”

Sense-enjoyment and happiness do not go together. They are self-contradictory.]

कर्त्तव्यदुःखमार्तण्डज्वालादग्धान्तरात्मनः ।

कुतः प्रशमपीयूषधारासारमृते सुखम् ॥ ३ ॥

कर्त्तव्यदुःखमार्तण्डज्वालादग्धान्तरात्मनः Of one whose heart's core has been scorched by the heat of the sun of the sorrow of duty प्रशमपीयूषधारासार' मृते without the torrential shower of the ambrosia of tranquillity कुतः how सुख' happiness (स्यात् is).

3. How can one whose¹ heart's core has been scorched by the heat of the sun of sorrow arising from duty, enjoy happiness without the torrential shower of the ambrosia of tranquillity?²

[¹ *Whose etc.*—Duty, as it is ordinarily understood, is nothing but slavery in the form of virtue. It is the morbid attachment of flesh for flesh, the absurd greed for gold and gain or other worldly things to which we feel attached. Only those who consider the world as real, find that they have things to do, duties to fulfil. The sense of duty, therefore, arises ultimately from illusion. And it makes us stick to the relative life, subjecting us to all the miseries of the world. This scorches our innermost soul.

² *Tranquillity*—When the *vrittis* of the mind have subsided—the mind has been freed of desires, then the relative life loses its grip on us. We feel that the world is ephemeral and we have nothing to do in or with it. Then comes real happiness. This calmness is, as it were, like ambrosia which pours like rain to revive the parched-up heart.]

भवोऽयं भावनामात्रो न किञ्चित् परमार्थतः ।

नास्त्यभावः स्वभावानां भावाभावविभाविनाम् ॥ ४ ॥

अयं 'This भवः universe भावनामात्रः mere thought परमार्थतः in reality किञ्चित् anything न not भावाभावविभाविनां that cognise existence and non-existence स्वभावानां of the self-existing entities अभावः non-existence न not अस्ति is.

4. This universe is but a state¹ of consciousness. In reality it is nothing. Those self-existing² beings which cognise both existence³ and non-existence, never cease to be.

[¹ *State etc.*—The universe has no independent existence of its own. It is only the projection of the mind. The moment we can bring about a change in our consciousness, the universe will change.

² *Self-existing etc.*—The *jivas* who are none else than *Brahman*, are meant. The objective world derives its existence from the subject, but the subject, from none—it is self-existent.

³ *Existence etc.*—of the Object.

The world changes and is ephemeral. But the soul that experiences its existence and also transcends it, is eternal.]

न दूरं न च सङ्कोचात्लब्धमेवात्मनः पदम् ।

निर्विकल्पं निरायासं निर्विकारं निरञ्जनम् ॥ ५ ॥

निर्विकल्पं Absolute निरायासं effortless निर्विकारं immutable निरञ्जनं spotless आत्मनः पदं the nature of the Self दूरं far न not सङ्कोचात् due to contraction लब्धं attained न not च and एव verily.

5. The nature of the Self which is absolute, effortless,¹ immutable, and spotless,² is verily neither³ far away nor⁴ attained because of contraction.

[¹ *Effortless*—Being one without a second, the Self has nothing to exert for. It is ever inactive—calm and serene.

² *Spotless*—beyond all attributes. The spots are adjuncts to which the Self is absolutely unrelated.

³ *Neither etc.*—The Atman is all-pervasive and therefore nearest of the near.

⁴ *Nor etc.*—like any other sense-object, which is easily attained because it is limited. The Atman is infinite. The mind accustomed to cognise sense-objects, cannot know It.]

व्यामोहमात्रविरतौ स्वरूपादानमात्रतः ।

वीतशोका विराजन्ते निरावरणदृष्टयः ॥ ६ ॥

निरावरणदृष्टयः Those whose vision is unveiled व्यामोहमात्रविरतौ as soon as illusion ceases स्वरूपादानमात्रतः as soon as the Self is apprehended वीतशोकाः with sorrows dispelled विराजन्ते exist.

6. No sooner does illusion¹ cease and the Self is apprehended than the veil² drops off the vision (of the aspirants) and they live with their sorrows dispelled.

[¹ *Illusion*—ignorance which makes one consider the Brahman as the world and as body and mind.

² *Veil*—of ignorance that obstructs the vision of the Self.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

As the *Prabuddha Bharata* enters the 36th year of its career, we fervently pray that it may be a silent instrument in the hand of God for the regeneration of India as also for bringing about a better understanding amongst different sects, creeds, religions and nationalities all over the world. We take this opportunity also to offer our cordial greetings to our readers, friends, sympathisers and all—whose valued co-operation has helped us to carry on our work in the past and we hope we shall not miss the same even in future.

This issue opens with a short article—an offering of heart-felt devotion to her Guru—by Sister Christine. The readers of the *Prabuddha Bharata* may know she was one of the best beloved disciples of Swami Vivekananda and passed away last year. Her reminiscences of the Swami, we hope to publish in future. . . . In *Charlotte Elizabeth Sevier* we have attempted a short sketch of the noble lady who passed away in London on October 20. She was one of the most prominent English disciples of Swami Vivekananda and was responsible along with her husband, Captain Sevier for the founding of the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama and for installing *Prabuddha Bharata* in that Himalayan retreat. We draw the readers' special attention to the article which we have illustrated with a few pictures. . . . In *A Fresh Resolve* we have attempted to show the necessity of looking before and after and of keeping the vision of our ideal bright in order to succeed in life individual and collective . . . We

deem it a privilege to have been able to publish an article from the pen of Swami Suddhananda. He is the present secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission. A disciple of Swami Vivekananda, he had the rare opportunity of knowing him most intimately. He was also entrusted with the task of translating the writings of Swami Vivekananda into Bengali. As such he is the most competent person to reconcile the so-called contradictions in the *Teachings of Swami Vivekananda*, with which many are confronted . . . Romain Rolland's article will be concluded in the next issue . . . *Swami Vivekananda about Himself* gives a picture of the early struggles in his life . . . Though differing from the opinion of the learned Professor, persons interested in the economic reconstruction of India will find enough food for thought, if they follow *Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar on the Economic Development of India* by Shiv Chandra Datta, M.A., B.L., F.R. Econ. S. . . . The verses in *Ashtavakra Samhita* will, we hope, be able to stimulate spiritual fervour at least in some of our readers.

AN INEVITABLE CONFLAGRATION?

Insatiable have been the demands of modern civilisation and irrepressible is the inventive faculty of man to meet them. Our desires for enjoyment are increasing more and more with their leaping flames, and science, that has become an unfortunate slave of civilisation, is ever supplying fuel to keep the fire of desire burning. What a great revolution is being wrought by so many new inventions every year in our outlook, thought and our external

paraphernalia of life ! If a man belonging to the last century could come to see the present world, he would wonder if this was the place he once lived in. If in the 15th century Columbus sailed on a 100 ton ship, now the seas are furrowed by 50,000 ton vessels. If it would take formerly several months to go from the old to the new world, now the distance is covered in a few days. So much is there nowadays to cater to human enjoyments, to supply the needs of man, to whet his appetite for knowledge and to hold that ready-made easily assimilable by human brains.

All these go by the name of progress and civilisation. We say that the world has progressed much further than where it was even a century back. We say that civilisation has been rapidly advancing from day to day. But what would be the criterion of progress and civilisation? If peace and happiness be the criterion of civilisation, we shall easily see we are far from the path to civilisation. The modern world has made us intoxicated with the desire for material enjoyment and giddy with the drink of the poisoned cup it holds to our lips. We are as if caught by a demon, and we do not know how to get rid of its clutches.

The best minds of the world are at despair as to where the speed with which we are moving will lead us to. Sometime back Sir Arthur Keith, that eminent British scientist, contributed an article to *The New York Times Magazine* in discussion of this problem. He also raises doubt whether we are safe at the arms of what we call progress. According to him, "No matter what department of human endeavour we examine we find man in the grip of a power greater than himself. That beneficent Jinn which we call progress has caught all of us in its arms and urges us along, whether we will or not." With regard

to modern civilisation he says, "Can we control the course of civilisation? There is something of the terrible inevitability of a conflagration in the way it spreads forward." "Clearly we are being carried along a road which is beset with perils—the perils of over-indulgence. There is a danger that feelings, emotions and passions may lay siege to conscience and undermine all powers of will. It is when we realise that our progress ministers to the lower rather than to the higher side of our nature that a feeling of uneasiness arises as to the future."

He, however, goes on to suggest some remedy. "If my diagnosis is correct, what is the remedy I would propose? Some of my best friends prescribe religion; far be it from me to deny the efficacy of such means. My own prescription is work—work if we are fortunate enough to have it and twice blessed if we can enjoy it. Work is the salt which gives life its savour. When I regard the future I am buoyed up by the knowledge that work is a necessary condition of human life. Work is a necessity; pleasure is, and should be its reward."

Yes, we also say not a single moment can one be without work, good or bad. If the active senses do not work, mind will work. If you do not like to work, you *will be worked* by the senses. The remedy of the ills of life is to work rightly—in a proper way, knowing the secret of work. If we can work unselfishly, it will bring peace, calm and blessedness. The wheel of causation goes on ceaselessly in the world bringing us joys and sorrows by turns. We suffer when there is sorrow and we do not really enjoy even when joy comes. These are like shadows passing before us; we rush to cling at one and get frightened at the sight of the other. We suffer because we identify ourselves

with them, but in fact neither affects us. We touch the wheel of causation, and we get caught. The secret of happiness lies in keeping ourselves unattached. The more a man becomes unselfish, the greater the bliss he will find. The modern civilisation will not be viewed with alarm, if man becomes unselfish—cultivates disinterestedness. For in that case all the instruments of enjoyment will be turned into those of service—all the powers of evil will be transformed into powers of good. Remove the apple of greed from life, and you free it of all its ills.

In this are we treading on too much a theoretical ground? Well, a traveller following a wrong way was overtaken by night. He would pay heed to no friendly counsel to retrace his steps: he thought his safety lay in the very act of running. If happiness be the goal of human ambition, why should we pursue it in a wrong way? Knowing full well that the selfish pursuits of life bring nothing but misery, why should we not reverse the direction, *i.e.*, try with the same amount of zeal, if not more, to be unselfish—to live for others?

Sir Arthur Keith in the suggestion of remedy, however, makes a confusion

about Religion and Work. He has no quarrel with religion, but prescribes work for its own end to all. But work for work's sake is one of the ways prescribed by religion for the attainment of God. If there is God anywhere, He is within every man—but remains masked by the cloak of human egoism and selfishness. If a man can be perfectly unselfish, Truth will reveal itself automatically. Work for work's sake or Karma-Yoga is *one* of the ways to kill the ego and realise God. The confusion of Sir Arthur perhaps arises from the views of credal religions. For the good of the world, it is highly necessary that religion be shorn of all superstitions and orthodox creeds. There has been in the world much abuse of religion and misconception about its real meaning, and for this reason much of the good that would otherwise have come from religion has been lost to the world. If all misconception could be removed, people would not have been scared by the name of religion and Sir Arthur Keith also would not have gone to the border-land of religion, and refrained from mentioning it as a remedy for the ills of the modern world—he would have found that religion is *the* remedy.

REVIEW

SAMKHYA AND MODERN THOUGHT.
By J. Ghosh M.A., Ph.D. *The Book Company, Ltd., College Square, Calcutta, 137 pp. (Price not given).*

We congratulate the author on the new method he has struck out to present Ancient Indian thought to the modern world. The book is not a comprehensive treatment of the Samkhya philosophy in the old expository style but a critical study of its main conceptions in the light of modern philosophical and scientific thought. The author's object in writing the book is to show that Samkhya system, though one of the oldest schools of thought, is not wholly antiquated, but that its views on the world-process and

the solutions offered by it of the problems of life can still enlighten our thoughts and guide our activities. It has been clearly indicated by him that some of the reasonings and the conclusions of Samkhya fall in line with the investigations of modern psychology and physical science and that in certain cases the former are more consistent and comprehensive than the latter. Some of the parallelisms appear to be striking. The analysis of the intellectual processes by Samkhya, its affirmation of the physical and the mental facts as equally material and its conception of the soul as pure consciousness distinct from both, foreshadow the conclusions which modern psychological

research is now turning to. The purposeful activity of insentient nature conceived by Samkhya is more appealing than the agency of force in the adjustment of nature maintained by physical science. The broad distinction made by science between sentient life and what appears to be insentient is less sound than the Samkhya view of the all-pervasiveness of sensibility.

In course of the discussion the author has examined and answered some of the objections to Samkhya doctrines and ideals of life raised by modern thinkers. He has at the same time pointed out some of the imperfections of the system. The real difficulty in the system, as far as we see, lies in its exact definition of the seeming relation between soul and nature, the root cause of bondage. We wish that the author had dwelt on the point more fully. The comparison drawn by him between the Samkhya theory of evolution and the evolutionary process conceived by the moderns seems to be too short and sketchy.

In representing the system the author has closely followed the authoritative texts and commentaries, and have frequently referred to them in the foot-note. He has strictly avoided Samkhya terminology. And its concepts have been clothed in fine philosophical English. The advanced students of philosophy will find the treatise a profitable and interesting study. Had the style been as simple as elegant, it might have suited general readers not acquainted with Samkhya doctrines. The printing and the get-up are good.

SHIVA OR, THE PAST OF INDIA. By *Elizabeth Sharpe*. Luzac & Co., 46, Great Russell Street, London, W.C., 38 pp. Price 1s. 6d.

This is a nice estimate of the profundity and sublimity of the conception of Shiva. The author tries to remove the misconception of some Western as well as Eastern people regarding the Shiva cult. The very crudeness and vulgarity of the phallic emblem startle the former, while the blind faith of the latter refuses to penetrate into its meaning. The author beautifully brings out the significance of the phallic worship by a graphic account of Parvati's struggle to gain Shiva as her husband. "So Shiva will have none of passion," observes the writer, "He is the destroyer of passion and all the things that make for passion; and

the phallic emblem is the symbol of that which cannot touch the Shiva—lust. It crept into ritual, a thing not to be worshipped nor despised: a thing to be *understood*. It is always *upturned*, a power converted upwards, held upwards, a symbol not of meanness or vulgarity—that lies with the mean and vulgar thinker; a symbol of a grand thought. * * * The Great Snake of Evil lies powerless round the neck of the One who has subdued passion, who dances on the deerskin of dead animal senses."

The author gives her full support to the monistic ideal of Shiva worship. The conception of Shiva is further explained by a free paraphrase of the Shivasahasranama Stotram (Hymn composed of thousand names of Shiva) and Ananda Lahari (Waves of Bliss). The former occurs in the 17th Chapter of the Anushasana Parva of the Mahabharata. The latter is a poem of 41 verses in praise of Shakti, Power of Shiva, attributed generally to the great Shaiva saint Shankaracharya. The book we hope will find appreciation both in the East and the West.

EDUCATION FOR LIFE. By *Samuel Chapman Armstrong*. Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad. 48 pp. Price 3 As.

This small tract is a collection of the sayings and teachings of the author from his addresses and reports of the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, Virginia, of which he was the founder. It is published with a short biographical sketch of the author. The following introductory remarks by a Professor at Harvard clearly sets down the value of the book: "The training of the hand and eye, as well as of the mind—or rather, the training of the mind through observation and manual labour—the moral effect of technical skill, the conception of labor as a moral force, the test education in efficiency, the subordination in industrial training of production to instruction, the advantages to both sexes of co-education in elementary schools, and the vanity of education without discipline in thrift, self-help, love of work, and willingness to sacrifice,—all these familiar maxims of modern vocational training are set forth with the assurance of a social prophet in these few pages of occasional utterances, in which the instinct of a creative genius anticipates the science of to-day."

The printing and the get-up are good.

NEWS AND REPORTS

BIRTHDAY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The birthday of Swami Vivekananda falls this year on Saturday, the 10th January.

BIRTHDAY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The birthday of Sri Ramakrishna falls this year on Thursday, the 19th February. Public celebrations of the Anniversary will take place on the following Sunday, the 22nd February.

RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, WELLAWATTA, COLOMBO.

A new Ashrama has been opened at Colombo, Ceylon. Its inauguration ceremony was performed by Swami Sharvananda on the 22nd October, last. The portraits of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda were duly installed and worshipped. Numerous members, friends and sympathisers of the Mission attended the opening ceremony on the 23rd October. After suitable speeches delivered by Swami Sharvananda and others, the function came to a close with the distribution of *prasād*. Swami Ghanananda has been placed in charge of the new Ashrama. The Vivekananda Society, Y.M.C.A., Young Men's Buddhists Association and various other public bodies invited Swami Sharvananda to speak on varied subjects, namely, "Devotional Practices," "Self-realisation through Service," "Cultural Heritage of India" and the like. At the invitation of the local public, Swami Sharvananda, Swami Ghanananda and Swami Vipulananda went to and delivered several lectures at Trincomalie and Batticalao. The lectures were attended by a large audience everywhere and were much appreciated.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL, BELUR- MATH, HOWRAH

The Ramakrishna Mission Industrial School, Belurmath, has completed the ninth year of its existence in 1929, and the annual report during the year shows how the school is steadily growing into a promising institution.

The number of students on the roll was 17 at the beginning of the year. Fifteen

new students were admitted, five left and nine completed their course. Among the nine successful students, six took up works in shops and two have joined the practical classes of the school.

There are three departments in the school in which students receive their vocational training. In the weaving department, there were ten students on the roll during the year. Two of them left and two passed. In the tailoring department, there were twelve students, out of whom one left and six passed. In the carpentry department, there were ten students, two left and one passed.

There were six day-scholars and the rest were boarders who were all provided with free board and lodging. The classes were usually held from 10-30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and conducted by qualified teachers. Along with the vocational training, the students were imparted physical, intellectual and moral training in the Boarding House attached to the school.

During the year under review, the second prize distribution took place on the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Deva. Six medals were awarded to the successful candidates, proficient in weaving, plain weaving, gents' cutting, carpentry, spinning and in spinning and weaving combined.

The School and the Boarding House are entirely dependent on public subscriptions and donations. Some kind-hearted gentlemen of Belur, Barrackpore, Salkea and Calcutta helped throughout the year with 82 mds. 29 srs. 11 ch. of rice in all for the maintenance of the boarders. The Bally Municipality and the District Board, Howrah, helped the institution with an annual grant of Rs. 96 and a monthly grant of Rs. 20 respectively. The Director of Industries, Bengal, made a monthly grant of Rs. 100. The total receipts during the year amounted to Rs. 7,299-0-3 and the total disbursement to Rs. 7,299-0-3. The School has got Rs. 4,000 as the permanent fund.

The School has always aimed to impart a training that will enable students to earn their own livelihood and become useful citizens. As such, the importance of such an institution can hardly be exaggerated in these days of unemployment. The School is in want of sufficient funds to extend its

work and the generous public may see their way to help it in any way they can.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SINGAPORE

The Ramakrishna Mission, Singapore, has completed its second year of existence. In the second annual report of the same, we find that the Mission work has taken definite shapes which may be put under the following heads:

(1) *Regular Services*: The Monk-in-charge of the Mission conducted regular services at the Mission premises during the year on Sundays.

(2) *Lectures*: There were several lectures under the auspices of the different Societies and Associations.

(3) *Propaganda*: Regular contributions were made by the Swami-in-charge to the local press for the propagation of the ideas and ideals of the Ramakrishna Mission.

(4) *Library*: During the year under review, about 200 books were issued to the members of the library.

(5) *Anniversaries*: The Anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were duly observed. Puja, Lectures, distribution of Prasad and Harikatha Kalakshepam were the main functions on those occasions.

Finance: The income and expenditure for the year ending on the 30th June, 1930, amount to \$1,814.56 and \$1,814.56 respectively. The liabilities of the Mission are \$12,508.85, the assets being \$12,508.85. For the building of the Mission, a sum of about \$6,000.00 has been promised and over \$2,000.00 has already been paid. The estimated cost of the building is roughly \$15,000.00.

This is an infant centre of the Ramakrishna Mission and it is hoped that through the progressive sympathy of the Singapore people, it may very shortly establish itself and spread the ideals of universal religion and practical Vedanta to the inmost corners of the country.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASRAMA, RANGOON

The ninth annual report of the well-known Ramakrishna Mission Sevasrama, Rangoon,

is to hand. It is a record of service done to the suffering humanity not only in Rangoon proper but throughout the length and breadth of Burma.

During the year 1929, the total attendance of patients at the Sevasrama was 1,81,010. The number of patients admitted may be divided into the following heads:

(1) *In-patients*: There were 1,933 males and 256 females including children.

(2) *Out-patients*: There were 1,08,815 including men, women and children.

(3) *Daily totals of attendance*: There were 24,816 males and 8,879 females including children.

(4) *Average daily attendance*: There were 66.6 males and 9.2 females and children, i.e., in total 75.8.

(5) *Average period of stay in the Hospital*: It was 18 days for females and 12 days for males.

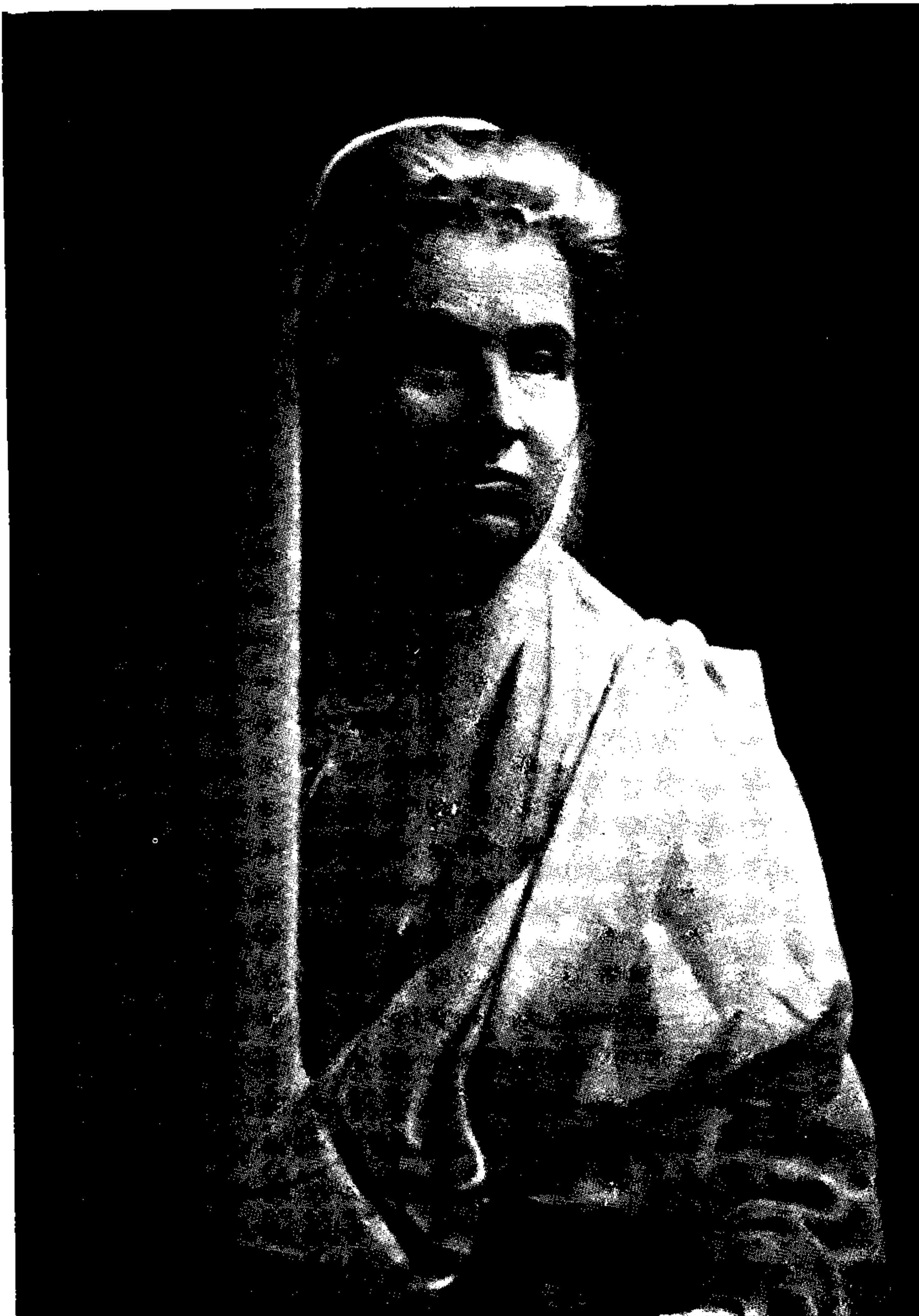
(6) *Chronic cases*: They had to be kept for months.

Children and Female Wards: The principal event of the year was the opening of the Children and Female Wards by Lady Innes and His Excellency Sir Charles Innes, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., Governor of Burma.

Finance: The year opened with a balance of Rs. 6,059-8-0 (including deposit accounts of Rs. 150 with the Corporation of Rangoon and Rs. 80 with the R. E. T. & S. Co. Ltd.). In the year under review Rs. 19,118-8-4 and Rs. 4,062-8-0 were received as contribution and donation respectively; Rs. 8,464-5-0 were collected from the monthly subscribers; Rs. 250-8-0 came from the Charity Boxes, the miscellaneous income was Rs. 199-11-0; and we borrowed an amount of Rs. 2,000. Thus the total amount on account including the opening balance was Rs. 40,149-6-4.

The total amount spent during the year was Rs. 40,118-2-6. The year closes with a credit balance of Rs. 81-8-10 as against the closing balance of Rs. 6,059-8-0 at the end of the previous year. The loan of Rs. 2,000 as shown above became an unavoidable necessity owing to the suspense of payment by the S. M. A. R. Chettyar Firm, where the Sevasrama had a credit balance of Rs. 6,118-9-9. However, out of the loan of Rs. 2,000, the sum of Rs. 1,650 has been paid off.





MRS. C. E. SEVIER



Mrs. C. E. Sevier



Captain J. H. Sevier



A Bird's-eye View of the Mayavati Advaita Ashrama



Sister Nivedita, Mrs. Sevier, Lady J. C. Bose,
Sister Christine



The Main Building of the Mayavati Ashrama after a Snow-fall