

Prabuddha Bharata

OR AWAKENED INDIA

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DECEMBER, 1933



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

Editorial Office

ADVAITA ASHRAMA

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Some of its Contributors are

Swami Abhedananda	V. Subrahmanya Iyer, B.A.
Swami Sharvananda	Prof. Mahendranath Sircar,
Swami Madhavananda	M.A., Ph. D.
Sister Devamata	Prof. M. H. Syed, M.A., Ph. D.
Prof. Nicholas Roerich	(London)
Prof. A. V. Hill, F.R.S.	Dr. J. H. Cousins, D.Litt.
<i>Nobel-Prize man</i>	The Rev. J. T. Sunderland
Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids,	Dr. Taraknath Das, M.A., Ph. D.
D.Litt., M.A.	Captain A. R. Poduval, M.D.,
Edmond Holmes	L.R.C.P., etc.
Dr. Maria Montessori,	Madeline R. Harding
M.D., D.Litt.	Pramatha Nath Bose, B.Sc.
Prof. Ramesh Chandra Mazumdar	(London)
Prof. Radha Kumud Mukherjee	Nagendra Nath Gupta
N. C. Mehta, I.C.S.	Prof. Pramathanath
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Prof. Suniti Kumar Chatterjee,	(of the University of the
M.A., D.Litt. (London)	Philippines)
etc.	etc.

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The Manager
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Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. XXXVIII

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

THE FIRST RAMAKRISHNA MATH

[FROM THE DIARY OF M.]

NARENDRA WITH THE MATH BROTHERS ;
HIS INNER THOUGHTS

In the meditation room, i.e. in the room of Kali the ascetic, Narendra and Prasanna were talking. In another corner of the room were Rakhal, Harish, and Gopal junior. Towards the end came Gopal senior.

Narendra was reading the Gita to Prasanna. He read :

“The Lord, O Arjuna, dwells in the hearts of all beings, causing all beings, by His Maya, to revolve, (as if) mounted on a machine. .

“Take refuge in Him with all thy heart, O Bharata; by His grace shalt thou attain supreme peace (and) the eternal abode. . . .

“Relinquishing all Dharmas take refuge in Me alone; I will liberate thee from all sins; grieve not.”

Narendra : “Just see, ‘mounted on a machine.’ ‘Causing all beings, by

His Maya, to revolve (as if) mounted on a machine.’

“To know God ! You are no better than a crawling worm; how can you dream of knowing Him? Just think what man’s position is ! It is said that each of the countless stars that you see is a solar system. We have one solar system, and it is so vast. Our earth is but a small marble when compared with the sun; and in that earth man is crawling like a worm !”

Narendra sings :

“Thou art our Father Whose little children are we.

We are born out of the dust of this earth, O Lord.

Blinded are our eyes with the same dust.

Born as children do we play with dust;

Oh Thou Protector of the weak, save us from fear.

Wilt Thou not take us into Thy bosom, if we err by chance; wilt Thou at once forsake us and go far away?

Then, then, O Lord, we shan't be able to rise any more; then, we shall have to lie for ever on the surface of this dusty earth, (inert) and senseless.

We are little children, Father, of little sense; at every step we stumble.

Why dost thou, then, show Thy angry face; why are those terrible frowns, now and then?

We are but insignificant, and hence you should not get angry with us? Have we done wrong, Father? Then say with loving words, what they are.

Hundred times dost Thou lift us up, but hundred times do we fall.

What can the weak do of themselves?"

"Lie down, lie down at His feet, seeking His protection."

Narendra sings again as if under inspiration :

The song says that the means of God-realization is to seek His protection.

"I am Thy servant, O Lord, Thy servant, Thy servant.

Thou art my Master, my Master, my Master.

Thou hast given me two slices of bread and a strip of loin-cloth (how glad am I).

I take Thy name; give me health, love, and emotion divine (to sing Thy praise).

Thou art the Lord gracious, Thy name is the Saviour.

Thy servant, Kabira seeks the protection of Thy feet, O Deliverer."

"Don't you remember his (Sri Ramakrishna's) words? The Lord is a vast

sugar-mountain. You are but an ant. One grain of sugar is sufficient for you; and you are thinking of bringing the whole mountain to your home! Don't you remember the words of the Master—that (the great sage) Sukadeva was but a large ant at the most. So I used to tell Kali, 'Fool, are you going to measure the Lord, with a measuring tape?'

"God is the Ocean of Love. Seek protection in Him alone. He will be gracious to you. Just pray to Him: 'Protect me always in Thy gracious aspect.'

"From falsehood lead me to Truth; from darkness to Light; from death to Immortality. O self-manifested Atman, manifest Thyself before me. O Thou Terrible One, what is Thy benign aspect—in that protect me for all times."

Prasanna : *"What are we to do then (to realize Him)?"*

Narendra : *"Only take His name. Have you forgotten the song of the Master?"*

Narendra sings that favourite song of Sri Ramakrishna :

The song says that the means of God-realization is to take His name.

"My only faith is on Thy name, O Mother of the Universe.

Care I for rituals or for hypocritical social conventions?

Well has it been proclaimed by Lord Siva that Thy name breaks all fetters of relative existence.

His follower am I and of none else.

I care not for aught that might befall me ;

On Siva's words I have absolute faith :

I have taken refuge in Thy name."

DOES GOD REALLY EXIST? IS HE KIND?

Prasanna: "You say that God is. But you are sometimes heard to say that Charvaka and others are of opinion that this universe has come into being of itself!"

Narendra: "Haven't you read chemistry? There must be some one to combine the chemicals: human hand is required to combine oxygen, hydrogen and electricity in order to produce water.

"An Intelligent Force is universally believed to exist: Some One Whose essence is intelligence and Who is conducting this huge affair (of the universe)."

Prasanna: "How am I to know that He is kind?"

Narendra: "The Vedas say, 'In Thy graciousness.' John Stuart Mill, too, says the same thing. He says: 'I do not know how very kind is He Who has imparted kindness to the human heart.' The Master used to say, 'Faith is the quintessence of religion.' He is very near to us, we are only to believe it; that's all."

With this, Narendra sings again in his melodious voice:

The song says that the means of God-realization is faith.

*"Where do you seek for Me, my boy;
I am by thy side (all the while).*

I am neither in the skin nor in the hair (of the body), neither in bones nor in flesh. I am neither in temples nor in mosques. I am neither in Kashi nor in Kailas; neither in Oudh nor in Dwarka. I reveal Myself where there is faith. I am not in rites and ceremonies, nor in spiritual practices and renunciation. If you but search for Me devoutly for a moment, I reveal Myself to you at once. Outside the city in the heart is My little cottage. Kabira says, 'Hear me.

brothers, the Lord is with each and all of His holy children.' "

WITH DESIRES ARISES DOUBT ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Prasanna: "Sometimes you say, there is no God. And now you are saying all these. You do not keep to one view; you always change your opinion." (All laugh).

Narendra: "No more will I change this opinion. As long as there are desires and hankerings, one doubts about the existence of God. Always there is one desire or other. Perhaps the desire to study, to get degrees or to become a scholar—some such desires (always linger)."

NARENDRA IS BESIDE HIMSELF WITH DEVOTION

With voice choked with devotional feelings, Narendra goes on singing song. "*He loves those very dearly who take refuge in Him, He is the father, He is the mother.*"

He sings another song which exhorts all to drink of the cup of devotion. It says that the Lord is very near to us just as the musk to the musk-deer (which not knowing whence is the sweet scent coming, runs about for it).

M. was hearing all these from the verandah. Narendra rose; when coming out of the room, he said, "The brain gets heated with so much talk." Seeing M. on the verandah he said, "Dear M., just have some light refreshment."

A Math-brother says to Narendra, "And you say there's no God!" Narendra laughs.

NARENDRA'S RENUNCIATION; HIS CRITICISM OF THE HOUSEHOLDER'S LIFE

The next day was Monday, the 9th May. M. was sitting in the morning

under a tree in the Math garden. He was thinking: The Master has made the Math-brothers renounce the world. Ah! how intense is their desire to realize God. The place is, as it were, the highest Heaven; the Math-brothers are but so many images of the Lord. It is not many days that the Master has passed away. So all his thoughts and ideas are still vibrant. The same Ayodhya! But Rama is absent! He has made them renounce the world; but some he has kept as householders. Why? Is there no way out?

From a room of the first floor Narendra saw M. sitting alone under a tree. He came down and said smilingly, "What are you doing here?" A conversation began, but M. cut it short saying, "Ah! what a voice you have! Just sing me a hymn."

Narendra recited a hymn in which a devotee begged to be pardoned for his numerous faults—the householders forget all about the Lord, commit many sins, in childhood, in youth, in the old age. Why do they not serve and think of God in all earnestness!—The hymn narrates all these.

Recitation finished, conversation began again.

Narendra: "You may talk of the unattached life, worldly life or the alike; but the essential thing is that one must renounce lust and gold. Anything short of that won't do. God-realization with having sex idea! Impossible.

Narendra goes on quoting Sanskrit verses and singing songs in corroboration of what he has said just now. He says:

"We must take to the life of a monk and wear his dress. One must cut off all connections with the world. Why should a man be bound down to the world? Why should he get entangled in the meshes of Maya? What is the

true nature of man? 'I am that Siva (the Lord), Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute.' I am That."

He again chants a hymn which says: "Oh Lord! I have taken refuge in Thee with all my heart. Save me from sex-desires and sin, from ignorance and attachment; and above all give me pure love for Thee. Born again and again, much have I suffered; led by inordinate passions, grievous sins have I committed. There is hardly a sinner worse than I, a sufferer greater than myself. I have sought for protection throughout the world and have been turned away from every door. In my sore distress I find no protection except in Thee. I am tired of these countless births and deaths; terrible and hideous are this world and the sorrows thereof. Deny me not, my Lord. Save me, a sinner, who has surrendered himself completely to Thy grace. Merits have I acquired none; sins have I committed innumerable; Many a time have I vowed to correct myself, but every time have I failed most miserably. Make me whole with Thy grace. Give me love pure for Thee. With love for Thee I care not if I be born again and again."

M.: (aside) "What a burning spirit of renunciation is in Narendra! It is because of this that all the Math-brothers are in the same state of mind. On seeing the devotees who are still leading the worldly life, these are reminded all the more of the necessity of renouncing lust and gold. Ah! What a nice state of mind! Why has the Master kept a few others in the world still now? Will he devise a means for them too? Will he give them the same spirit of renunciation, or will he keep them deluded in the world?"

Narendra has to-day gone to Calcutta with two other Math-brothers. He will

return in the evening. Narendra's lawsuit is still pending. The Math-brothers

can hardly bear his separation. Everyone is thinking when he will return.

WHAT THEN ?

BY THE EDITOR

I

Even a child does not like to be controlled by his elders. If he submits to the control of his superiors, he does so out of sheer helplessness. Similarly no nation likes to be under the tutelage of another nation, however benevolent the latter may be. A man does not like to be under the dictation of another man, though the latter may be his sincere well-wisher. Everyone likes to have complete freedom of action though that may involve serious risks. He may not be wise enough to guide himself, but he wants to learn by his mistakes. It is far better to commit mistakes and learn than remain eternally a minor. It is from this idea that the subject nations all over the world are trying to throw off the foreign yoke. They are not in a mood to listen to or believe that their rulers are led only by an idealism to continue their protection over them. They do not want any protection, they do not like to be under any shelter; they want to be thrown absolutely on their own resources—to sink or to swim. This is the psychology of political fights of all subject nations in the world. If they continue to remain under foreign rules, it is only because they cannot help it, just as a child submits to the tyranny of his guardians out of mere inability to assert his own views.

Modern theory of education says that

the greater the amount of freedom given to the child, the greater the chance of his perfect growth and development. This is true with respect to national life also. A nation under a foreign rule will feel that its growth is hampered in a thousand and one ways, because it is not politically free. By searching even the whole history of the world, it will be difficult to find out any ruling nation which was able to convince the subject people, or to keep them under that conviction for a long time, that it ruled them only for the good of the latter. Foreign rule is everywhere looked upon with distrust and suspicion, even if it be really good.

II

Here the questions arise, does political independence necessarily bring happiness to a nation? Is the salvation of a nation identical with its political independence? Are the general populace of a country happy simply because they have their own people at the helm?

A country may miserably suffer, though it may be politically free. This is why we come across so many revolutions, if we study the history of the world. The rule of the Tsars was not a happy thing for the Russians, though the Tsars were their own countrymen. Every revolution means that the people were so much tyrannized that by mere desperation they were goaded to rise against the throne.

Even in countries where there is a democratic form of government, are the people happy? The very fact that in every country the ministry changes from time to time indicates that no political party in power could give satisfaction to the whole nation. Besides, everybody knows that democracy has been a sad failure. Nowhere democracy means that general masses control political power; it is everywhere the vested interests which rule the country for their own selfish purposes, giving only a secondary importance to the welfare of the masses. As a result, even in democratic countries, people are not happy—they have great grievances against the governments.

Political independence is not an end in itself, it is a means to an end—it is a means to make the people happy, to give them an opportunity to pursue the goal of human life. Judged by this standard, no politically free country in the world has attained the desired end. Even in free countries, the misery of the people is as great as ever. The government exists not for the good of the people—though it professes to be so—but to serve the interests of particular people. Tolstoy would say, “The government, in the widest sense, including capitalists and the Press, is nothing else than an organization which places the greater part of the people in the power of a smaller part, who dominate them; that smaller part is subject to a yet smaller part, and that again to a yet smaller and so on, reaching at least a few people, or one single man, who by means of military force has power over all the rest. So that all this organization resembles a cone, of which all the parts are completely in the power of those people, or of that one person, who happen to be at the apex.

“The apex of the cone is seized by those who are more cunning, audacious

and unscrupulous than the rest, or by someone who happens to be the heir of those who were audacious and unscrupulous.”

Truth of the above statement is borne out by the fact that even in wealthy countries a large number of people suffer from unemployment and are on the verge of starvation, and yet no successful step has been taken to combat the evil. Rich people grow richer, and poor people become poorer and suffer more and more misery. Who cares for them? Everywhere circumstances are such that the government cannot devote its best attention to the welfare of the general masses. Attempts are, no doubt, made, here and there to improve the lot of the people, but those attempts are made only when all other interests have been fully served. It is something like doing charity by a man who performs such actions only when he has got all the comforts and luxuries he wants.

It has been calculated that there are now about 2 crores of people unemployed in the world. If we include dependants, there are some 4 to 5 crores of men, women and children who are facing hunger and nakedness.

And while millions are on the verge of starvation, nearly 500 crores of dollars are being annually spent for armaments, and from 80 to 85 p.c. of all taxes extorted from the people go for war purposes.

And who suffer most during the war as well from its after-effects? It is the general public. They become physically, morally and spiritually ruined. They are led to war, through the intoxication of nationalism, and turned into brutes; they are trained to stifle all finer feelings and to resemble in every respect wild animals fighting one another. And each war costs so many human lives and so much money even

to the victorious party! —so much so that it requires many years for the country to come to a normal condition, and perhaps at that time it has to be ready for another war. People are coming to understand the tragedy of such affairs, and if they have not already revolted against them, it is because they have been kept in delusion and ignorance. People are everywhere tired of war, but still there is chance of their being led to it in spite of themselves. At present the economic depression all the world over is such, that the misery of the people has reached almost a breaking point. But still, another war is in preparation; one can almost hear its rumbling sound. If at the present situation of the world, another war breaks out, God only knows what will be the extent of the misery of people. And in this there will be no distinction of peoples—politically free or dependent—all will suffer.

III

The present civilization is called a scientific civilization. The power of a civilized nation nowadays is measured by its capacity to harness the forces of nature to the end it desires. But unfortunately science has proved to be a dangerous instrument in the hands of those with whom might is right. Science has no doubt contributed to human happiness to some extent, but it has also supplied people with weapons to wreck the peace of the world. Power in the hands of the irresponsible is dangerous. As such science is being utilized more for base ends than for the noble purposes to which it could be applied.

Man is now busy to control the forces of external nature, but does not think that it is more important to devise means as to how to control his inter-

nal nature. As such, a man is daily becoming more and more a victim of lower instincts. The animal in him is finding greater opportunity for growth than the Divine in him. Everything in the world nowadays serves to foster the growth of greed, avarice, selfishness, etc.—things which will make man unsafe for human society. Self-aggrandisement instead of self-control is the order of the day. The cultivation of higher qualities does not receive as much attention as it should. Man is not ready to undergo the discipline and restraint which presuppose the development of moral virtues. Everywhere man wants unchartered liberty of action. But freedom without previous discipline leads to abuse. As man nowadays cannot brook any control from any quarter, he has lost all control over himself and is running headlong towards destruction.

Nowadays though man boasts of the many uses to which science has been put, though he prides himself over many comforts and luxuries he has got, it is doubtful whether the modern world is more civilized than ancient India or Greece or China. Many relics of barbarism are to be found in the modern civilized society. And the pity of it is that many are not ready to recognize them.

So long as such a state of things exists or is encouraged to continue, no form of government will give happiness to any nation. So long as man's action is not prompted by higher idealism, whoever holds the power will tyrannize over the people or at least will serve his interest at the cost of the interest of the dumb millions. In this respect indigenous government will not make much difference from a foreign rule. A prominent Indian leader some time back very aptly said that if an indigenous government took the place

of the foreign government and kept all the vested interests intact, that would not be even the shadow of freedom.

Indeed no form of government will be a sufficient guarantee to the happiness of the people so long as human nature remains as it is. Man is by nature selfish; he still retains in him the primitive instinct of struggle for existence and follows the rule of the survival of the fittest. To a higher man self-sacrifice is the law of life—he is ever ready to sacrifice his all to the cause of others. He is extolled and admired because of his readiness to sacrifice his interest for the sake of humanity. But such persons are very rare. Ordinary persons spend all their energy to fulfil their selfish interest, and as soon as they get into power they will take advantage of their position to serve their own ends. Government is not an abstract entity; it is after all composed of human beings. And therefore the weakness of persons constituting a government will be reflected in the latter.

Such being the case, if any one believes that political independence will bring in the millennium for his country, he remains to be disillusionized. It is natural for a man to expect that his interest will be safer in the hands of his own countryman than in those of a foreigner, but logic does not say that one's own countryman cannot prove as bad as a foreigner, if not worse. A man may be so selfish, that he will not hesitate to betray the cause of his country, for furthering some selfish ends. History is not slow to supply instances of persons, who have proved themselves to be traitors to their motherland. So long as human nature is not fundamentally changed, nobody can be trusted. Particular individuals may be of exemplary character, their whole aim in life may be to serve their countrymen ;

but their followers may be as bad as they were good.

IV

It has been said that independence is a much-abused word, it hardly proves to be what people understand by it. A country may be politically free, but its people may be as much under tyranny or in misery as any subject nation. It may be that the advantage of political freedom will be reaped only by a few, and the whole country will be suffering as much as ever.

A country will be in an ideal condition, when the persons wielding political power are the best type of persons. Under such state only the interest of the people will be safe. In ancient India though the king, representing the military power, would rule the country, he would often be under the guidance of his family preceptor—a Rishi who typified ideal man. As such the royal actions would very often be prompted by a great idealism. The ambition of a king would be not so much to be a powerful ruler as to be an ideal king. Ancient India admired not a Cæsar or an Alexander, but a Ramachandra whose name has come down through the corridor of time to us as an incarnation of moral perfection—an Incarnation of God. We do not say that there was not a Duryodhana or Kansa in ancient times, but such characters would be universally condemned. People would be less overpowered by the grandeur of royal power than filled with admiration for high moral qualities to be found in kings. Because such was the tradition handed down from the hoary past, even in historical age India could produce an Asoka or a Kanishka.

Nowadays the most pressing problem before every country is not how to evolve the best form of government, but how to produce the best type of men.

But unfortunately little attention is nowadays paid to that direction, and a great chaos is the result. People do not look at the fundamental cause of evils in the world, and at the same time fondly wish that ideal condition should prevail on earth. One may as well, then, wish that fire should not burn, water should not make wet or the sun should not produce heat.

V

Man has got body, mind and soul. People usually take care of the body, develop their intellect, but pay no attention to realize the Self. By developing the body one may have physical happiness, with the growth of the intellect one may have knowledge of the external world, but unless one dives deep down within oneself, one will not have real happiness. Unless a man develops spiritually,—however high may be his intellectual powers, however refined he may be in his manners and behaviour—at any moment he may find himself, to his great dismay, no better than a brute. The animal in man is always trying to come out; only the man who has control over himself, can check that. But how few are the persons who have complete control over themselves! Man may conquer the waves, man may control the elements, but unless he has conquered himself, he is no better than a wild animal. It is because man nowadays is not particular about the conquest of himself, that there is conflict and chaos everywhere, and even in civilized countries there is going on constant display of devil dance. A civilization should be judged by its spiritual culture, and not by its material power. But unfortunately reverse is the case. A nation is respected according to the military strength it has; its culture and civilization have no value unless it has got sufficient

military power to compel attention from the ready-to-fight nations of the world. Some time back a Japanese said very significantly: "We brought you (the people of the West) our flowers and paintings, and you took no notice. It was only when we adopted your guns that you paid us any attention." It is ironically said that a rich man easily gets the reputation of being wise, though he may be in reality a fool. A nation with great military strength is universally recognized to be highly civilized, though it may not have at all the qualities which characterize a truly civilized people. Wealth and power are false standards by which to judge a civilization. These false standards must go. The greater a man resembles his Maker, the more civilized is he. And the greater the number of such people in a country, the higher is the quality of its civilization.

The Upanishads say that it is a tragedy of human life that man's senses always go outward and become the cause of his sufferings. It is only some fortunate few who desirous of immortality turn their eyes inward and behold the inner Atman. The ideal of man should be to see the Atman, and not simply to have 'freedom of action and liberty of conscience,' as is commonly supposed to be. Many people say that a nation will attain an ideal condition, when its people can follow their will unhampered and obey their conscience without any hindrance. As we said before man will not be happy, though he be allowed complete freedom of action, unless he develop his inner life. And how can the question of the 'liberty of conscience' at all arise? For very few have what is called conscience: they have stifled it to death by wilfully neglecting its call. All are running after the senses, and hence this universal suffering in the world.

Such being the case, mere political independence will not bring happiness to a nation. For those who claim to be its protectors, may prove false to the cause they have espoused. They may do so in spite of themselves. Very few remain constantly alert to find out what is right, and try to follow that; and there are some who cannot follow the right, though they try, because they have no control over themselves—with them the piteous cry is, "Led by whom man commits a wrong?" This state of things will change only when man pays greater importance to his inner development.

But will the world follow this path, though it "leadeth unto life," by giv-

ing up the way which is broad and easy? Perhaps the world needs some more experience to come round. The last war has turned the mind of many thinkers to the actual condition of modern civilization. But they find themselves helpless to fight against the forces of evil. Perhaps the next war will prove more disastrous in its effects and set a greater number of people thinking as to what should be the right attitude of a man and a nation towards life. In this way, by getting blows after blows, the world will realize its mistakes. Man learns by experiences. Will not the world do the same? Let us not be pessimists.

THE PROBLEM OF PROBLEMS

BY NAGENDRANATH GUPTA

As a diamond is set in a loop of gold so has the soul its setting in a cycle of lives. Everywhere the circle and the orb are the symbols of completeness and perfection. The firmament is full of dazzling luminaries smooth and round in shape. There are no angles, no sharp projections. The movement of the heavenly bodies is circular. They rotate on their own axes and travel round in their own orbits. The visible horizon is a circle, the sky overhead is the half of a hollow sphere. The circle is the most perfect and flawless geometrical figure.

*

Even time which usually moves in one continuous stream has a phase of cyclic movement. The seasons, which are periods of time, pass in rotation, coming and going round and round

through the ages. The alternation of birth and death is like an arc of a circle, and every birth is an elongation of a circular line. The movement ceases with the cessation of a fresh birth after death and the circle is complete.

*

In a definite sense this circle is of our own making, and it shrinks or expands accordingly as we order our lives in each incarnation. The account of Karma may be prolonged or wiped out, and we may choose to remain strapped to the giant wheel of births and deaths, or to loosen our bonds and set ourselves free.

*

Among all races and in all times has existed this desire for ultimate freedom. Call it Nirvana, Moksha, or the attainment of heaven, the root idea is to

escape from the bondage of birth to the freedom of non-birth. Even in the simple creed that eliminates the past and takes no cognizance of previous births, which regards the soul and the body as the products of a simultaneous creation the bonds of the flesh are not recognized in the life hereafter. In the resurrection, it has been said, they neither marry nor are given in marriage.

*

In Karma lies the explanation of the difference between man and man. It is the law of cause and effect. The cause is generated in our previous lives, the effect becomes apparent in our present life. The choice of the cause lies with us but the effect is beyond our control. We may point and shoot an arrow as we will but we have no power to arrest its flight or to divert its course and aim.

*

From the cause to the effect the sequence is inevitable and irrevocable, but it is given to us to generate fresh causes and to add to or neutralize previous effects. When an evil-doer reforms his ways he sets in motion a new cause to counteract the effect of his previous actions, and a seeker of wisdom adds to his store by fresh effort.

*

Every new birth is a fresh opportunity for adjustment of the old account. Life is like a debtors' prison in which we are detained time after time in successive births and we can be free only when the debt is paid.

*

If life were a single brief existence with nothing behind it, a bubble rising and bursting on the silent, swift waters of time, why should any one concern himself with the why and wherefore of it? All wisdom, or the want of it, would be concentrated in the teaching

of the Greek philosopher—eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die.

*

For the vast majority of mankind this is the only real and practical philosophy of life. It peremptorily excludes all thought, all speculation, all curiosity about the past, all anxiety about the future. Live as the butterfly lives, a few hours of a gay existence, the flashing of gorgeous wings in the sunshine, the flittings from flower to flower sipping honey, the merry chasing of the mate, and the final flutter and then the stillness of death.

*

The soul sleeps or remains quiescent, there is no stored energy of past lives to quicken reflection or thought, no questionings about the hereafter, no looking back to the road already traversed. Still there is an occasional stirring of the spirit, moments of unease when there is a faint sense of something lacking, a void that needs to be filled.

*

Even when no thought comes of what is behind this life it is impossible to shut out all thought of what is beyond. To the primitive man as well as to the highly civilized there is always a prospect of another life beyond this life. If the latter has beatific visions of paradise, the former is equally happy in his dreams of a happy hunting ground.

*

This refusal to accept death as the final end of existence does not proceed from a mere human weakness. It is a faith ingrained in our being, wrapped up in the consciousness of the spirit. This faith cannot be shaken by the theory that the physical body of man holds nothing to justify a belief in a future existence.

*

It is a superfluous contention because the flesh of man is dust and unto dust it must return. It is equally undeniable that man is capable of doing what cannot perish and the spoken word may live as a vitalizing force even after structures of granite and marble have become dust like the frail human body.

*

More than any speculation about the future the past is a convincing testimony to the immortality of the human soul. Like alone can produce like; out of the transient the emergence of the permanent is inconceivable; the feeble cannot bring forth the strong; a mere mortal cannot give utterance to immortal thoughts.

*

The intellect unaided, however powerful or keen, cannot penetrate the mystery of being, and hence the endless conflict between doctrines and philosophies. There is the philosophy that has for its foundation the doctrine that man can have no knowledge of anything but phenomena, and that the knowledge of phenomena is relative and not absolute.

*

A conclusion like this is arrived at by a process of intellection without any resort to the higher power of communion, the contact with the spirit known as Yoga or Samadhi. The intellect alone cannot comprehend more than phenomena, and that not wholly. All the phenomena of which we have knowledge are effects, but the knowledge that we seek is of the causes.

*

A great intellect is like a powerful searchlight; it floods distant objects with light and cleaves the darkness with razor-like blades, but the illumination extends to surfaces only, it cannot pierce below the surface. The light of

the intellect plays over the exterior of things, it throws into relief what is palpable, but cannot reach the core.

*

To get at the truth, the cause that lies behind the effect, the reality behind phenomenon we need the X-rays of the spirit, the light that reveals the bone inside the flesh, that pierces solid walls, that passes through the thick veils of Maya with as much ease as ordinary light travels through ether.

*

Self-communion, out of which proceeds the knowledge of Self, holds the apparatus of spiritual X-rays. It has to be properly adjusted so that the light may successfully penetrate the solid obstacle of matter and lay bare the naked truth before us. The power to use this instrument is inherent in all of us; we have to acquire the skill without which it is of no use.

*

Every great teacher, every great guide of humanity has held self-communion during which the revelation of the truth has come to him. A time comes in the life of every true prophet and seer when he withdraws from the bustle and distractions of the world and seeks solitude in order that he may find the truth undisturbed. He is like the angler who finds out a quiet pool where the fish rises readily to the bait.

*

The true knowledge of Self, the realization which puts an end to all doubts and questions, is a perception of great subtlety. It cannot be analysed by reason alone, nor condensed in a syllogism. It can be neither acquired nor explained away by argument. The intellect has its own plane, but the higher truths are beyond its reach. Cold argument on a subject like this is mere sophistication.

*

A somewhat crude but significant illustration is that of the man who went to a saint and put him questions about God. Not satisfied with the answers given the man said, 'Show me God and I shall believe that he exists.' The saint picked up a stone and hit the inquirer on the head. The man complained of pain and the saint answered, 'Show me your pain and I shall show you God.'

*

Just as pain is to be felt and not seen, so is the Self to be known and not merely reasoned about and debated upon. There is nothing to be taken on trust, no dogma to be accepted without question, no implicit reliance upon a revealed faith. It is a knowledge that every one has to acquire for himself.

*

The difference is in the method of attainment. The doctrinal or theoretic part of any creed is not difficult of comprehension, because it is on the intellectual plane. The deep, underlying truth, the solution of the mystery that perplexes us is to be discovered by our own efforts,—not by a process of reasoning, but by the light of our inner being, the communion that is subtler than the intellect.

*

Age after age this has been the highest and most difficult quest of man, the one problem that has absorbed all his thoughts to the exclusion of the passing things of life. The high destiny of man is not the hoarding of wealth, or the building of kingdoms, but to lift the veil behind which stands the truth, unchanging and unalterable through all time.

*

Is it our destiny to be merely the plaything of circumstance, to be tossed about like a shuttlecock from battledore to battledore, and finally to be

flung aside like the battered and broken toy of a child? Are we to be caught perpetually in the net of delusion like flies in the spider's web?

*

Quite apart from the probability of things or the likelihood of the truth, consider the two conceptions of life: first, the life that is inspanned between a single birth and death, with nothing to look for either behind or before; next, the life that has passed many milestones of births and deaths, and may or may not have to traverse a similar weary road in future.

*

The man whose thoughts cannot travel beyond the present life cannot have anything to bequeath to others who come after him, for everything that men desire or possess in life is fleeting like life itself. Great possessions, unlimited power, the enjoyment of life, all turn to dust in the hand.

*

The other man who resolutely turns his back upon the good things of life, who puts temptation behind him, who closes his ears to the siren voices of the pleasures of life, and with a steadfast, single purpose devotes himself to fathom the mystery of being, discovers a treasure of thought that can be neither wasted nor exhausted and is shared by countless generations.

*

That is why the very greatest of men have no worldly possessions whatsoever and despise the things for which men sweat and toil, and for which they are prepared to barter their soul. Who would have heard of Siddhartha the Prince if he had become the King of Kapilavastu? Everything that men seek in life—wealth, love, power, domestic felicity, was his by the primary right of birth. When he

abandoned all these, people thought he had taken leave of his senses.

*

He became a homeless wanderer on the face of the land, an itinerant beggar who begged his food from the pariah and the outcast as well as from the well-born householder. The time came when he was an honoured guest of kings, but for himself he never owned anything and the world had nothing to offer that he desired.

*

He did not, however, admit that he was an idler, who shirked toil and had an easy life. When a farmer who did not know that the Buddha was a king's son and had renounced a kingdom, accused him of leading an idle life and advised him to become a tiller of the soil in order to earn a living, the Buddha answered him in a short parable that silenced the farmer though perhaps it was beyond his understanding.

*

The Buddha said he was also a labourer in the field, a ploughman. "Faith is the seed I sow and good works are as the rain that fertilizes it. Wisdom and modesty are the parts of the plough and my mind is the guiding rein. I lay hold of the handle of the law, earnestness is the goad I use, and diligence is my draught ox. Thus is my ploughing ploughed, destroying the weeds of delusion. The harvest that it yields is the ambrosial fruit of Nirvana, and by the ploughing all sorrow ends."

*

Jesus, the son of Joseph the carpenter, could have stuck to his lathe and adze, and earned an honest living, but he also elected the vagrant life. Of his homelessness he said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." And he

also spoke the parable of the sower, and of the seeds that brought fruit an hundredfold.

*

To all appearance these men were as other men, poorer than most and strangely indifferent to the good things of life. Who could have judged in their lifetime that they were bequeathing a priceless treasure to humanity, a wealth that would grow with time unlike the worldly wealth that comes only to vanish again? What made them deliberately turn their backs upon all that men usually prize, and prefer poverty and a wandering life to the ease and shelter of a home?

*

Whence comes his wonderful power of discernment, the intuition that distinguishes between the real and the unreal, that turns to the truth with the unerring precision of the needle to the magnet? There is no obvious explanation as to why some men should be so utterly unlike their fellows and reject without regret all that is attractive in life.

*

It is not enough to say that such men are gifted with a vision which is denied to other men and their natures are more profound. The only satisfying explanation is the doctrine of Karma, a certain storage of insight accumulated in previous lives like a store of electricity in a power-house.

*

That is the driving power behind the wheels of life, the determining cause of the course we choose in the brief journey of life. Partly we live our own lives, but in the main we pursue a path that we ourselves laid down when the choice rested with us. We are the arbiters of our own destiny, and we make and unmake it as we will.

*

Whether we accept or deny the doctrine of previous incarnations, the present life itself is an indisputable testimony to past influences that have moulded it. Otherwise, one life would be spent as another, there would be no renunciation or rejection of the average aspirations that fill a lifetime, the sordid scheming and struggling that make up life. All life would be a dead, flat level without any heights or hollows.

*

There would be no incentive to thought or inquiry, no appreciation of any mystery, no unrest, no endeavour to rise above circumstance, no response to the challenge that comes from outside and within. There would be nothing to distinguish man from the lower creation.

*

Man stands higher than the rest of created beings not merely by the higher order of his intelligence, but by the nobler and higher urge of his spirit, his power to detach himself from the tangible in pursuit of the intangible, his ability to distinguish between the real and the unreal, his capacity for developing an inflexible resolution.

*

In the two views of life the first practically ignores the existence of the soul. There is merely a depressing recognition of the littleness of life, a sense of utter helplessness, impotence

and complete absence of responsibility. Life becomes a rudderless vessel on the raging waters of time, a straw blown about in the storm.

*

The second is an illuminating vision of the eternity of existence, fixity in the midst of mutability, changelessness in the midst of change. Behind the present life there is a lengthy record of other lives, lives that were spent well or ill, and have helped to fashion this life through which we are passing.

*

The real existence is that of the soul, or the self. Unseen it waxes and wanes like the moon, phase by phase, from the crescent to the half moon and so on to the full orb, or it may grow fainter and fainter till it becomes invisible. Unlike the moon, however, the soul when it is full like the full moon, merges into the greater Light from which all things proceed, and the rotation of its phases comes to an end.

*

The sum and end of life is freedom, freedom from the ever-recurrent bondage of births and deaths, freedom of the soul from the toils, and the ultimate and final attainment of peace. The knowledge of the Self is the way to liberty and the discovery of the truth and at the end of the journey the reward of the traveller is peace.

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PEACE AND EDUCATION

BY DR. MARIA MONTESSORI, M.D. (Rome), D.Litt. (Durham)

(Concluded from the last issue)

VII

If we wish to set about a sane psychical rebuilding of mankind, we must go back to the child. But in the child we must not merely see the son, the being in whom our responsibilities are centred: we must consider the child in himself and not in his relation to us, which is that of dependence. We must turn to the child as to a Messiah, an inspired being, a regenerator of our race and of society. We must succeed in effacing ourselves till we are filled with this idea, then go to the child, as the wise men of the East, loaded with power and with gifts, and led by the star of hope.

In the child, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau theoretically imagined him, we can find the natural characteristics of man before they were changed and spoilt by the baneful influences of society and around this theoretical problem the phantasy of genius wove a romance. Such a question would interest abstract psychology, and the study of it would go far to create an embryology of the mind.

But, for our part, as we studied the new child, who has manifested unsuspected psychical characteristics—surprising because hitherto unknown—we discovered something more than an embryology of the mind. What struck us in particular was the existence of an actual conflict, of a ceaseless struggle which awaits man at his birth and accompanies him throughout the course of his growth—and this is the conflict

between the adult and the child, between the strong and the weak, we may even add, between the blind and the seeing. The adult, in his dealings with the child, is indeed blind and the child is indeed a seer: he brings us the gift of a little flame to enlighten us. The adult and the child—both unconscious of their own characteristics—are engaged in an age-long warfare, more acute than ever to-day because of our complex and depressing civilization. The adult triumphs over the child so that, when the child has grown into a man, he bears graven for ever in him, the marks of that famous peace which follows war, and which is on the one hand a destruction and on the other a painful adaptation. It is impossible for the child to help the old fallen man to rise by instilling into him his own fresh, new life, for the old man just goes for him and tries to crush him. This situation was not so disastrous in the past as it is gradually becoming now, as man, creating an environment ever further removed from the state of nature, hence less and less adapted to the child, is increasing his power and, at the same time, his domination over the child. No new moral refinement has come to save the adult from his blinding selfishness; no new understanding of this changing situation, so unfavourable to the child, has illumined his intelligence. The ancient and superficial idea of the uniform and progressive growth of the human personality has remained unaltered, and the erroneous belief has persisted that it is the

duty of the adult to fashion the child according to the pattern required by society. This misunderstanding, handed down from time immemorial, causes the first war between men, who were most emphatically intended to love one another: a war between parents and children, between teachers and pupils.

VIII

The key to this problem is to be found in the fact that the human personality is not single. On the contrary it has two different shapes and two separate goals, those pertaining to the child and those pertaining to the man. We do not find in the child the same characteristics as in the adult, except only on a smaller scale: the child possesses his own characteristic life which has its end in itself. This end may be expressed by the word "incarnation," which means that in the child must be realized the incarnation of personality. Therefore the character and rhythm of the child's life will be totally different from those of the adult, who is chiefly engaged in modifying his environment and who is pre-eminently a social being. If we think of the unborn child, this idea at once becomes clearer: the life of the embryo in the mother's womb has one sole end, and that is maturing into the newborn child. Thus is fulfilled the first period of man's life. And vital force will be greater in the newborn child whose pre-natal growth has been fostered by the best possible conditions that a healthy mother can give it, although she has nothing to do except to let the new life develop within hers. But the gestation of man is not confined to the short ante-natal period. There is yet another form of gestation: that accomplished by the child in the exterior world: the act of incarnating the spirit whose germs are in him, though in a latent and unconscious form. Delicate

nurture is needed to protect this process, which gradually becomes conscious and which is perfected through knowledge acquired in the outer world—a process accurately carried out by the child, who is guided by laws as are all beings in nature, and who obeys a rhythm of activity which has no common measure with that of the conquering and combative adult.

That the period of incarnation and of spiritual gestation is entirely different from the period of adult socialized activity, is not really a new idea. On the contrary, it is one that accompanies us through life with some solemnity and that has been proclaimed to us for centuries as a great truth; it is even embodied in sacred rites. We all keep two festivals in the year, Christmas and Easter; we recognize them in our hearts, we keep them by a suspension of social activity, many of us observe them religiously. What do those two ancient festivals bring to our remembrance? They remind us of one single person, whose incarnation and social mission however were distinct. In the history of Jesus, the period of incarnation lasted till puberty, that is to say until the time when, at the age of about thirteen, he said to His parents: "Why do ye seek me? Do ye not know that I have other concerns than yours?" And during that period His behaviour was that of a child who did not acquire his knowledge from wise adults, but who, on the contrary, amazed and confounded them. It was only later that began the hidden life of the Son obeying His parents, learning His father's trade and adapting Himself to that society of men in which He was to carry out His mission.

When the independent life of the child is not recognized with its own characteristics and its own ends, when the adult man interprets these characteristics and

ends—which are different from his—as being errors in the child which he must make speed to correct, there arises between the strong and the weak a struggle which is fatal to mankind. For it is verily upon the perfect and tranquil spiritual life of the child that depend the health or sickness of the soul, the strength or weakness of the character, the clearness or obscurity of the intellect. And if, during the delicate and precious period of childhood, a sacrilegious form of servitude has been inflicted upon the children, it will no longer be possible for men successfully to accomplish great deeds—and we have there the symbolical sense of the Bible story of the Tower of Babel.

Now, the struggle between the adult and the child finds its expression—both within the family circle and at school—in what is still called by the old name of “education.” But when the intrinsic value of the child’s personality has been recognized and he has been given room to expand, as is the case in our schools (where the child creates for himself an environment suited to his spiritual growth), we have had the revelation of an entirely new child, whose astonishing characteristics are the opposite of those that had hitherto been observed.

We may therefore assert that it would be possible, by the renewing of education, to produce a better type of man, a man endued with superior characteristics as if belonging to a new race: the superman of which Nietzsche caught glimpses. Herein lies the part that education has to play in the struggle between war and peace, and not in its cultural content. Above all it is to be noted that the child, a passionate lover of order and work, possesses intellectual qualities superior by far to what might have been expected. It is very evident that, subjected to the usual education,

the child has had not only to withdraw within himself, but to dissimulate his powers, in order to adapt himself to the judgment of the adult who lorded it over him. And so the child performed the cruel task first of hiding his real self, then of forgetting it, of burying in his subconsciousness a wealth of expanding life whose aspirations were frustrated. Then, bearing this hidden burden, he encountered the errors current in the world.

Thus does the problem of education present itself when we envisage it from the point of view of war and peace, not as a matter of what ought, or ought not, to be taught. Whether we speak or do not speak of war to the children, whether we adapt history for their use in this way or in that way, does not change the destiny of mankind. But an education that is merely a blind struggle between the strong and the weak can only produce an inefficient man, weakened and enslaved, a man whose growth has been stunted.

IX

That the child in his own individual nature possesses characteristics different from what had been commonly believed, has been plainly shown by the uninterrupted experience of a quarter of a century, carried out not only among the majority of the civilized nations, but in the most diverse races: among the red men of America, the natives of Africa, the Siamese, Javanese and Laplanders. When the experience began, much was said, under the influence of the then current educational prejudices, about a new method of education capable of giving amazing results. But ere long the full reality and importance of the phenomenon was recognized and there appeared, in England, a book entitled “New Children.” The striking revelation was the existence of a differ-

ent kind of humanity, the comforting emergence of a better quality of human being. Was it then not impossible to improve human nature? That is indeed a possible achievement, given the right environment: to the deviations hitherto enforced during the period of growth must be substituted normal conditions, if we wish the soul to reach its full healthy development.

A healthy man from the psychical point of view is rare nowadays, is indeed almost unheard of, just as a physically healthy man was a rare phenomenon before the coming of personal hygiene had shown mankind how to find the lost road to good health. In the realm of ethics, man still delights in subtle poisons and his ambition reaches out for advantages that are full of mortal dangers to the spirit. Often, he disguises his vices, hereditary or transmitted by education, and allows them to masquerade as virtue, duty and honour. The unsatisfied needs of the child leave their mark on the adult in whom they come out as inhibitions preventing his intellectual development, as deviations of moral character, as innumerable psychical anomalies which make the personality weak and uncertain. The child who has never learned to act alone, to direct his own actions, to govern his own will, grows into an adult who is easily led and must always lean upon others.

The school child, being continually discouraged and scolded, ends by acquiring that mixture of distrust of his own powers and of fear which is called shyness and which later, in the grown man, takes the form of discouragement and submissiveness, of incapacity to put up the slightest moral resistance. The obedience which is expected of the child both in the home and the school—an obedience admitting neither of reason nor of justice—prepares man to

be docile to blind forces. The punishment, so frequent in schools, which consists in subjecting the culprit to public reprimand and is almost tantamount to the torture of the pillory, fills the soul with a crazy, unreasoning fear of public opinion, even of an opinion manifestly unjust and false. In the midst of these adaptations and many others which set up a permanent inferiority complex, is born the spirit of devotion—not to say of idolatry—to the “condottieri,” the leaders, which for this repressed personality, are the father and the teachers, that is to say, the figures who imposed themselves on the child as perfect and infallible. Thus discipline becomes almost a synonym of slavery.

The child has never been able to try and follow the moral paths which his latent vital urge would have sought out eagerly in a world new to him; he has never been able to put his own creative energy to the test. But he has succeeded in setting up within himself an order that has resulted in a sure and unchanging discipline.

When he has attempted to find out the path of justice, he has wandered and become perplexed and has finally been punished for having tried to accomplish deeds of love by helping schoolfellows still more oppressed and obscure than himself. On the contrary, he has received tokens of approbation when he turned spy and tell-tale. The virtue worthy above all others of public encouragement and of reward has always been the triumphing over one's schoolfellows in competition and the gaining in examinations of the decisive victory allowing one to pass from one year to another of a monotonous existence of perpetual servitude. Men brought up in this way have been prepared neither to fight and be victorious, nor to conquer truth and possess it, nor

to love others and join with them in striving for a better life. Their education has prepared them rather for an incident, a mere episode of real community life : war. For, in reality, the cause of war does not lie in armaments, but in the men who make use of them.

If man had grown up with a healthy soul, enjoying the full development of a strong character and of a clear intellect, he could not have borne that there should exist within him, at one and the same time, contradictory moral principles; nor could he have endured to be simultaneously the upholder of two kinds of justice, the one protecting life and the other destroying it, nor would he have consented to cultivate in his heart both love and hatred. Neither could he have tolerated two disciplines, the one gathering together human energies for constructive purposes and the other gathering those same energies for the destruction of what has been constructed. In other words, a strong man could not bear to have a double conscience, still less could he bear to act in two opposite directions. Now this is a most important fact, for if the existing human personality is so different, it must be simply because men are passive and allow themselves to be blown hither and thither like dead leaves.

X

The wars of to-day are not born of hatred for the enemy. Who would dare to assert such a thing when we see nations fighting now against one people and now against another, and those who are foes to-day becoming friends to-morrow? Verily the white man, the man of the proud civilization, is reduced to the mentality of the ancient armies of mercenaries who fought indifferently against any foes, provided they were paid to do so! Things are not different to-day : men will waste their efforts and

their wealth, they will lay themselves open to the destruction of their own achievements and run the risk of famine, simply because they have been ordered to do so. The Egyptians of old knew how to maintain a distinction between the deeds of civilization and the deeds of war : they enrolled Phoenician troops to fight and they kept the Egyptian people for the tilling of the soil and the work of civilization. But we of the proud civilization confuse the two. A better man than we, faced by the complexity of our social problems and the agonizing perplexities we are up against every day, would use his intellect and the conquests of civilization accumulated by his forefathers to find a means of ending the fury of war. What is the use to-day of having an intellect? And to what purpose do we possess so much knowledge, acquired by the wisdom of our forefathers? War would not be a problem at all for the soul of the new man : he would see it simply as a barbarous state, contrasting with civilization, an absurd and incomprehensible phenomenon.

War to-day is really a scourge which can have no other meaning than that of being an eternal chastisement attached to the moral errors which darken the human mind. To conquer war, a sincere and inspired voice would be enough, crying like Jonah : "Be ye converted and repent, or Nineveh shall be destroyed!"

It seems so self-evident as to be almost a childish statement, to assert that only two things are needed in order to establish peace in the world : above all a new type of man, a better humanity; then an environment that should no longer set a limit to the infinite desire of man.

It would be necessary that wealth should be localized in no country, but equally accessible to all. How can we

guarantee that nations will permit others to pass over the roads they have made, when they know that this would enable those others to use the treasures contained in their soil? If the whole of mankind is to be united into one brotherhood, all obstacles must be removed, so that men, all over the surface of the globe, should be as children playing in a garden. Man's little piping voice must be able to make itself heard all over the world, with all its intonations, whether he be singing for joy, or calling, or warning, or asking for help and expecting a comforting voice to answer him. Verily, I believe that laws and treaties are not enough: what we need is a world full of miracles, as it seemed miraculous to see the young child seeking work and independence, and manifesting a wealth of enthusiasm and love. A new world for a new man: that is what we sorely need to-day.

If this were Utopian, it would be sacrilegious even to mention it when we stand on the edge of an abyss at the bottom of which we perceive catastrophe lying in wait for mankind. But it is not Utopian. Already some time ago, at the beginning of this century, a spark of the miraculous life made its appearance in our world. Is it not a fact that man flies? Behold, earthly obstacles no longer separate one land from another and man can go all round the world without building roads and without trespassing upon the land of others. And if man succeeds in conquering gravitation and if—so as to make rapid journeys which are a source of wealth—he manages to reach the stratosphere, who shall become its possessor? Who shall own the rights over gravitation or over the ether in the space beyond the limits of the atmosphere? Those long and short waves, the medium of mysterious communications, invisible but nevertheless

efficiently carrying the voice of man and the thoughts of all mankind, in an absolutely immaterial way, without pen or ink, without newspapers, where are they? To whom do they belong? And who will ever be able to exhaust them? Solar energy will ultimately be transformed into a more substantial kind of bread than ours and into heat for the dwellings of man; what nation will declare itself the owner of solar energy? There are no limits, there is no localization for the new wealth which man acquires when he seeks it in the realm of the ether, of the infinite heavens, of the starry soul of the universe.

What, in such times, would be the sense of conflicts among men? They used to fight for the appearances of so-called matter—but now they have discovered their origins, they have found out that these were forces, they have made themselves masters of the occult and infinite causes as well as of their limited effects. Like a god, man has seized them and has thus wrought a revolution in social life. A wonderful and unforeseen move upward has placed the realm of human conquest on a higher level than the earth. The surface of the earth used to have two dimensions for mankind, to-day it is beginning to have three and the history of a mankind living in a two-dimension world is closed.

XI

An age of thousands of years is drawing to its close—a period going back to the beginnings of History, and beyond that to the days of which Legend tells, to the periods only rare vestiges of which are left buried in the depths of the soil. The epoch which began with the origin of man, that immense chapter which has slowly unfolded through an

immeasurable span of time, is ended. Until now man has had to toil at the sweat of his brow, as though under a sentence of hard-labour, he has had to humble himself as a slave. Although in himself of a lofty nature, he has remained ever attached to the ground. He, the creature of love, has been constrained to allow himself to be fettered by the shackles of the exchange of material goods. But now that man has entered into the realm of the stars, he can rise to his full height; he can present himself to the universe as a new being. He it is who is the child, the new child! He it is who is the new man, entering into the third dimension, the man predestinated to undertake the conquest of the infinite. Such a conquest is a work of great magnitude and it demands the help of all men; but to bind them together they will find no other cement than love.

Such is the vision that we see in the real facts of to-day. We who are the last men to live in a two-dimension world must make a strenuous effort to rise to the understanding of this vision. We have fallen upon a period of crisis, inserted between an old world which is drawing to its end and a new world which has already begun and has revealed all the elements that go to build it up. The crisis we are witnessing is not one of those that mark the passage from one era to another, it can only be compared with the opening of a new biological or geological period, when new beings come upon the scene, more evolved and more perfect, while upon the earth are realized conditions of life which had never existed before. If we lose sight of this situation, we shall find ourselves enmeshed in a universal catastrophe which will call to mind the

prophecies of the year one thousand—that year of which it was said that the world would not live through it. If the sideral forces are used blindly by men who know nothing about them—the men of the two-dimension world—in view of destroying one another, the attempt will speedily be successful in doing so, because the forces at man's disposal are infinite and accessible to all, at all times and in every place. If man—who possesses the secret of pestilential sicknesses, holding in his hands their invisible agents which he can cultivate and multiply *ad infinitum*—uses that which was a sublime conquest over disease in order to spread the scourge of epidemics and poison the world, he will easily succeed in his endeavour. Henceforth there is no obstacle preventing him from reaching all regions, to the uttermost ends of the earth; neither mountains, nor deserts, nor seas will stop him now that he can fly over them.

What are we going to do?

Will no one sound the trumpet to awaken man who is lying asleep on the ground while the earth is making ready to engulf him?

We must prepare men for the new world which is spontaneously building itself around us as a phenomenon of evolution; we must make them conscious of the new life which is coming about, in order that they may work for it.

At the same time we must gather together all the elements of this new world and organize them into a science of peace.

Will not the League of Nations and the societies for promoting peace make themselves the centre of a new orientation of mankind?

THE CROSS

BY ANILBARAN RAY

I stand aside from Time's domain,
The world rolls on before my eyes,
An interminable sea of sighs;
Benighted creatures struggle in vain
Against the ruthless sway of foes
Unseen, unknown, that daily forge
New chains, new torture slow but sure.
It was not once that Christ, the Pure,
Bled on the Cross, but every day
In thousand hearts he is nailed again!
All truth is mocked; this clump of clay
Distorts all love and beauty's call;
Man's quest of pleasure brings but pain.
The soul aroused now measures the fall
From its Divinity, and, lo!
The darkness faints before the glow
Of aspiration; nothing can
Repress the tiny spark in man,
Which waits to make him a living flame
Of all-engrossing love; that will
Redeem this clay, transmute all pain
To marvellous joy, and thus fulfil
Earth's ancient dream and Heaven's claim.

I stand aside from Time's domain,
The world rolls on before my eyes,
A new Light dawning in its skies—
The Cross hath not been borne in vain.

MEMORY THAT STILL INSPIRES

BY SWAMI SAMBUDDHANANDA

Of the six great disciples belonging to the inner circle of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Premananda, popularly known as Baburam Maharaj, was one. He was a man of magnetic personality. Whosoever had the rare privilege of coming into contact with him even for a minute talks so eloquently of his great love and power of attraction. In the make-up of his personality one could find the love and liberality of a mother, sweet reasonableness of a father and great strictness of a guardian all harmoniously combined. To meet him was a pleasure and privilege, to hear him an inspiration and to study him in his everyday life a great lesson, which one would never forget in the whole life.

The principles of religion are nowhere better illustrated than in the lives of saints and sages. The life they live removes all doubts and difficulties in one's path of spiritual development, and invites thousands of thirsty souls to follow their examples. The few events and incidents of the saintly life of Swami Premananda, which we propose to narrate below, may be of some help and inspiration to the earnest seekers of truth and those who want to build up an ideal life.

Swami Premananda had great confidence in those who lived and worked with him. He believed in all-round development and had great abhorrence for one-sidedness in life. As such he encouraged those who were undergoing training under him to follow manifold activities, and provided suitable opportunities for the unfoldment of their parts. "You should learn," he said, "how to work in every walk of life—

be it of a worshipper in the shrine, a cook in the kitchen, a cow-boy in the cow-shed or a sweeper in the latrine. Be they great or small, all works should receive your equal attention. Always take as much care of the means as of the ends." Even the slightest indifference of a worker to his work would give him great annoyance, and he greatly resented careful carelessness. But withal he was so quick to forgive and forget the faults of all.

One day he asked one of the novitiates to cut fodder to pieces for the cows. ~~At his~~ order the boy went to the proper place and started the work with all attention. But after some time, getting confidence in himself, he began to work with the usual indifference of an expert worker and cut his finger. Swami Premananda who was on his round to see how different works were going on, arrived there. The boy tried his best to conceal his bleeding finger, but could not evade the sharp notice of the Swami. He was shocked to see the finger bleeding, and said, "Well, what have you done? Ah, you are so careless! I asked you to cut fodder, and not your finger. Did I? You see your finger bleeds but do you know how it bleeds the heart of another? I knew you to be a very clever boy, but you have proved yourself a fool and me a greater one. It is a great shame on you! You considered the work a very trivial one!" Then he took the boy with him and got the finger bandaged.

The Swami who was as if love incarnate had a soft corner for all—parti-

cularly the youths who used to visit the Math frequently. The young students of Calcutta who once enjoyed his holy association, felt inclined to see him over and over again. They would often put to him many questions on the burning problems of life, and they were all very free with him. One evening some young men while listening to his interesting talks,—the Swami was sitting in the western verandah of the main Math building—asked his opinion about the political situation of the country. As the talk drifted to politics, the Swami, who was a man of great insight, at once realized the workings of the mind of the young questioner. He turned to the big portrait of Swami Vivekananda (in the 'Chicago posture' with arms crossed against his chest) and exclaimed, "Look there at the portrait of the great hero—the world conqueror. Would you not find a sword hanging from his waist, were arms necessary to conquer the world? India does not believe in arms and ammunitions—she believes in Knowledge and Wisdom. With her, Knowledge is power and Love is the weapon of all weapons which alone is necessary to conquer the world, to win over the hearts of the whole humanity. She is for cultural and not political conquest. Be men, true men, men of love and reverence, wisdom and knowledge."

It was in March 1913, the day before the public celebration of the anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna. I was then a student and came from Calcutta to join the celebration. Preparations on a large scale were going on in full swing. Hundreds of volunteers were attending to multifarious works. Some were decorating a big portrait of Sri Ramakrishna in a shed raised specially for the occasion on the north of the lawn. Some were busy dressing vege-

tables, the mountain-high heaps of which struck one with awe and wonder. Some were drawing bucketfuls of water from the Ganges and filling the big tanks. Some were pitching tents in different parts of the Math premises for stores, offices, musical performance and other purposes. And some were supervising the works of dozens of cooks engaged in cooking over a number of ovens all aflame with fire. According to the division of work I was placed at the services of the Swami, and was to be a constant attendant on him. I was so happy at this. My only work was to enquire how the different works were getting on and report to the Swami, and also convey his directions to different camps and groups of workers.

The day was bright, but a little before evening the sky began to be darkened with thick clouds. At about 10 o'clock there was a shower followed by an awfully threatening atmosphere. Swami Premananda was found brooding over the unexpected situation. At times his lips were moving in silent prayer. At last he asked me to run to the kitchen and give directions to stop further cooking; for things would be wasted next day if the condition of the weather did not change. I did this, and the cooking was stopped.

All works of the day having been finished, he went to his room for sleep at about 12 in the night. I was also given a bed in his room on the floor. Though I was given every comfort, I had no good sleep. I was anxious to get up and begin work in the morning before the Swami awoke. At about 3 in the morning I saw the Swami sitting on the bed for prayer. Seeing me also up, he said, "Just go to the kitchen please, and ask them to start cooking in full vigour." The Swami's message was delivered, and all began their work in right earnest. There was no change in

the weather. Some of the prominent workers came to the Swami and asked why he had changed his mind. He said that during the small hours of the morning he had some experience from which he could understand that the celebration would go on smoothly and undisturbed. And he was found free from cares and anxieties.

Rarely it happens that the men of Self-realization get any intuition which does not come true. It is so, because they have controlled their senses and conquered the mind. The mind of ordinary men is distracted by a thousand things, how will they perceive truth? What the Swami felt, came true.

As the day advanced, the sky became clear. In the morning the Holy Mother arrived from Calcutta. Her presence lent a special sanctity to the occasion. The Swami was busy during the whole day supervising this work and that. He threw as if his whole being into the work. The influence of his personality radiated everywhere. And everything was performed nicely and perfectly.

During those days scripture classes would be held every evening in the Math in what is called the "visitors' room." One day the Swami after his evening prayer came to the class room and found nobody there. The room was all dark.

He got greatly annoyed at this. When the news spread that he had come to the class room, all began to come in. On their arrival he demanded an explanation from them as to why the class did not begin till then. All remained silent. One Brahmachari, summoning up courage, said, "We find it difficult to hold the class in this room. The devotees who come to the Math are found often to lie down or sleep here." The Swami was all kindness to one

and all. He knew with how much burden of mind one visited the Math for peace and solace. So he replied, "Do you know how much worried and troubled are they in life? When they come here, they find relief from all cares and anxieties, and the cool breeze of the Ganges, in addition, induces them to sleep. But what are you here for? Have you not joined the Order in response to the call of the great Swami Vivekananda to awaken the world? The world is in deep sleep. It is your duty to wake it up. But how will you do that if you can't awaken these few souls?" With this he asked them to begin the class. One Brahmachari read the verses from a chapter in the Gita. The Swami began to explain them in the light of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The class went on till the bell for the night meal rang.

Saints are, as it were, three-eyed men. The third eye, they develop as a result of their great experiences in life, and with that they perceive the inner meaning of everything. That is absent in the common people, who live only in the senses and have no inner development. Outer appearances do not delude the men of Self-realization—they never fail to see the deeper significances behind external things. The Swami was not an exception to this.

We have heard many things from him, which show his penetrating vision. One day a devotee handed over to the Swami a few rupees, so that a particular kind of sweetmeats which Sri Ramakrishna liked most, might be offered to him in worship. At this the Swami said, "Do you mean to say that Sri Ramakrishna had a liking for any particular earthly delicacy? He liked only love and reverence. Whatever was offered to him with love and reverence,

and without any selfish motive behind it, he accepted most gladly.

"The wife of late Balaram Bose was a great devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. Whenever she would get flowers and fruits from her garden, she would offer a few of them first to Sri Ramakrishna. One day a basketful of white berries (*engenia alba*) arrived from the garden. She wanted to send a few of them to Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar through another devotee. But the devotee simply laughed at the idea that such insignificant things should be sent to Sri Ramakrishna. She could not see the spirit in which they were offered. But when they were actually carried to Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna received them with great joy."

He narrated some other similar inci-

dents illustrating how Sri Ramakrishna liked sincere devotion more than anything else. In this way Swami Premananda tried to inculcate into the mind of the particular devotee that it was real devotion and not external offerings which mattered most in religious life. For he would always try to give a spiritual upliftment to those who came in contact with him.

Each of the incidents narrated above, though commonplace, speaks eloquently of the inner greatness of the Swami. These are of course but a few of many such things which one had the privilege to see and hear, while living with the Swami, and the memory of which gives one inspiration and uplift whenever the spirit droops or the life seems dry.

IF I WERE TWENTY AGAIN, WHAT WOULD I DO?

BY J. T. SUNDERLAND

As regards the question before us, it takes only a very little thinking to make several things clear.

One is that none of us can go back and become twenty again, when once we have passed that very inspiring time in human life. There are no eddies of backward currents in the stream of time. We may pray never so persistently,

"Backward, turn backward, O Time
in thy flight,
Make me a child again just for
to-night,"

but the flight of time is only onward.

A second thing that is clear is, that if we *could* go back to our past, unless we could have greater wisdom than we had then, or be differently circumstanced

(in which case it would hardly be our past), we probably should not do very differently from what we did. So that it would be idle to wish to have a chance to try life over again, unless we could do it with the help of greater wisdom or better advantages.

Still a third thing grows clear. There probably isn't one of us who has passed on beyond youth who has not found life bringing to him gifts which he would not, on any consideration, consent to surrender, even for the privilege of going back and being young again. Where is the father or mother who would give up his or her children? Where is the true husband or wife who would give up the other, the dearer self? Where is the man or woman who does not have friendships which have

grown and deepened and taken on added sacredness with the years, until they could of no condition be parted with?

All this helps us to see that youth does not possess all the good there is in life, or all the attractiveness. Youth has its own charm, as the spring has. And it is a very rare charm. But one would not want the year to be all spring. It is better that summer and autumn and winter should come in their place. Each brings its own great wealth of good, and its own satisfactions.

The truth is, the glory of life lies in the full roundness of it—in going through all the rich and precious experiences of every season of life, from the earliest spring-time to the latest autumn—from light-hearted childhood in the nursery as life's morning sun begins to climb the eastern sky, to peaceful old age by the fireside, as life's evening sun sinks in the west.

With this much by way of introduction, to prevent misunderstanding, let me come to the question that is before me, "If I were twenty again, what would I do?" Let me suppose it possible to go back to that age, and begin life again at that point with my present knowledge and experience. How would I shape my life? In what respects would I do differently from what I have done? What rules or principles of life would I adopt?

Of course these are large questions which can only be imperfectly answered. But perhaps we may be able to get some thoughts on the subject not wholly without value. Let me speak first of one thing that I would *not* do.

If I were twenty again, I would *not* be in a hurry. Perhaps there is no time in life when one is more likely to feel in haste than at twenty. Youth is gone; manhood and womanhood are upon us. We begin to feel stirring within us strange new powers and ambi-

tions. We grow eager to get out into the world—to plunge into its battles, to work out careers for ourselves. We begin to feel old. I doubt if I have ever felt so old since, as I did at twenty or twenty-one. I now see how very young I was.

The reason why I would not be in a hurry if I were twenty again, is, that that independent, responsible life upon which one is soon to enter, is so large, so many-sided, so serious a thing, that one needs the largest and best possible preparation for it—a preparation much larger and deeper and more thorough than anyone can possibly get who rushes into it in haste.

It so happens that some of the greatest and most momentous decisions in life have to be made soon after one sets out upon an independent career.

One of these is the business or calling in life that one is to follow. It is immensely important that he shall choose that business or calling wisely. Success or failure is likely to hang upon the decision. It is plain then that in so serious a matter there should be no undue haste. In the case of some young persons, the choice of a calling seems to make itself—if I may use the expression. That is to say, the young person very early develops a decided taste for some calling, or shows a strong aptitude in a certain direction, which is nature's way of pointing out to him what he can do best. In some respects young persons are fortunate who are born with such a natural bent or taste or aptitude. They are saved the anxiety and risk of making a choice of a calling for themselves.

But in many, perhaps a majority of cases, young people are not aided to a choice of a vocation by any such clear and decided indication in themselves. They have to canvas the whole field of callings open, study their own nature

as best they can, study the nature and the possibilities of the various callings, and thus decide between them. It is not an easy matter. In many cases it is exceedingly difficult. A false step taken in haste or ignorance may prove a life-long disaster.

Hence the importance of waiting before taking the step, until one has some maturity of judgment, and some knowledge of himself and the world. Here comes in the value of the years spent in schools. What is a course of high school study? What is a course of college study? Each is a voyage of discovery, made with two distinct objects in view. One object is, that the student may discover nature—I mean, find out all possible about the world he lives in; the other is that he may discover himself—I mean, find out and develop as fully as possible his own faculties and powers. Now when a young man has made honestly and earnestly one or both of these voyages of discovery, and thus found out what they have to reveal to him about himself, the world, and human life, do you not see how much better prepared he is to make intelligently and wisely such a great decision as that of what his career or work in life shall be?

But a choice of a vocation is not the only one that he has to make. *Other* decisions almost as important follow. Shall he marry? If so, whom shall he marry? No decisions can be more serious than these. How great is the need of wisdom, maturity of judgment, knowledge of human nature, knowledge of one's self, in order to make them safely!

Nor yet may we stop. Launching out upon independent life not only means decisions to be made as to one's calling, and concerning marriage and the home, but much else. Life's many-sided responsibilities at once confront him. He

must take his independent place in the community. He must assume the duties of citizenship. He must become a member of the social order, and adjust his life accordingly. If he is to be a business man, will he set his standard of business high, and hence do something to maintain a standard of honour and integrity in business circles around him? In society will he be an integer, or a cypher? Will he become a factor in the community for the elevation of its intellectual and social life? Or will he simply drift with the tide? As to religion, what will he do? Will he support and help it, or will he be an indifferent? Or, will he sneer at and oppose it? And if he supports religion, will he support a kind that is most enlightened, most elevating, and best, or a kind that is allied with ignorance and that tyrannizes over the human mind?

These are some of the questions of grave import, both to himself and to society, which crowd upon a young man when he launches out upon independent life. He must meet them and in some fashion settle them. Shall he settle them wisely, or foolishly?

You see how great is the need of intelligence. You see how serious a matter it is for him to hurry into life before he has the intellectual furnishing of knowledge and judgment to enable him to settle them properly. You see the need of that discipline of mind and that knowledge of the world, of human nature and of himself, which the school and the college are calculated to give. You see why I said that if I were at twenty, with my present experience, I would not be in a hurry to get into the work and responsibilities of life, until I was as well as possible prepared.

If I were twenty again, while setting out to give my intellect the best training possible, I would not neglect those

other kinds of training that are equally important, namely, training of the will, the conscience, and the heart.

As to the will, I would discipline myself to the making of prompt decisions, and clear and strong resolves, not to be shaken.

As to conscience, I would say, it shall be my king. What it clearly commands, that I am to obey without question. Integrity, even in the smallest things, is to be the inviolable rule of my life.

As to the heart, I would set out to keep all its holy fountains of love and sympathy open, that their waters may make green the waste places of life, for myself and all with whom I have to do.

If I were twenty I would look out very carefully what habits I formed.

Habits are like a statue that an artist moulds in clay. While it is fresh it is plastic : he can change it as he pleases. Let it stand a while and it hardens, and changes become very difficult. In early life it is comparatively easy to correct bad habits, or to form good ones. The young person who is wise will look very carefully to the habits which he allows to fasten themselves upon him.

If I were twenty, I would set out to keep clean lips and a clean heart, as not less important than a clean face or clean clothing. I would try to provide myself always with pure air to breathe. But at the same time I would try to remember that it is quite as necessary to have the moral atmosphere one breathes sweet and wholesome, as to have the physical atmosphere so. I would as much shun the moral poison of unworthy companionships, as I would the physical poison of malarial swamps and pest-houses.

If I were twenty again what would I read?

I would not be narrow in my reading, and yet I would not read indiscriminately, and certainly I would try to exercise some common sense in my reading. Is there anything more amazing than to see men and women all around us who would not think of eating and drinking everything they saw, wholesome or unwholesome, fit to be eaten or filthy, yet *reading* absolutely *everything* that comes in their way, no matter how worthless or how debasing it may be? If I were twenty again and didn't have a vein of idiocy or lunacy running through me, I don't believe I would do that. I don't believe I would fill my mind with the weak and worthless and often wicked stuff that offers itself to us in so many of the popular books of the time, especially the novels, and in our great daily papers. If I thought my stomach too good to be filled with trash I think I would regard my head as too good to be similarly filled. Of course I do not mean that I would discard all newspaper reading, but I do mean that I would try to read only the best; and I would limit myself. I would no more allow myself to read habitually the sensational records of scandal and gossip and vice and crime and prize-fights that crowd and blacken the pages of some of our great dailies, than I would allow myself habitually to drink from a sewer.

Beyond a limited amount of periodical reading, I would be a reader of *books*. I do not know that I would absolutely adopt Emerson's rule to read no book until it is a year old; but I would not read books merely because Mrs. Grundy was talking about them. Above all, I would read *great* books. My motto should be few books and noble. I would choose a few great minds—the greatest—and these I would know as I know my nearest friend. If I were to select three books out from among all the

rest in the world, they should be the Bible, Shakespeare and Emerson; the Bible as the world's greatest book of religion, and the book woven into all our civilization as no other is; Shakespeare as an epitome of the whole world in one glorious volume; and Emerson as the greatest seer and illuminator of life that God has given to our modern times. To be at home in these three books is to possess the best culture known to man.

If I were twenty again, I would take care to lay for myself the best foundation possible of physical health. I would remember that a sound mind needs a sound body to make its activities effective. I would ride a bicycle, I would play tennis, I would row a boat, I would swim, I would take long walks; I would do physical work where opportunity offered. If I had muscles like an ox, and plenty of money to pay surgeons to set by broken limbs, perhaps I would play football. I would certainly endeavour in all rational ways to build up for myself a strong, vigorous and healthy body, as a physical basis for my life work in the world. I would not willingly violate any of the laws of life and health. But I would make myself intelligent as to what those laws are, and then I would obey them as the holy laws of God.

If I were twenty I would greatly prize worthy friends and friendships, and would set out to make much of them for all life. That should be counted a great day when a new and noble friendship was formed or an old one deepened. Nor should I have any fear lest friends might not be true. I would determine myself to be true, and that would be sufficient guarantee that they would be.

If I were twenty again I would set out to keep my life in close touch with

nature. I would be an observer and a student of nature. "Nature never did betray the heart of him that loved her." I would be her lover fond and true. I would know the secret nooks of the wild flowers, and their times of blooming. I would know the friendly trees and their habits. I would know the birds around me and their songs. I would know the stars above my head, and the mysterious phenomena of the clouds. I would know the winds and the waters. All these should be my associates and prized friends. For nothing, like companionship with nature, can keep the eye bright, the step elastic, the heart young, and make us wise with that wisdom that never grows old.

If I were twenty again, I would set out to lead a simple life—a life as little enslaved as possible by the artificialities and the conventionalities of society. I would make Emerson's motto mine, "Plain living and high thinking," for there is not much high thinking in this world except where there is plain living. I would aim at simple tastes and simple habits; simplicity in clothing, simplicity in food, simplicity in enjoyments. Simple things wear, they do not pall. They are new every morning and fresh every evening. Whereas the elaborate and the artificial give pleasure for a little while, but soon tire us, overburden us, wear out our lives.

If I were twenty again I wouldn't smoke. I would save the thousand dollars which smoking would cost me by the time I reached middle life and put the money into books. I would preserve a sweet breath, instead of manufacturing for myself a foul one. I would keep my blood pure, instead of filling it with tobacco. I would keep my pulse strong and my heart-beat vigorous, instead of wearing out my pulse, bringing on myself what the

doctors call the tobacco heart, and needlessly shortening my life.

If I were twenty, and looked at things as I do now, I certainly would not bet; I certainly would not gamble; I certainly would never buy a lottery ticket. I don't believe I would play billiards; and I don't believe I would play cards. Not that there is any harm in billiards of themselves. The game is one that might be commended if it could be disconnected from its associations. But it is hard to conceive of a game more generally associated with drinking, with smoking, with betting in a small way—and sometimes in large ways—and with society that is far from the best. If a young man knows how to play billiards, that very knowledge opens the door and almost drags him into low associations. Can any self-respecting young man, whose time, money and character are worth something, afford it? I don't believe he can.

Much the same seems true of cards. Of course cards of themselves are as harmless as any other bits of paste-board, except for their use. And we can easily conceive of their being used in ways wholly unobjectionable. But two or three things are to be said of them. They are the common instruments of gambling, so that if a young man is a good player it is much more easy than it otherwise would be for him to fall into gambling habits. Still further, card playing affords to the player no physical exercise; it is not carried on in the open air, as such games as tennis are; it is an enormous waster of time; it seems actually to kill intellectual life wherever it goes. There are hundreds and thousands of communities all up and down this country that seem mentally dead; you can't stir up an interest in any intellectual thing; and the cause is cards. The people go to innumerable progressive

euchre and other card parties, and the result seems to be the impossibility of creating an interest in anything higher.

It is these evil effects that seem everywhere to be associated with card playing, that makes me class it with billiard playing, and incline me to believe that, on the whole, it is a serious evil, and that the best way to deal with it is to let it alone.

If I were twenty again, I would learn to sing—if I had any musical capacity at all; and if circumstances would allow, I would learn to play an instrument. Music is such an excellent recreation; it fills so important a place in the social circle and the home, and it is such a joy and inspiration in all human life, that I cannot but think young people make a serious mistake who neglect it.

If I were twenty again, I would make distinct provision for the joy side of life. Not that pleasure-seeking is the highest aim of existence. The man who lives simply for pleasure will fail of his object, or he ought to. Nevertheless, pleasure is legitimate in life. It ought to be scattered all along through life. We should not willingly neglect any fitting opportunity to smile, to laugh, to sing, to play with little children, to enter into the joy of others, to notice beautiful objects, to catch the sunshine, to make others happy, and thus find happiness for ourselves.

If I were twenty, with my life yet to be lived, I would set out to walk through this world on my own feet. My feet may not be very good, but they are better than crutches. My intellect may be inferior in strength and vigour to some other man's, but it is the one that God has given me, and I would trust it. "Self-respect" and "self-reliance" are words to be written on the banner of every life, that proposes to achieve worthy ends.

If I were twenty, and knew what I know now, I would dare, I would *dare* to an extent that few young men do. But I would dare in directions in which daring is worth while, and not in those where it is contemptible. There is a kind of daring popular in some quarters that is simply weakness under another name.

A young fellow is challenged by another to fight. There is no good reason why he should fight. To do so will be silly and brutal. But his companions look on and laugh and shout that he is afraid. He hasn't courage to withstand that laugh, and so fights. It is his cowardice that makes him fight, not his bravery.

Splendid as was the heroism of the men who fought the war for the reunion, the anti-slavery reformers were more heroic. It took higher courage to be a Garrison, a Wendell Phillips, or a Theodore Parker, than to be a Grant, a Sherman or Sheridan.

The supreme sphere for bravery in this world is that of the *moral*. There is no other such heroism as that of *duty*.

If I were a young man again, I would set out upon life daring to be on the side of what seemed to me true and right, at whatever cost. No matter how unpopular a cause might be, if it commended itself to me as just, and in the interest of humanity, it should have such support as I could give it. Since God has given me but one life, I would try to make of it something worth while. And that can't be done by playing the shirk or the coward.

If I were twenty again, and saw things as I do now, I would not live for myself alone. I would begin at once planning for some distinct service of my fellows. Many young people of good intention make a mistake here.

They wait; they postpone efforts at service. They say: Now we must give all our time to our studies, or to getting a start in business. When study is passed, or when we are well established in business, then we shall have time to plan for the helping of others. But will they have any more time then than now? Will they be any less selfish then than now? The very delay will tend to dry up their sympathies. The probabilities are very strong that any of us who allow ourselves to live for ourselves alone now, and to forget others now, will not much improve in any future. Now is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation. If any of us believe in helpful and unselfish lives, the only safe thing to do is to begin living such lives to-day, no matter where we are, or what our circumstances may be.

If I were twenty again, what attitude would I take toward religion? I answer, What attitude could I take except that of interest in it, as something which represents the highest side of human life?

What would my religion be? It could be only one thing, if, going back to twenty, I carried with me the light and experience which I now have. It would have to be that reasonable, that natural, that beautiful religion of the spirit which Jesus taught and which is gathered up into diamond points of flashing light, in the Golden Rule, the blessing craved on enemies, the Lord's Prayer, and the commands to love God and our neighbour. This is the religion which satisfies the reason, the conscience and the heart of man, everywhere. Certainly this is the religion which all that is best within me welcomes, with satisfaction and great joy.

If I were twenty again, would I be afraid of religious inquiry? A thousand times No. Can we believe that God has made it safer for a man to go through

the world with his eyes shut than with them open?

If I were twenty again what church would I interest myself in? I would make myself intelligent concerning all. I would try to study all with an open mind and a sympathetic spirit. And then, whichever one I found the freest, and in line with the best intelligence and soundest conscience of the time; whichever one I found teaching most clearly and exemplifying best the pure, simple, noble religion of Jesus and the human soul, that church should be my church, and to it, with all my heart I would pledge my adhesion, my love, and my life-long loyalty.

Here I close.

Such, then, is my answer, fragmentary and incomplete, but as full as time permits, to the question, What would I do if I were twenty again?

I shall not become twenty again. God allows none of us to go back to re-tread the road over which we have once passed. Doubtless it is best that He does not. It is better to go forward than back. Courage for the future rather than regrets for the past, is the need of us all. But if any of us who are a little farther along the path than some of the rest, can call back words of suggestion, or warning, or cheer, surely it is well.

JALALUDDIN RUMI

BY AGA SYED IBRAHIM DARA

I

We have dealt in the pages of the *Prabuddha Bharat* with the lives of two great Sufi sages. Let us in this number describe the life of a Sufi who was neither only a simple lover like Rabia nor so much of an austere ascetic as the great Bayazid, but one gifted with many shades and colours that added to the charm of his personality. Jalaluddin Rumi combined in his being the wisdom and realization of a sage and also the expression of it as a brilliant poet; he was an exquisite singer and a passionate lover. He filled the whole country with the sweetness of his songs, woke up and inspired the slumbering and the indifferent to the great wonders of the Spiritual Existence. The incidents and the miracles of his early life are so many that it would fill volumes to write all of them, and there are

stories in legion of his doings and miracles even as a child which we have no place to describe here. At the age of six he taught his playmates philosophy and saw visions, and it is said that he even brought the dead to life.

Jalaluddin Rumi was born on the 30th September of 1207 A.D. in the holy province of Balk which has been the birth-place of so many Sufis, including the famous king Ibrahim Adam who renounced the kingdom like Buddha and went in search of spiritual knowledge. Rumi's father was a very influential man but he was exiled from the kingdom by the jealousy of the king and took refuge in Nishapur. Here the famous Sufi poet Fariduddin Attar blessed the boy and predicted that he would soon be a great sage and attain realization and become world famous. He presented him with his books, *The Israrnama* and *The book of Mystics*.

After this initiation Jalaluddin made rapid progress. He began to be considered a prodigy, and when the family went to Quonia, an old Roman Province, he got the name of Rumi—the Roman.

His father was considered a religious head, and was a religious teacher. Jalaluddin was still young when his father died, and he took his place. He met with very little opposition. He was supported by many and had a great number of followers from the very beginning.

The most fascinating thing about Jalaluddin was his passionate and pure love. He drew people to him and made them close and loving friends. He was like a fountain of Divine Love which flowed ceaselessly from his being and found expression in various ways. He used to get into ecstasy while reciting his own poems, and it created such a strong spiritual atmosphere that many who witnessed it got greatly inspired and often had a spiritual experience. It led to the conversion of many people. It is a fact that wherever there is pure Divine love it cannot but express itself in some form or other, and by its own law and nature it finds its way into other hearts that are pure and ready to receive it. Love has no dwelling-place. It is an illusive wanderer running from heart to heart. The only way to draw and keep it is by loving more constantly and with great purity and passion. This is the reason why so many Sufi teachers advised us to cast aside all deliberations and scriptures and get into and remain in an inspired condition of love.

II

The message that Jalaluddin Rumi delivered was also similar. He used to get into an inspired condition and dictate his world famous classical Mas-

navi, and one of his faithful friends patiently copied down every word of it. At times the whole night passed in doing so. Rumi used to be in a condition half conscious and half inspired. Others too found themselves thrown into an ocean of love and bliss and freely laughed, wept, danced, praised or went into an ecstasy. It reminds one of the dances of Chaitanya in his closed room.

It is said that there was a pillar in the courtyard of Rumi's house, and in his ecstasy he often used to catch hold of it with one hand and go round and round it rapidly like a child at play but when he got into trance he continued doing so for hours without stopping. It is while turning round the pillar that Rumi very often dictated his poetry. We can judge his condition and feelings by these lines:—

“Come! Come! Thou Art the Soul,
the Soul so dear, revolving!
Come! Come! Thou art the Cedar,
the Cedar's Spear, revolving!
Oh, come! The well of Life bubbling
springs;
And Morning Stars exult, in gladness
sheer, revolving!”

The great Masnavi of Jalaluddin Rumi which took forty-three years to finish is a memorable work. It is an attempt at the synthesis of the entire Sufi teachings and doctrines and truths which accumulated without any organized synthesis or scientific treatment of the subject. It is a great work. It is more scientific than creative, but the poetic genius of Rumi shines more brilliant in it than anywhere else. In a chaste inspiring poetry he sums up all the great wisdom of Sufi masters and their various philosophies and doctrines. Besides this it gives in superb poetry the message of Rumi himself. Parts of this book are very deep and profound while at other places

he is very inspiring. Let us quote a passage from Professor Hadland Davis who writing about his poem in the 'Wisdom of the East Series' says, "He (Rumi) carries us along a torrent of heavenly music. The rhythmic swing of his wonderful dance is soul-stirring. We seem to move exultantly, ecstatically, to the sound of the poet's singing, far behind the silver stars into the Presence of the Beloved. With what reverence, with what a glow of simile and subtle suggestion he describes the Beauty of the Beloved! With what exquisite passion he foretells the Eternal Union! Then there is a lull in this fierce and spiritual song, and Jalal sings, ever so gently and with an infinite tenderness, about human tears being turned into 'rain-clouds.' " Rumi's simple advice to a seeker in the "Complaint of the reed" is to make himself like a reed in the hands of a musician who plucks it out from all its associates, cuts it to pieces and turns it into a flute to play the Divine Music. "Become a flute, give up your self, and like it surrender fully; then alone you will get the touch of the Lover's lip and He will blow through you His Divine Music"—this he has untiringly said over and over again.

III

To Rumi all religions were alike. He saw no difference among them. To him they were like so many different clothes in which the soul aspires to come to the Beloved. After a short time the clothes are flung aside, and the naked purity of the soul comes to the forefront. Then there is no difference between man and man. All become one, and all are lovers of the same Beloved. Nay, there is no difference even between the Lover and the Beloved. Eloquently he says :—

"Lovers and Beloved have both perished

And not themselves only but their love as well.

Sense of separating duality is drowned in an Ocean of oneness
Where God alone exists eternally."

The sayings of Rumi are sincere, passionate and inspiring. The following are nice examples :—

"O Obscurity of obscurity, O Soul of soul

Thou art more than all. Thou art before all.

All is seen in Thee. Thou art seen in all."

"Lose Thyself in Him to penetrate this mystery and everything else is superfluous."

"In each atom thou shalt see the All, thou shalt contemplate millions of secrets as luminous as the sun."

His ideal was to get Union with God and to see, merge himself in His consciousness, "To see all in God and God in all and all as God and God as all." He writes, "I, All in all, becoming now clear see God in all."

Everywhere he realized the One.

He says :

"I looked above and in all the spaces
I saw That which is One,

I looked below and in all the waters
I beheld That which is One.

I looked into the heart; it had space
for many worlds, all peopled with dreams;

In all those dreams I saw That which is One."

Rumi did not preach a religion but emphatically urged all the necessity of realization of the Divine. Eloquently he asks,

"Look for the moon in the sky; not in the water!

Become pure from all the attributes of Self

That you may see your own bright essence.

You see in your own heart the knowledge of the prophet!

Without book, without tutor, without preceptor."

It is possible, says Rumi, for a sincere soul to attain Divine nature, the qualities of the Beloved which he explains thus :—

The motion of every atom is towards its origin. A man becomes the thing on which he is bent. Through constant remembrance and eager longing one assumes the qualities of the Beloved, who is the Soul of souls.

He emphasized also work and 'loving sacrifice' in the path of God to get Realization.

"Put away the tale of love that travellers tell;

Do thou serve God with all thy might."

This is his emphatic advice.

He founded a sect of Dervishes called the "Moulavites." It is the most important and the most influential order of Dervishes existing up to this day and is the most broad-minded of all. He introduced into Sufism music and dancing. The Dervishes sing and dance till they get inspired and pass into a condition of ecstasy. The dances are called 'Raza Kulli'—"utter dependence on the will of God." In his lifetime Jalaluddin often got into conditions not far removed from insanity, during dances. Jalaluddin had himself authorized music and dancing even at the time of funeral, to rejoice at the freedom of the spirit from the bondage of the body. Rumi's religion was devotion, and he got the realization of love. Though it found in the beginning such passionate and noisy expressions, he discovered in the end that the greatest love is "still and silent." His expression reminds one of the similar saying in the Upanishad: "Beyond relation,

featureless, unattainable in which all is still."

Though Rumi himself did not claim godhead as did Mansoor and Bayazid, yet he supported their doctrines and in his Masnavi gives incidents from the life of Bayazid and others to explain the same. He considered his own poetry to be Divinely-inspired and therefore allowed nothing to be omitted from it. On one occasion when, after receiving his instruction to do something, a disciple said "God willing," he flew into a rage.

IV

Jalaluddin was married at Lerenda in 1226 A.D. to a lady named Gevher (pearl). She bore him two sons and died a premature death. He married again. He has in many places written profound and true things about woman and her true relationship with man. His conception of woman can be seen from the following lines.

"Woman is a ray of God, not a mere mistress,

The Creator's Self, as it were, not a mere creature!"

Jalaluddin had also a friend Shamsuddin Tabriz with whom he entered into very deep and passionate bonds of love and friendship which he believed to have some spiritual relationship. He left the company of others and went to solitary places with Shams to meditate and to discuss profound mysteries. This enraged the disciples, and they created so much row about it that Shams fled away to Tabriz. Jalal could hardly bear the separation. He wept, lamented and wrote poems on Shams, and soon he too went after him and brought him back. Another disturbance led to Shams flying away to Damascus where, it is said, he died a violent death. Rumi has written a lot in his Masnavi as well as in his lighter

poems about Shams with so much praise that it is believed that he was not an actual person but a mythical creation of Rumi. This theory is not correct. Shams, it is said, was a man of strong dogmatic and forceful character. The mystical way in which Rumi sings the praise of Shams can be seen from the following couplets like which there are many in his work.

“The face of Shamsuddin Tabriz’s glory, is the sun

In whose track the cloud-like hearts are moving.

O Shamsi Tabriz, beauty and glory of the horizons,

What king is but a beggar of thee with heart and soul?”

Rumi was also a believer in the transmigration of soul and its through rebirths. He seems to have got the experience of it clearly at times. The following lines of his have become famous.

“I died as mineral and became a plant,

I died a plant and rose to animal,

I died as animal and I was man!

Why should I fear? When I was less by dying?

Yet once more I shall die to soar

With angel’s blest, but even from this state

I must pass on: ‘All except God doth perish.’

When I have sacrificed my angel soul I shall become what no man ever conceived.

Oh, let me not exist, for non-existence Proclaims in organ voice: ‘To Him we shall return.’ ”

Jalaluddin Rumi died in the year 1273 A.D. He was in an exultant mood at the time of his death and praised God. He left many wise instructions to his son Bahauddin Valad. The whole country mourned over the great loss. His funeral was attended by

people of all religions and creeds; and there is a story that a Christian, when asked why he was mourning in such a manner over a Muslim grave, replied emphatically, “We esteem him as the Moses, the David and Jesus of our time; and we are his disciples, his adherents.” This fact is a good illustration of the love and unity with which Rumi inspired everybody irrespective of external differences of caste, creed or religion.

The work of Rumi brought into Sufism untold wealth and riches. His poetry is such as any literature of the world might well be proud to possess.* His books have been a source of knowledge and guidance for the innumerable seekers that came after him. One cannot help observing in writing about Persian poets that their inner aspiration as well as the mode of expression resemble so much to that of an Indian devotee, that at times they seem to belong to the same country.

V

Let us now give some selections from his poetry which in spite of losing most of the original native charm in translation are beautiful and inspiring.

THIS IS LOVE

This is Love : to fly heavenward,

To rend, every instant, a hundred veils.

The first moment, to renounce Life :

The last step, to feel without feet.

To regard this world as invisible,

Not to see what appears to one’s self.

*From the literary point of view all the poetry of Rumi is not as perfect or polished as that of Hafiz or Jami; and some minor defects too can be pointed out. But it is because he wrote too much of it and had no time for revision. As we have seen, much was written in trance while dancing or revolving in which such errors can easily creep in.

"O heart," I said, "may it bless thee
To have entered the circle of lovers,
To look beyond the range of the eye,
To penetrate the windings of the
bosom!

Whence did this breath come to thee,
O my soul,
Whence this throbbing, O my heart?"

THE KINGLY SOUL

The kingly soul lays waste the body,
And after its destruction he builds it
anew.

Happy the soul who for love of God
Has renounced family, wealth, and
goods!

Has destroyed its house to find the
Hidden Treasure,

And with that Treasure has built in
fairer sort;

Has dammed up the stream and
cleansed the channel,

And then turned a fresh stream into
the channel.

THE DIVINE ABSORPTION

Do me justice, O Thou who art the
glory of the just,

Who art the throne, and I the lintel
of Thy door!

But, in sober truth, where are throne
and doorway?

Where are "We" and "I?" There
where our Beloved is!

O Thou, who art exempt from "Us"
and "Me,"

Who pervadest the spirits of all men
and women;

When man and woman become one,
Thou art that One!

When their union is dissolved, lo!
Thou abidest!

Thou hast made these "Us" and
"Me" for this purpose,

To wit, to play chess with them by
Thyself.

When Thou shalt become one entity
with "Us" and "You,"

Then wilt Thou show true affection
for these lovers.

When these "We" and "Ye" shall
all become One Soul,

Then they will be lost and absorbed
in the "Beloved."

THE RELIGION OF LOVE

The sect of lovers is distinct from all
others,

Lovers have a religion and a faith of
their own.

Though the ruby has no stamp, what
matters it?

Love is fearless in the midst of the
sea of fear.

BEHOLD THE WATER OF WATERS!

The sea itself is one thing, the foam
another;

Neglect the foam, and regard the sea
with your eyes.

Waves of foam rise from the sea night
and day.

You look at the foamy ripples and
not at the mighty sea.

We, like boats, are tossed hither and
thither,

We are blind though we are on the
bright ocean.

Ah! you are asleep in the boat of
the body.

You see the water; behold the Water
of waters!

Under the water you see there is an-
other Water moving it.

Within the spirit is a Spirit that calls
it.

* * * * *

When you have accepted the Light,
O Beloved,

When you behold what is veiled with-
out a veil,

Like a star you will walk upon the
heavens.

I WILL CHERISH THE SOUL

Lo! I will cherish the soul, because
it has a perfume of Thee.

Every drop of blood which proceeds
from me is saying to Thee :

"I am one colour with Thy love, I
am a partner of Thy affection."

In the house of water and clay this
heart is desolate without Thee ;

O Beloved, enter the house, or I will
leave it.

THERE IS A PLACE OF REFUGE

Yes, O sleeping heart, know th
kingdom that endures not,

But ever and ever is only a mei-
dream.

I marvel how long you will indulge
in vain illusion,

Which has seized you by the throat
like a headsman.

Know that even in this world there
is a place of refuge ;

Hearken not to the unbeliever who
denies it.

His argument is this : he says again
and again,

"If there were aught beyond this life
we should see it."

But if the child see not the state of
reason,

Does the man of reason therefore
forsake reason ?

And if the man of reason sees not the
state of Love,

Is the blessed moon of Love thereby
eclipsed ?

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU'S DIFFICULTIES

BY NAGARJUN MISHRA

I

Some time back Pandit Jawarharlal Nehru sent to the Press a series of articles under the heading "Whither India?" in which he attempted to place some "basic facts and principles" before the national workers. In the course of these writings he observed : "And there are also here as in many other countries, the usual accompaniments of a growing nationalism—an idealism, a mysticism, a feeling of exaltation, a belief in the mission of one's country, and something of the nature of religious revivalism."

Also, "We are often told that there is a world of difference between the East and the West. The West is said to be materialistic, the East spiritual, religious, etc. What exactly the East signifies is seldom indicated, for the

East includes the Bedouins of the Arabian deserts, the Hindus of India, the nomads of the Siberian Steppes, the pastoral tribes of Mongolia, the typically irreligious Confucians of China, and the Samurai of Japan. There are tremendous national and cultural differences between the different countries of Asia as well as of Europe ; but there is no such thing as East and West except in the minds of those who wish to make this an excuse for imperialist domination, or those who have inherited such myths and fictions from a confused metaphysical past. Differences there are, but they are chiefly due to different stages of economic growth."

Why should the Pandit grudge if a nation believes that it has got a distinct mission to fulfil ? Has not even every man a distinct mission to fulfil in life ? That mission may not be very great

in every case, but every man has got an individuality which manifests itself more and more as he goes on with his life's works; and every man leaves some influence—direct or indirect, marked or unnoticeable—upon the people he comes across in life. There is no harm if a man believes that he has got a mission in life; that belief or confidence will give him better courage to face the problems of life and will help him to score easier victory in life. In the same way, if a nation really believes that it has got a mission in life, so much the better for it. A nation with such confidence will remain undaunted under all adverse circumstances, and will rather find delight in wrestling with difficulties and obstacles. A man who has got no purpose to fulfil, will easily give way to difficulties; for he has no driving power in life. Similar is the case with a nation. Of course if a nation, in going to fulfil its mission, thwarts the growth of another nation, it is not a desirable thing. But our idea is, if a nation develops its individuality, it will silently and imperceptibly influence other nations, and that without raising any conflict.

II

Now the questions arise, Has India a mission to fulfil? And is that mission to spread religious culture in the world? For answers to these questions we are to examine the past history of India. If we do that, we find that India has never sent abroad conquerors to carry on works of pillage and devastation, but she has sent Bhikkhus and priests to spread the gospel of love and peace. And these evangelists were not backed by military power, as is the case with many modern missionary organizations, but they depended only on the value of the message they carried, as their armour and strength. Not that they had no opposition, but their weapon

against all oppositions was to give love in return for hatred.

It was in this way that the influence of Indian religion and culture spread over to Ceylon, Burma, Siam, other lands of Indo-China, of Malaya and Indonesia, to Afghanistan, Turkistan, China, Korea and Japan. And wherever the Indian civilization went, it uplifted people, instead of extirpating them or destroying their cultures, as is the case with Western civilization. The world is to-day poorer because of the destruction of Mexican, Central American and Peruvian cultures by the greed and fanaticism of Catholic Spain. But China still remembers with gratefulness the gifts she received from ancient India. During the last visit of Rabin-dranath Tagore to China, Liang Chi Chao, President, Universities Association, Peking, in offering him welcome, traced how India had quickened the growth of Music, Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, Literature, etc., of China.

It may be said that these are stories of the past, circumstances are different at present. But should we not have lessons from the past? And is it not necessary in the interests of humanity that Modern India should try to raise herself to that height from where she can again spread gospel of peace and love to all? To do this is much more possible to her than any other nation, because she did it once and it is ingrained in her very being.

And why should the Pandit dread what he calls "religious revivalism" in India? If religion is revived, is it bad for the country, or even the world as a whole? Apart from the questions how religion solves the problem of life and death and how it satisfies spiritual longings of hungry souls, does not religion supply man with a better code of conduct? Is it not better to follow a

Christ or a Buddha than a Lenin or a Stalin or any other political demi-God? In Russia, whose anti-religious propaganda has become the object of imitation to many other struggling nations in the world, people have discarded Christ, but have installed their political leaders in his stead. It is true, religious ideals have suffered much in practice. But do not political theories have similar, if not worse, risks? In any case, every religion asks people to follow a code of conduct which is characterized by its high moral values—whether people live up to that ideal is a different thing; whereas politics everywhere casts all moral considerations to the winds. But man does not live by bread alone. Man is more than a political or economic unit. He is a spiritual entity. Sooner or later his spiritual thirst will awaken in him. And then he will judge everything by the only and supreme standard—namely, whether that will lead to his spiritual growth.

III

Panditji objects to the view that the East is spiritual. He need not doubt that the East is spiritual; for the East has long been the target of attack and ridicule as being religious. We believe that there may be and are people in the West who live exemplary lives and there are people in the East who are pests to society and a curse to humanity. But still we can judge the general outlook of a nation. Do not the Western nations think less of inner life and more of material power? And do not the Easterners respond more quickly to the call of religion or moral idealism? Coming nearer home, what is the secret of Mahatma Gandhi's influence in the country—over the masses? Is it his political shrewdness or his religious

background of life? Why, many of his political followers delight in making him an Avatar! He is being constantly compared to Buddha and Christ. Masses do not know—do not care to know—what benefit they will get from his political activities; they admire him, revere him because of his spiritual strength. How many are the cock and bull stories spread about his spiritual powers, which the Mahatma is tired of contradicting and denying? These indirectly show the heart-beat of the nation. Who knows the pulse of the nation will never doubt that religion has got a greater appeal to the people than any other thing?

If we look to those who have been untouched by the influence of Western civilization, we can easily find how they care more for religion than for any other thing. There have been various political changes in the country from the remote past, but the masses are indifferent about them. They know more about Sankara, Ramanuja, Chaitanya, Tulsidas, Kabir than about Prithviraja, Pratapaditya or any other prominent figure of political India. This cannot be attributed to their ignorance or absence of education; for they have got a religious culture which is not a small part of education. Many know the details of the incidents in the life of Sri Krishna or Rama, though they may not know the name of the person under whose rule they live.

Whether all the past traditions of the nation can be wiped off and a new life begun on a clean slate, is a different thing. And how far such attempts will be successful, time alone will show. But it is commonly seen that a tree turns to the direction where it will get sustenance for growth. In the same way, a nation turns to the direction where it sees the light of life.

Panditji's another difficulty is that the Eastern nations are composed of so many elements,—from the Bedouins of the Arabian deserts to the Hindus of India—how to find their common characteristics? Well, in a family there are so many members, still do there not exist what are called family characteristics? Panditji will perhaps doubt whether the Eastern nations can be grouped together into one family. History indicates that there has been constant intercourse amongst the different nations of Asia even in ancient times, and traces of a common culture can be found in different nationalities. If we take into considerations the principal nations of Asia, will it be difficult to find some characteristics which are common among them, but different from those to be found among the Westerners? Some time back Dr. James Cousins said; “India stands for intuition, China stands for mental development, Japan stands for beauty. When you go down below the surface definition of China's culture and Japan's culture, you find a fundamental thing, which is Indian.” It might be due to the fact that Indian culture once dominated the whole of Asia. Here we leave out of account those people who have no distinct and traditional culture of their own.

IV

When Indians doubt the utility of religious culture in our national life, it sounds all the more jarring and is all the more unfortunate. Thereby they betray their ignorance of the past history of the country and their sad lack of capacity to appreciate the value of the rich inheritance they have got. They want to read the meaning of the history of other countries into that of India, and in their talks they show as if they are alien people in their own motherland.

Of course we also have no sympathy with those people who want to live always with their eyes upon the past. Eastern nations had highly developed cultures in the past, they produced spiritual giants in ancient times; but of what avail will they be, if the people at present cannot meet the immediate problems of life? The possession of material wealth only cannot be the object of life of any nation. It is true. But the Eastern people have no right to decry the West as materialistic, because they do not know how to solve the problems of physical existence. The immediate problem with the East is that it should find out means and ways how to succeed in the struggle for existence. But this does not mean that it should forget its spiritual ideals .

APAROKSHANUBHUTI

BY SWAMI VIMUKTANANDA

अलातं भ्रमणेनैव वर्तुलं भाति सूर्यवत् ।

तद्वदात्मनि देहत्वं पश्यत्यज्ञानयोगतः ॥ ७६ ॥

(यथा Just as) अलातं a firebrand भ्रमणेनैव in consequence of mere rotation सूर्यवत् resembling (the disc of) the sun वर्तुलं a circle भाति appears तद्वत् so, etc.

79. Just as a firebrand, in consequence of mere rotation, appears as a circle resembling the disc of the sun, so does one, etc.

महत्त्वे सर्ववस्तूनामणुत्वं ह्यतिदूरतः ।

तद्वदात्मनि देहत्वं पश्यत्यज्ञानयोगतः ॥ ८० ॥

(यथा Just as) सर्ववस्तूनां of all things महत्त्वे (सति) being prodigiously large हि really अति दूरतः in consequence of great distance अणुत्वं very small (भाति appears) तद्वत् so, etc.

80. Just as all things that are really very large appear to be very small in consequence of great distance, so does one, etc.

सूक्ष्मत्वे सर्वभावानां स्थूलत्वं चोपनेत्रतः ।

तद्वदात्मनि देहत्वं पश्यत्यज्ञानयोगतः ॥ ८१ ॥

(यथा Just as) सर्वभावानां of all objects सूक्ष्मत्वे (सति) though very small उपनेत्रतः (viewed) through spectacles स्थूलत्वं (भवति) appears to be large तद्वत् so, etc.

81. Just as all objects that are very small appear to be large when viewed through (powerful) spectacles, so does one, etc.

काचभूमौ जलत्वं वा जलभूमौ हि काचता ।

तद्वदात्मनि देहत्वं पश्यत्यज्ञानयोगतः ॥ ८२ ॥

(यथा Just as) काचभूमौ in a place covered with glass जलत्वं water जलभूमौ in a place filled with water हि (expletive) काचता glass (भाति appears) तद्वत् so, etc.

82. Just as water appears in a place covered with glass or *vice versa*, so does one, etc.

यद्वदग्नौ मणित्वं हि मणौ वा वह्निता पुमान् ।

तद्वदात्मनि देहत्वं पश्यत्यज्ञानयोगतः ॥ ८३ ॥

यद्वत् Just as पुमान् a person अग्नौ in fire मणित्वं a jewel हि (expletive) वा or मणौ in a jewel वह्निता fire (पश्यति sees) तद्वत् so, etc.

83. Just as a person imagines a jewel in fire or *vice versa*, so does one, etc.

अभ्रेषु सत्सु धावत्सु सोमो धावति भाति वै ।

तद्वदात्मनि देहत्वं पश्यत्यज्ञानयोगतः ॥ ८४ ॥

(यथा Just as) अभ्रेषु धावत्सु सत्सु while clouds move सोमः the moon वै (expletive) धावति is moving (इति thus) भाति appears तद्वत् so, etc.

84. Just as when clouds move, the moon appears to be in motion, so does one, etc.

यथैव दिग्विपर्यासो मोहाद्भवति कस्यचित् ।

तद्वदात्मनि देहत्वं पश्यत्यज्ञानयोगतः ॥ ८५ ॥

यथैव (Just as) मोहात् through confusion कस्यचित् of someone दिग्विपर्यासः mistake about different directions भवति arises तद्वत् so, etc.

85. Just as someone through confusion loses all distinction between the different points of the compass, so does one, etc.

यथा शशी जले भाति चञ्चलत्वेन कस्यचित् ।

तद्वदात्मनि देहत्वं पश्यत्यज्ञानयोगतः ॥ ८६ ॥

यथा Just as कस्यचित् to someone शशी the moon जले in water चञ्चलत्वेन to be unsteady भाति appears तद्वत् so, etc.

86. Just as to someone the moon (when reflected) in water appears to be unsteady, so does one, etc.

एवमात्मन्यविद्यातो देहाध्यासो हि जायते ।

स एवात्मपरिज्ञानालीयते च परात्मनि ॥ ८७ ॥

एवं Thus अविद्यातः through ignorance आत्मनि in the Atman देहाध्यासः the delusion of the body जायते arises स एव that very delusion आत्मपरिज्ञानात् through the realization of the Atman परात्मनि in the supreme Atman च again लीयते disappears.

87. Thus through ignorance arises in the Atman the delusion of the body¹ which, again, through Self-realization, disappears in the supreme Atman.²

¹ *The delusion of the body.* . . . The delusion of matter in general. In fact matter is but a concoction of our mind, and therefore it has no real existence.

² *Which, again,* *disappears in the supreme Atman.* . . . When one realizes that the Atman alone is, and nothing else ever exists, the ignorance with all its effects, such as the delusion of the body and the like, ceases to exist for ever. Or, in other words, ignorance has never had any appearance at all, neither has it any disappearance as well. What is ever is. The Atman alone exists.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

The First Ramakrishna Math is concluded in this issue. Will the picture of the intense life that is depicted there stimulate the energies of those who are but half-hearted in their spiritual pur-

suits? Men very often go merely by shibboleths. People all the world over plunge into national activities, sometimes with fanatical zeal, though they have no clear ideas as to what should be the end for which a nation should strive. *What then?* raises some

questions with regard to that Nagendranath Gupta is a well-known journalist. For a considerable time he was editor of the *Tribune*, published from Lahore. *The Problem of Problems* indicates that his interest is not confined only to politics but he thinks keenly of the deeper problems of life. . . . In this concluding installment of her article, Madame Montessori shows how with the right type of education given to the children the future peace of the world will be ensured. . . . Swami Sambuddhananda is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order. He came greatly under the influence of Swami Premananda about whom he speaks so feelingly in *Memory that still inspires*. . . . It may be mentioned that the writer of *If I were twenty again, what would I do?* is past 90 in age. . . . Anilbaran Roy writes of the *Cross* at a time when many will be thinking deeply of the life of one who was crucified. . . . Aga Syed Ibrahim Dara wrote about two other Sufi saints for our journal. Lives of these Sufi saints clearly point out that truly religious persons transcend all barriers of credal religions and are a source of inspiration to anyone who hungers after righteousness. . . . Nagarjun Mishra is an old contributor to the *Prabuddha Bharata*. In the present article he examines some ideas which are thick in the atmosphere, and have been voiced forth by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

STRAINING AT A GNAT

One crime is no excuse for another crime. A man doing an evil deed cannot find justification from the fact that there is another person who does the same thing. But what is really objectionable and funny is, that a person who is not free from faults will

spend all his energy in picking faults in others.

Nobody denies that 'untouchability' is a great blot on the present Hindu society. Every Hindu with any pretension to culture and refinement feels it keenly that there would be anything as untouchability. Some are actively trying to remove it. But what seems strange is that a visitor from the West will look aghast at the inhuman cruelties meted out to the 'untouchables' in India, and on returning home try to prove that India is the most uncivilized country in the world because all are not treated equally.

Why, is there no untouchability in the West? Mr. C. F. Andrews writes some articles in *Harijan*, showing, how untouchability of similar, if not worse, kind exists in the West. Mr. Andrews says that some American gentlemen who came to London, "were not allowed to take meals in the hotel. They could only have rooms there. They could not appear in the dining room. They were 'untouchables' in their own hotels!" Mr. Andrews came to know of this cruel wrong only when some one of the party invited him to supper.

In Alabama, one of the Southern States of America, C. F. Andrews could not travel in the same train with two professors of the famous Tuskegee Institute because of the colour bar. At another place he could not take coffee with a Negro friend—a teacher—even in a Negro restaurant; for "it would lead possibly to a riot or some breach of the peace."

What will the Western critics of India say with regard to these facts?

Whatever might be the condition of society in the West, we wish that untouchability in India soon become a matter of the past. And this, not because our Western critics say so but

because untouchability is against the spirit of Hinduism.

HOW TO READ SCRIPTURES

With regard to the scriptures of every religion there have been so many interpretations and annotations that they are bewildering to an ordinary reader. He finds it difficult which to accept and which to reject, and at last gives up in disgust the reading of scriptures, refusing to believe that any sustenance of life can be got from them. Very often it is the commentators and annotators who make it difficult to understand scriptures. Each commentator will try to read his own meaning into scriptures. When there are several such commentators, they will fight with one another, each trying to force his own meaning upon others; and consequently confusion becomes the result.

When Tolstoy was once asked how to read the Gospels, he said it was not a difficult thing to understand them if only people would read them with a sincere wish to know the truth. According to him, even an ordinary man, when he goes to teach others, tries to make himself as intelligible as possible, and did not Christ, who the Churches say was God, take care that his words were as clear as possible even to a man of common understanding? That cannot be. A great teacher is great because the truth he expresses is as clear as daylight. Even a child will find the meaning of the Gospels as plain as anything if he will read the Gospels to *understand* them and not to *interpret* them.

This is true not only of the Gospels, but of all the scriptures in the World. But many will find it difficult to follow Tolstoy's advice. Because they read scriptures not so much with a desire to find out the guidance of life from them, as with a view to satisfy their

intellectual curiosity. When scriptures are subjected to such tragic purposes, what doubt is there that they will yield but poor results? Scriptures are meant mainly for those who long for Light in life; others who are not sincere in their religious thirst will necessarily beat about the bush and find it difficult to enter into the real spirit of scriptures. To a sincere soul scriptures will reveal a world of meaning—they will supply him with hope in times of failure, joy when fallen into misery, strength when all resources seem to have failed; whereas a scholar, proud of his intellectual acumen, will find them strange, improbable, unintelligible and even contradictory.

ALWAYS ILL-TREATED

Some persons find themselves always ill-treated by the world. They find that the world is always apathetic towards them; it will not appreciate their good points, but will always be careful to find out their defects. They think that everybody is talking about them, and that disparagingly. They become very sensitive and suspicious about the attitude of every man towards them. As they think that nobody is in sympathy with them, they are given to brooding, and as such their life becomes all the more miserable. As they find no happiness in the world, they get into the habit, as a reaction, of extracting every drop of misery from their misfortune.

Bertrand Russell considers these people to be the victims of 'persecution mania.' They not only make their own life miserable, but become also the cause of unhappiness to the society in which they live. Everywhere they create an atmosphere in which it is difficult to breathe freely. It is not that they are persecuted by the world, but it is they who persecute the world.

On analysis it will be found that the root cause of the trouble lies with these people themselves, and not with the world. It is their self-centredness which makes them the victims of their own imagination. Such people will be always found to be demanding more from the world than they are ready to give. They always want sympathy from others, but they have no time or are not in a mood to find interest in the welfare of others. They think that everybody will or ought to take care of them, but never imagine that they have got any duty to others.

One gets from the world, what one gives. The man who will give all he has to the world and expect no return, will get the greatest amount of happiness from it. The remedy for all 'persecution mania' is to develop unselfish love. The man who always feels interested in the welfare of others, and never thinks about himself, will have no enemy in the world. How many people are there in the world who can say that they have no enemy in the world? Is not, then, this simple method worth trying as a sure means of becoming happy in life?

ENGLISH MUST BE TAUGHT AT ANY COST

Some persons want that English should be continued as the medium of instruction as that will help our boys

to learn English. Apart from the question whether so much stress should be laid on learning English on the part of Indian boys, one may ask, "Do all English school boys know good English?"

We find the answer given by an experienced English professor in the pages of the *Review of Reviews*. According to him English public schools have pitifully failed to educate the boys. The students who enter schools of applied science from the public schools "cannot write English; they know nothing of English subjects; they do not care to read anything except the sporting news in the daily papers; . . . in fact, they are quite deficient in that kind of general education which every man ought to have."

If that be the state of affairs, where one's mother tongue is the medium of instruction, how deplorable will be the result where education is given through a foreign language? Yet some persons get alarmed at the idea that Indian boys should be taught through Indian vernaculars, and insist that English should be taught not only through English literature, but through all other subjects included in the school or college curriculum—through history, geography, logic, philosophy, physics, chemistry, botany! This is what might be called teaching English with a vengeance.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

PLOTINUS ON THE BEAUTIFUL AND ON INTELLIGIBLE BEAUTY. *The Shrine of Wisdom, Aahlu, 6 Hermon Hill, London.* 33 pp. Price 2s. 6d.

This small work is Manual No. 13 of the *Shrine of Wisdom Series*. The Editors are

to be congratulated on their judicious selection of the works on ancient wisdom for publication. For we cannot always boast of everything modern and scornfully look down upon the past. Indeed we have been tired of hearing too much of the much vaunted modern civilization. And it is doubtful if

everything bearing the stamp of modernity is to be regarded always as a healthy sign of progress and evolution. In all ages and in all countries there are people who still look back to the past, to the great repository of ancient wisdom and culture—to “the Shrine of Wisdom”—for inspiration and guidance. The work under review is a most welcome publication to them.

This book contains the two most important writings of Plotinus on the Beautiful: first, *Ennead* I. 6, translated by the Editors of the *Shrine of Wisdom*; second, “On Intelligible Beauty,” *Ennead* V. 8, translated by Thomas Taylor, together with an introduction and notes by the Editors of the *Shrine of Wisdom*. The question is asked: Wherein lies the beauty of an object? Plotinus rejects the stoic view that beauty consists in harmonious proportion of parts; for, he argues, how can the whole be beautiful if the parts are not beautiful? Again, what will become of the beauty of *simple things* such as a colour or a single note? Indeed things are beautiful through their participation in *form and reason*. “Body becomes beautiful through communion with Divine Reason descending from above.” This becomes clear when we consider the invisible beauty of pursuits and sciences and of virtue. Here soul perceives beauty as something *akin to its own essence*. Beautiful things remind the Soul of its own spiritual nature. “All souls may be and indeed are affected by invisible beauty, but especially those which are of a most *loving disposition*; just as in the case of corporeal beauty, all behold it yet are not equally stirred by it, but especially those who are really *lovers*.” But there is indeed such a thing as soul-blindness. And an ugly soul is soiled by the invasion of base passions. “Shall we not say that baseness has invaded such a soul under the false appearance of beauty and has corrupted her and rendered her impure and adulterated with much evil so that she is no longer truly alive nor possessed of pure perception; no longer beholding that which she ought to behold, nor able any more to remain within herself, but continually dragged towards externality, descent and darkness?” All virtues, therefore, it has been truly said, are purifications. “When therefore the soul is purified, she becomes form and reason, altogether incorporeal, intellectual and wholly of the divine order whence is the fountain of beauty and all that is akin thereto.” Hence it is right-

ly said that beauty and good of the soul consist in her assimilation to God. Beauty and goodness are thus one and the same.

“We must ascend, therefore, once more to the Good, which every soul desires. If any one has beheld It, he will know what I say, and in what manner It is Beautiful, for it is as good that it is desired and all appetency is towards goodness.” “He who has not yet seen Him desires Him as Good and he who has, admires Him as the Beautiful.” “Let us then, fly to our dear country.” “Our fatherland is that country whence we came, and there our father dwells.”

What then are the means of our escape thither? “We must exchange our earthly vision for another, and awaken that, a vision which all possess but few use.” The soul must be accustomed to contemplate beautiful pursuits and beautiful works and then the souls of the authors of such beautiful actions. “How, then, may you behold the beauty of a virtuous soul? Withdraw into your self and look; and if you do not yet behold yourself beautiful, do as does the maker of a statue which is to be beautiful; for he cuts away, shaves down, smooths and cleans it, until he has made manifest in the statue the beauty of the face which he portrays. So with yourself. Cut away that which is superfluous, straighten that which is crooked, purify that which is obscure: labour to make all bright.” “If you have become this, and have beheld it, and dwell within yourself in purity, and there is now nothing which prevents you from thus becoming one, your whole self is true light and light alone and you become the vision itself.” “For he that beholds must be akin to that which he beholds, and must, before he comes to this vision, be transformed into its likeness.” Or, as the Editors of the *Shrine of Wisdom* in their Introduction have put it, “two ways are given in which the soul may attempt to view it, first, as different from itself, second, as the same with itself. If the spectator is unable at first to perceive it other than as different from himself he must look within and shape his own nature into the likeness of Divine Beauty, when he will at last behold in the hidden centre of his own essence the Intelligible World, and uniting himself with it, will become one with the Divine.” But so long as he perceives it as something different from itself, he cannot be truly united to it. And “when it reaches its true home it will not be aware that its purpose is accom-

plished, for we are least aware of that which is most allied to our nature." "Thus, when most knowing, the soul will seem in its finite nature to be most ignorant of its blessed state."

It need hardly be pointed out what great affinity there is thus between Plotinus and the Sankara-Vedantist of our country in respect of this outlook and goal of life. The translation is very lucid and clear, and the introduction is very helpful in grasping the true spirit of this great mystical writer.

U. N. GUPTA

GLEANINGS. By Manohar Lal Zutshi. *The Indian Press, Ltd., Allahabad. x+274 pp. Price not mentioned.*

The book is a fine collection of brilliant essays. They are all reprints from dailies and monthlies, and mostly on literary, social and political subjects; the few biographical sketches that we find in the volume are also written from social and political considerations. The series of articles under the title, "Hindu Protestantism," though smack of religion, have the same socio-political aim in views. By the side of these essays, the literary ones, though scholarly in themselves, occupy a much inferior position. In fact, the whole personality of the learned author is filled with one burning question, viz. that of Indian nationality. So when he speaks of this, he speaks with such feeling, reason and conviction that others, holding different views, are also led to admire him. The author is a thinker and scholar; and what make his essays charming are their complete freedom from bitterness of any kind and their dignified moderation.

But the essays, most of them, were written a quarter of a century ago; and as such they labour under both the merits and demerits of old writings on ever-progressive subjects like society and politics. In these two decades and a half, India has revealed many peculiarities which belie many of the author's principles; and even where principles are all right, methods seem to differ. Religion, for example, the overdose of which the author so much complains of, now seems to be the source of inspiration to not only the social and political leaders but to the rank and file as well. Book-learning and lecturing count for nothing at present. What we find is that the more religious a man is,

the better is his character; and the more noble he is, the greater power does he wield.

Still there are principles and truths that do not change, historical facts and social and religious traits that seem to last long. As regards such matters Mr. Zutshi holds his ground well. Such a well-balanced analytical critic we seldom find.

TANTRIC TEXTS, VOLS. XVI & XVII (Sharadatilakatantram). Edited by Arthur Avalon. *Published for the Agamanusandhana Samiti by the Sanskrit Press Depository, 30 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. 504 pp.+ 539 pp. Price Rs. 12.*

The Agamanusandhana Samiti has already published a good lot of Texts and other works dealing with the Agamas. The Society is undoubtedly doing a very useful service for the revival of the Tantric literature. The present volumes contain the original text of the Sharadatilaka Tantra by Lakshmanadeshikendra along with the commentary by Raghavabhatta named *Padarthadarsa*. The first volume gives in the very beginning an exhaustive Introduction dealing with a summary of twenty-five chapters into which the Sharadatilaka Tantra is divided. This Tantra dwells upon various forms of the Brahmanik faith prevalent in India. It is replete with numerous details of religious life as practised by the Hindus. It is written in lucid Sanskrit poetry. S. J. Jnanendra Lal Majumdar introduces a note on the first chapter wherein he discusses at length the philosophy of the Tantra. The first chapter is pre-eminently the philosophic portion of the whole book. The rest of the Tantra deals with Upasana or worship of the Deity with rites, Mantras and Yoga. The two volumes are very carefully edited, nicely printed and got up. They will be of immense help to all those who are in any way interested in practical religion. The Samiti which is devoting so much energy to the cause of religious literature of India should receive sympathetic attention from the cultured people of our land and abroad. The practical aspect of the Tantra literature gives considerable proofs of the scientific knowledge of the ancient Rishis. The details of ceremonies and worship bear testimony to that. So, even in these days of scientific progress, the value of the Agamas can hardly be over-estimated.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES

THE THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL REPORT: THE REPORT FOR 1932

The works of the Home for the year 1932 are:—

(a) *Indoor General Hospital*:—The number of beds is 145. Want of accommodation has compelled the authorities to convert some of the seats in the male refuge block to hospital seats. The total number of new cases was 1,607. The daily average number of indoor cases was 118. The total number of surgical cases in the indoor hospital was 207.

(b) *Refuge for aged men*:—This Home has 25 beds for poor invalids.

(c) *Refuge for women invalids*:—A house at Dasaswamedh accommodates helpless, aged and invalid women. In the year under review there were 7 members in all.

(d) *Girls' Home*:—7 girls belonging to respectable families have been accommodated in the women department of the Home. They receive general education as well as a special training in nursing in their own department.

(e) *Home for paralytic patients*:—This year 11 paralytic patients were accommodated.

(f) *Dharamsala for the poor and the helpless*:—150 people were given shelter and food or either, during the year under review.

(g) *Outdoor Dispensary*:—This year 41,409 new patients attended the outdoor dispensary; the number of repeated cases was 67,346. These include the patients of the *Branch Outdoor Dispensary at Shivala*. The daily average attendance of the two dispensaries was 198. The total number of the operation cases was 324.

(h) *Outdoor help to invalids and poor ladies of respectable families*:—The Home had 137 permanent recipients of outdoor relief this year.

(i) *Special and occasional Relief*:—685 persons coming under this heading were assisted during the year.

New additions:—

(a) A plot of land adjacent to the women's department has been acquired for erecting the proposed Women's Invalid Home.

(b) Another adjoining plot of land has

been purchased together with an old building thereon in order to meet the various needs of the Home.

All the three departments—the *allopathic*, the *homœopathic*, and the *Kaviraji*—are conducted under the instruction of expert doctors and Kavirajas.

The total receipts of the general fund amounted to Rs. 63,177-11-8. The total expenses come to Rs. 56,876-1-8.

The present needs of the Home are:

(a) Endowments for beds for the sick and the invalid. The cost of endowing a bed is Rs. 3,000 for the sick, and Rs 2,500 for the invalid.

(b) Bedding and clothing: the Home is in constant need of these articles.

(c) A good kitchen and store-room in the female department.

(d) An invalid Home for women.

Contributions are to be sent to:—Asst. Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares City, U.P.

RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION, BANKURA

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1932

This centre was started in 1910. It was at first situated just on the bank of the river Gandheshwari but when the greater portion of the Ashrama was washed away in 1922 by a flood, it was finally removed to the south of the B. N. Ry Station to a fairly extensive plot of land donated by Sj. Gopinath Dutt.

Its present activities are twofold, viz. charitable and missionary. It conducts a charitable dispensary where both Allopathic and Homœopathic medicines are dispensed. In the year under review 40,027 cases were treated of which 29,337 were old ones. Its missionary activities are limited to the birthday celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples as well as of other prophets of Hindu and other religions.

Its present needs are (i) a separate building for the dispensary which is being conducted from an open verandah which causes great inconvenience to the patients specially during the rains and the winter; and (ii) some surgical instruments for want of which the doctors cannot carry on their work properly.

Its receipts during 1932 came up to Rs. 1,108-5-3 and disbursements to Rs. 1,071-11-6, leaving a poor balance of Rs. 36-9-9 only. Any contribution to this branch of the Ramakrishna Mission will be thankfully accepted by:—Swami Maheshwarananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Bankura.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, DACCA

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1932

The activities of this branch of the Ramakrishna Mission are mainly of three kinds: Missionary, Educational and Charitable. Its missionary activities comprise: (i) Weekly sittings in different quarters of the city and outside. There were altogether 241 such sittings in the year under review. (ii) Public lectures—Invited to different parts of Bengal, the Swamis of the Ashrama delivered 44 lectures on social and religious topics and conducted a large number of conversation classes. (iii) Birthday anniversaries: The workers fittingly celebrated the birthday anniversaries not only of Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples but of almost all the prophets of the world. Lectures and discourses on their lives and teachings by the learned professors of the local university and other leading men of the town were arranged.

Educational activities:—This branch conducts one free *M. E. School for the boys* and another free *girls' school* up to the standard of Class III, their average number on the rolls being 172 and 23 respectively. *Two libraries* and *one reading room*—all free and well-stocked with books and periodicals and dailies—are also run by the Ashrama. *Free board and lodging* and *pecuniary help* to a limited number of poor students were also given.

Charitable activities:—It conducts an *out-door charitable dispensary* where Allopathic, Homoeopathic, Biochemic and Ayurvedic medicines are dispensed. Total number of new cases treated is 2,927, and of old cases 6,447. *Distribution of cloth, corn and money* was another item of its activities. During the year under review the district of Mymensingh suffered not a little from the ravages of a tornado. This Ashrama sent to the Mission centre at Mymensingh whatever money and pieces of cloth it could collect. The total expenditure to relieve the distressed families of the district amounted to Rs. 218-10-9. The Dhakeshwari Cotton Mills very kindly made over to the Mission some

200 pieces of new cloth, all of which were distributed to the needy families of the Dacca district through its different branches within the same district.

Its immediate needs are the following: (1) *A separate building for the outdoor dispensary* at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,500/- is very keenly felt. (2) A sum of Rs. 3,000/- is required for the carrying on of its proposed *mass education scheme*. (3) To save the Mission tank water from pollution the *construction of a pucca drain* on the western border of its compound is an immediate necessity; it will require some Rs. 2,000/-. (4) It is needless to say that without a *decent permanent fund*, all the philanthropic works that this branch of the Mission is doing, cannot be carried on. So the public are requested to come forward with their quota of help. Any contribution to this branch will be thankfully accepted by:—

The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Dacca.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FLOOD RELIEF WORK IN ORISSA AND MIDNAPORE

In the week ending 4th November we have distributed 486 mds. 21½ srs. of rice among 9,316 recipients belonging to 292 villages from Kapileswar, Niali, Fatehpur, Chitreswari, Baliana and Balikunda centres in the districts of Puri and Cuttack. In the same week 121 mds. 19 srs. of rice and 398 pieces of new cloth were distributed among 2,410 recipients of 96 villages from Balighai, Pratapdighi and Balyagovindapur centres in Contai Sub-Division and 30 mds. 22 srs. of rice among 611 recipients of 29 villages from Barabaichheria centre in Tamluk Sub-Division of Midnapore. Besides, 70 mds. of bran were supplied free for cattle from the centres of Contai.

Our work has to be continued some time yet. Contributions in the shape of money or new cloth will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses:—

- (1) President, R. K. Mission, Belur Math, Howrah.
- (2) Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.
- (3) Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

(Sd.) SUDDHANANDA,
Secy., R. K. Mission.
9-11-33.