

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

VOL. XL

SEPTEMBER, 1935

No. 9



“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

REMINISCENCES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

*Detroit,
January 18, 1900.*

At present I have not in any way come to grief over my relation to Swami—and I have *not* told it to the world at all. Of that I am sure.

But experience contradicts theory all the time.

On this journey I have seemed to find my feet and to be led every step by Mother Herself. And as I look back I see that the same thing was true before. When I have been *free* everything has gone well, but it has been necessary that people should accept *my personality* with a certain readiness to love me, and when this is so, I find that I simply sit and tell them, for the present, the things Swami tells us. I don't will one thing or another but unconsciously I seem to be a channel, and I sit and listen to him talking. When I first discovered this, I kept a tight hold over myself because the acknowledgment of plagiarism while it would have satisfied myself would have been a jarring note. Now I see that it is all right and I don't bother. Shall a child not rejoice in speaking its Father's message?

*Chicago,
January 26, 1900.*

I am finding daily that Kali's ways are not as ours, if one may put it so. She puts one person out of the way, only to discover someone else standing ready where one had no more dreamt of help than of flying.

Did I tell you at the last centre how my most blessed helper was the thorniest of all thorns at the beginning of the week? And here it is just the same; two or three of the strongest workers are the most unspeakably unexpected. I find, too, that the marks of a great Renunciation are very different from those of a small, and I laugh daily at our mutual friend's blindness about Swami's. Why, that way he has of finding himself in any company, of holding or withholding light indifferently, of caring nothing about people's opinions of him, are simply gigantic. I only realized when, after all the love and warmth I had in one town, I reached another and found myself fuming and chafing against the artificiality of people about me, what Swami's greatness really was, in this respect! And it was these very people, from whom I would have escaped at once if I could, who proved Mother's appointed instruments—thus setting the seal on Swami's ways. That irresponsibility of his is so glorious too. Nothing is more enticing than to put oneself into the attitude of generalissimo of the forces, and make splendid plans, compelling fortune, but Swami just waits, and drifts in on the wave. And so on. I am just beginning to understand his bigness.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[IN HIS OWN WORDS]

Sri Ramakrishna described his practice of the Mahomedan faith as follows: "Then I used to repeat the name of Allah, wear my cloth in the fashion of the Mahomedans and recite the Namaz regularly. All Hindu ideas being wholly banished from the mind, not only did I not salute the Hindu gods, but I had no inclination even to visit them. After three days I realized the goal of that form of devotion." This realization is described by him in another version that he saw a radiant Person with a long beard and of grave appearance, and then his mind, passing through the realization of the Brahman with attributes, was finally absorbed in the Brahman without attributes.

*

Speaking of a vision at Benares, he said: "I saw a tall figure with a white body and tawny matted locks staidly approach each funeral pyre, and tender-

ly lifting up the Jiva, breathe into its ears the Supreme Mantra! The Gracious Mother of the universe, seated on the other side of the pyre, was removing one after another all the coverings of bondage of every Jiva, and unlocking the gate of Nirvâna was speeding the fortunate soul to the Absolute. Thus the realization of Advaita which people attain after ages of concentration and austerity, was brought within the easy reach of those who died at Benares, through the infinite mercy of Siva."

*

The following is his description of some of his experiences at Vrindâvan: "At the sight of Banku Vihâri (a name of Sri Krishna) I was overwhelmed with emotion and ran to embrace Him. I was not so impressed by Govindaji. The very sight of the Kâliya Daman Ghât used to throw me into ecstasy, and

Hriday used to bathe me like a child. I would take a stroll in the evening on the sandy beach of the Jumna, where there were small thatched huts among the jujube trees. One evening I saw herds of cows returning from their pasture. Followed by cowherd boys they waded the Jumna. The scene at once suggested Sri Krishna to me, and overwhelmed with emotion I ran crying wildly, 'Where is Krishna, Oh, where is Krishna!' I had a desire to visit Syâm Kund and Râdhâ Kund. They sent me in a palanquin. It was a long distance; so they provided refreshments for the way. I got down to visit the Govardhan hill. The very sight of it overwhelmed me, and I ran to the top, where I stood lost to outward consciousness. The inhabitants of the place brought me to normal. On the way to Syâm Kund and Râdhâ Kund I saw the old meadows and trees and plants, and birds and deer—rich with associations—and could not contain myself. Tears rolled from my eyes and wetted my cloth. I thought, 'O Krishna, everything hallowed with Thy association is here, only I can't see Thee!' I was in the palanquin, but had not the power to utter a syllable and could not ask the bearers to stop."

*

At Vrindâvan he visited Gangâ Mâtâ, a Vaishnava woman devotee, noted for her great spiritual realizations. The following is his own description of her and of his association with her: "Gangâ Mâi used to take great care of me. She was very old and lived all alone in a hut near Nidhuvan. Seeing my condition and loss of consciousness in Samâdhi, she often said, 'This is verily Râdhâ reincarnated in flesh and blood!' She used to address me as Dulâli (a pet name for Sri Râdhâ). When I was in her company I forgot

all about food and drink, or returning to my quarters. On some days Hriday would bring food to her hut and feed me."

*

At Vrindâvan he adopted the Vaishnava dress, which he wore for a fortnight. He visited Muttra also, where, he said, at the very sight of the Dhruva Ghât he had a vision of Vasudeva crossing the Jumna with his babe Krishna in his arms.

*

Referring to the lamentable death of Akshay, his nephew whom he loved very much, he used to give an account of the event: "Akshay died before my very eyes. But it did not affect me in the least. I stood by and watched a man die. It was like a sword being drawn from its scabbard. I enjoyed the scene, and laughed and sang and danced over it. They removed the body and cremated it. But the next day as I stood there (pointing to the south-eastern verandah of his room), I felt a racking pain for the loss of Akshay, as if somebody were squeezing my heart like a wet towel! I wondered and thought that Mother was teaching me a lesson. I was not much concerned with the body even—much less with a nephew. But if such was my pain at his bereavement, how much more must be the grief of the householders at the loss of their near and dear ones!"

*

While proceeding in a boat to old Nadia, the real birthplace of Sri Gaurânga, he had seen a vision which was described by him as follows: "Two boys (meaning Sri Chaitanya and Nityânanda), bright as molten gold, with aureoles round their heads, rushed smiling towards me through the air with uplifted hands. 'They come, they

come,' I cried. In the twinkling of an eye they came and entered into this body (meaning himself), and I fell down unconscious. I would have fallen into the water but for Hriday, who caught hold of me."

THE PRACTICAL PROBLEMS OF LIFE

BY THE EDITOR

I

When we try to probe the deeper meaning of life, we are often led to speculate on various theories and metaphysical questions. This is sometimes wrongly done or done to such an extreme that we become perplexed and do not get satisfactory results as expected. It is true that we need to go through philosophy in order to keep the intellectual life clean and healthful. But if philosophy be not studied carefully, it very often brings us intellectual obstructions. Intellectual doubts and difficulties run riot in our brains and we get worse confounded when practical problems arise. There are people whose lives have been miserable due to intellectual confusion. We should make our life easier and simpler with some plain truths for practical purposes. Those who are earnest among us are found to plunge headlong into practice with a few golden principles. Such men boldly face the facts of life without wasting their energy in vain speculations. "Our young people", said Emerson, "are diseased with the theological problems of original sin, origin of evil, predestination, and the like. These never presented a practical difficulty to any man,—never darkened across any man's road, who did not go out of his way to seek them. These are the soul's mumps, and measles, and whooping coughs, and those who have not caught them cannot describe their health or prescribe the cure.

A simple mind will not know these enemies." The greatest evil of the times is that the modern life has been too complex. We have lost much of the power of seeing and doing things in a simple manner. In private or public affairs, we have unnecessarily complicated our problems and have made our homes and society so unhappy. The result of such a medley of things is that we are deprived of the spontaneity of life and the optimism of nature. The only remedy for it is to develop simplicity in our thoughts and actions in order to make our lives smooth and worth living.

The Rishis of ancient India used to take great precaution when they imparted philosophical training to their disciples. They tested the individual tastes and parts at first, before they imparted any philosophical training. Besides, they laid stress on the practical problems of individuals side by side with their intellectual education. Hence, philosophy could not bring any conflict in the midst of practical life. Today one great fault in education is that too many theories and doctrines are put into the brains of young men and women indiscriminately. They get imbued with the thoughts of the people who are more or less obsessed by their peculiar mentality or outlook on life. They have very little touch with men of wisdom. This is why we find so much unrest and chaos in the intellectual life of today. Many people

get confused and take recourse to atheism or scepticism. Some take to dangerous cults and ruin themselves. So it is no wonder that nowadays we hear so often that we ought to give up the false consolations of religion and alluring thoughts of the Invisible. Religious instincts are regarded as diseases harmful to humanity. Many of us want to accept life as it is and think it more manly to believe in the actual than roam in the absurd. Some there are, who find all the prevailing opinions interesting and do not have any convictions.

The cause of such a state of things is that philosophy today is divorced from the practical life and it is not directed along proper channels. One great defect is that we are much more swayed by the opinions of thinkers than by the experiences of seers. It is necessary for us to draw a sharp line of demarcation between the former and the latter. John Ruskin used to say, "The more I think of it, I find this conclusion more impressed upon me that the greatest thing a human soul ever does in the world is to *see* something and tell what it *saw* in a plain way. Hundreds of people can talk for one who can think, but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy and religion all in one." When Yudhisthira was questioned about the right path to be followed in life, he is said to have answered: "The Vedas differ, the Smritis differ, philosophers differ, Truth is beyond our gaze. The path trodden by the great souls is the only path to be followed." The great souls are those who have experienced the highest Truth in life. Indian sages uniformly advise men to take refuge in such souls who alone can free them from bondages in life. They always gave preference to intuitive knowledge than to intellectual. So, philo-

sophy in ancient India was practically governed by men of intuition. There was thus no break of continuity between philosophy and religion in ancient Indian literature. "Philosophy in India," said Swami Vivekananda, "means that through which we see God, the *rationale* of religion; so no Hindu would ever ask for a link between religion and philosophy."

II

The conflict between authority and reason is very common to modern minds. There are people who proclaim their unbelief in all forms of authority. They do not want to submit to any discipline. They have no philosophy of life which they adhere to, nor have they any ideal to be achieved in life. They absolutely ignore the great value of tradition. They are practically led by wandering whims and caprices. In the name of liberty and reason, they propound doctrines which are suicidal to the progress of mankind. In the midst of this confusion, some people take a blind refuge in age-long authority. In their heart, they are either sceptics or hypocrites but they console themselves with a false relief by leaning towards authority.

The efficacy of reason can hardly be over-estimated. Who can underestimate the value of any rationalistic investigation? Our life is sure to be swayed by superstition and fanaticism, if it be not governed by reason. We know how the evils of authority have ruined individuals and nations. It is well known how religions fight against one another for want of reason. Besides, liberty and reason are so indispensable for the growth of our soul. We can never grow within the hedges of blind tradition.

"It has been said that reason is not strong enough;" said Swami

Vivekananda, "it does not always help us to get the Truth; many times it makes mistakes, and therefore the conclusion is, that we must believe in the authority of a church! That was said to me by a Roman Catholic, but I could not see the logic of it. On the other hand, I should say, if reason be so weak, a body of priests would be weaker, and I am not going to accept their verdict, but I will abide by my reason, because with all its weakness there is some chance of my getting at truth through it; while, by the other means, there is no such hope at all." The great Swami at the same time emphasized the limited scope of reason too. He said in the same breath: "To reach Truth by reason alone is impossible because imperfect reason cannot study its own fundamental basis. Therefore the only way to study the mind is to get at facts and then intellect will arrange them and deduce the principles." Liberty and reason must have their proper limits. If they be let loose, they will certainly fail to be safe guides in life. Tradition, on the other hand, should not be set at naught, simply because they are age-worn and out of fashion. We must avoid the extremes of both authority and reason for the solution of our problems in life. We need be conscious of the dangers of faith and also the obstacles of intellectualism. There ought to be a balance between reason and faith in all our undertakings in life. An undue leaning to one or the other is the cause of our mistakes and miseries. The unrest that we find in the modern life is largely due to the lost balance.

III

Of all the problems of life, what concerns us most is that of happiness. Because our life on earth is not at

all happy, even if we are blessed with the most covetable things of the world. So it is necessary for all to rise above the sorrows and sufferings of this finite existence. In response to this practical need, the Rishis of India discovered not only theories of life but also means to escape from the taint of finiteness. In their methods of approach to freedom in life, they combined immense practicality with intense thinking. They proclaimed to the world the secret of happiness in which we can find our freedom from the thralldom of finite things. One of their utterances may be cited to show the clue to our happiness: "The Infinite is happiness. There is no happiness in what is finite. The Infinite alone is happiness." We hear the distant echo of the truth in the writings of Emerson: "It is only the finite that has wrought and suffered; the Infinite lies stretched in smiling repose." The Upanishads din into our ears the glory of the Infinite and teach us to give up all narrow grooves of life. It is due to our narrow vision and attitude to life that we suffer and mourn. Each soul is infinite in its nature. It is pure, resplendant, and full of bliss. Every man has to hear about it from a perfected soul, reason about, and meditate on it. Then alone can he expect to proceed towards happiness, by getting which he will no more be deluded by the finite things of the world.

It is admitted that the search after the Infinite entails sufferings, but they contribute to the gradual unfoldment of the spirit in us. The pain and sorrow that we suffer from for our blind pursuit of material things have a baneful effect on our soul and it gradually drags us to a lower level where we find nothing but despair and degradation. Our sufferings are due to the fact

that we often confuse happiness with pleasure. Pleasure owes its origin to matter; whereas happiness, to the spirit. Sufferings for the spirit help us to manifest the potentialities of our soul. They kindle the inner fire in us that consumes all the dirt and dross of our life. All men of wisdom had to pass through this fiery ordeal of sufferings. The *Gita* teaches us to engage ourselves in the struggle, having made pain and pleasure, gain and loss, conquest and defeat the same. The notions of the dual throng arise only out of the contact of our senses with objects. They are impermanent in their nature and that alone which does not change but abides for ever is the source of all bliss and peace. In the pursuit of the same, the *Bible* also gives the following hint: "Accept whatever is brought upon thee and be long suffering when thou passest into humiliation. For gold is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of affliction." There is joy even in our sufferings as we proceed towards the destination. Sri Ramakrishna's parable of the woodcutter teaches us the lesson of greater and greater possibilities in our journey towards Truth.

IV

The spiritual life signifies the gradual unfolding of the Infinite that is present in every man. The process of unfolding goes on in every individual through various stages and circumstances. We make our own environments. It is a mistake to think that man is a tool in the hands of Nature. In every man lie dormant the immense potentialities of the soul. To think ourselves weak and powerless is due to our lack of self-introspection.

Man is not a mere mechanism of instincts. Every man is a spirit that moulds and governs his own actions.

Although there is the law of Karma, it does not conflict with his freedom. The spiritual element in him can cut the Gordian knot of his actions. The *Gita* teaches us to depend more on our own exertions than on fate: "A man should uplift himself by his own self, so let him not weaken this self. For this self is the friend of oneself, and this self is the enemy of oneself. The self is the friend of the self, for him who has conquered himself by this self. But to the unconquered self, this self is inimical and behaves like a foe."

The problem of sin overpowers many a soul in the journey of life. The very name of sin has a baneful effect on our heart. Hence, the more we give up the pernicious ideas of sin and God's wrath, the more can we proceed towards the expansion of our own selves. The ideas of punishment in the next world have rendered us weaklings, and our lives have become miserable. Unless there is a genuine faith in the potentialities of our soul, we cannot develop our spirit simply through fear. The Rishis of India ask us to stand on our own feet and declare that there is neither sin nor virtue, but only ignorance. We need to dispell our ignorance about the nature of our soul and advance towards freedom which alone is the goal of life. The greatest harm that has been done to man is due to the literature that deals with sins and perdition. The world has been much weaker and miserable by such teachings than by the acts of sin themselves. "Men are taught from childhood," said Swami Vivekananda, "that they are weak and sinners. Teach them that they are all glorious children of immortality, even those who are the weakest in manifestation. Let positive, strong, helpful thought enter into their brains from very childhood."

Mere weeping and brooding over our shortcomings in life can hardly raise us unless we grow a dynamic attitude of our soul. While we seek to obtain God's mercy, we thereby awaken the dormant power that resides in us. Our prayer to God requires a positive and strong turn of our mind. When we leave Satan and look towards God, it means that we give up weakness and cultivate strength. When we forsake broodings and take to reformation, it implies that we set aside ignorance and seek after knowledge. It is a mistake to think that we can please God without a genuine change in our life and character. Faith, prayer and love are so many modes of our spiritual opening. Faith in God is not a cowardly refuge in something supernatural. When a man possesses this virtue, it means that his soul posits its real home in eternity. Faith requires the mighty nerves of an ardent soul. Because, he faces the odds of life with his convictions. It is not easy to be faithful to God, unless one at first has cultivated faith in one's own self. Love of God is not a frenzy of one's mind. It requires the virile sentiments of a heroic heart. Because, that man alone can love God,

who clings no more to finite things of the world. It is hard to love something that lies beyond the horizon of our sensuous experience. Love of God is thus a means of unfolding our self, which is infinite and blissful in its nature.

We hear so often about the conflict between the sacred and the secular, between the life of the spirit and that of the world. The conflict comes when we fail to view the affairs of life as so many lessons taught in the school of the world. We need to look upon the world as the best training ground for the development of our souls. The lives and teachings of men like Krishna make us understand that it is possible to live the highest truths of religion even in the busiest affairs of the world. While reviving the son of Abhimanyu, Krishna said, "Never before have I uttered an untruth even in jest. Never have I turned away from battle. By the merit of these actions let this child revive." It is easy for a man to pass for a truthful or honest man, when he is not in the society of men. But unless a man passes through crucial tests of the world, how can he be said to have achieved perfection in life?

BRAHMACHARYA OR CONTINENCE

BY SWAMI TRIGUNATITA

Truly does Sankara say that human birth is very rare. The human form is the highest and man the greatest being because in that form alone is his greatest and best chance to attain salvation—to attain Knowledge. All other creatures, be they gods or angels, have to come down to this world and attain salvation through a human body. This is a rare privilege—this human

life. And such a privilege we are foolishly abusing. Without appreciating the value of such a privilege we are bringing down untold miseries on ourselves by our evil actions. Can there be a greater irony of fate? Can there be a greater fool than one who getting such a rare chance busies himself with worldly things and aspires not after Knowledge? Far from striving for

Knowledge we are on the contrary getting more and more steeped in ignorance. What is the reason? Man, who was almost free from diseases, who used to do whatever he willed, who used to sing, "I have no fear of death etc.", and was thoroughly convinced of it, why is he today beset with a thousand fears, worried by distracting thoughts and is sinking in the abysmal ocean of discontent? What is the reason? It is all due to lack of continence. Time was when a child could by his reply pregnant with wisdom strike dumb his enquirer, though an intellectual giant; when children like Nachiketas and sages like Sukadeva were born. Why has such a society been brought to such a pause? It is because we have lost that ancient fire, that ancient force in us due to lack of continence. Without continence nothing great can be achieved.

What is Brahmacharya or continence? It is the conservation of the sexual energy. In all spheres of life, whether spiritual or material, whether pertaining to this world or the other, this conservation of the sexual energy is absolutely necessary if success is to be attained. Without absolute continence, you cannot have perfect health, or be able to do good to others, or attain realization. The famous Dr. Nichols says, "The suspension of the use of the generative organ is attended with a notable increase of bodily and mental vigour and spiritual life." Therefore there is no hope of success in any sphere of life whether material or spiritual unless man maintains absolute continence. Sri Ramakrishna used to say: "When a man succeeds in the conservation of his sexual energy, his intellect reflects the image of Brahman, even as a glass gives a perfect image when its back is painted with mercury solution. The man who carries this image of Brahman in his

heart is able to accomplish everything—he will succeed wonderfully in whatever action he engages himself." So without continence our life is useless.

The dictionary meaning of the word Brahmacharya is that Asrama or stage of life which a man undertakes for the study of Brahman or the Vedas. The Vedas are generally studied in boyhood, so the first of the four Asramas or stages of life is called the Brahmacharya Asrama. The taking to this Asrama is obligatory on all, specially on the Brâhmanas, the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas. Why is it obligatory? Because all the great and noble qualities of character are cultivated and easily acquired in this period of life. Nowadays it has become a fashion, so to say, in many countries to impart vocational education to children. No attention is paid to the improvements of his moral side, let alone the spiritual. In former days, however, it was not the custom with us. The primary attention was given to the building up of character; next came the imparting of spiritual education; and last of all some used to impart vocational training also. Then everyone knew that character and knowledge were things that were mostly needed, and that money and all other things would come of themselves to one who possessed these two. Character and knowledge are not subservient to money; the truth lies the other way about.

This Asrama or stage of life is obligatory because of the fact that noble qualities are cultured in this period. Manus says: "In order to increase the force of his character, a Brahmachârin, living in the house of his Guru or preceptor and having perfect control over his passions, should duly practise these (i.e. serving the preceptor, repetition of mystic syllables, austerities, non-injury, forbearance, etc.)".

This stage of life is the very basis of all other stages. The other stages viz. the married life, the life of a recluse and that of the Sannyâsin—all these stages of life wholly and fully depend on this period of Brahmacharya. Just as a building though large and beautiful is unstable if it is built on a shifting ground, even so no duties of any stage of life can be performed with any degree of success if this period of Brahmacharya has not been fully utilized—nay, one is not even thought fit to enter any other stage of life.

The Lord speaks in the *Bhâgavatam* : “When the Brahmachârin (i.e. the boy undergoing Brahmacharya) shines like fire due to the faithful performance of great penances, when his sins and past evil tendencies have been burnt down by them and he has acquired love for Me (the Lord), then the preceptor will examine him (with respect to his knowledge); having passed the test the boy should offer honorarium to the Guru and take his purificatory bath with his permission and then that good scion of the twice-born classes may take to a householder’s life or to the life of a recluse or forthwith take to the fourth stage of life viz. Sannyâsa, according to his own choice.” So we see, this stage of life must be gone through by all.

Continence is such a great power, so noble, so necessary for all, that it should not be confined to the first stage of life only. It is wrong to think that it should be practised only in boyhood. Its function is not finished with the mere laying out of the foundation stone of life; it is not to end with the climbing of the first step of the ladder of life. It functions throughout life. Without Brahmacharya it is impossible to build one’s character even as it is impossible to create a building without mortar. Again just as a particular part of a building totters where the strength of

mortar is lost or weakened, so also that part of our life is exposed to dangers where the strength of Brahmacharya or continence is lacking. The qualities that are practised in the first stage of life are, all of them, equally necessary in all other stages of life. Even in the householder’s life continence is of great importance, not to speak of its necessity in the other three stages. Without Brahmacharya it is absolutely impossible to lead a householder’s life according to the injunctions of the scriptures. Without self-control householders can never be true to their ideals. Sri Ramakrishna used to say to all, not excepting the householders : “Make the Knowledge of oneness your own first and then do your work”; “take firm hold of the post, i.e. God, and then go on whirling”; “Keep the greater part of your mind fixed on God and with the rest attend to your ordinary rounds of duty.” With these and many other beautiful similes he used to teach householders how they should lead their lives. If one is to live as a householder up to his instructions, the first thing that is necessary is Brahmacharya. First of all control over the senses is required. The power of curbing the outward tendencies at will is to be acquired first. In one word he must be perfectly self-controlled. It is for this reason that some speak of the householder’s life as the greatest stage of life. It is indeed a very pure Asrama. It is not for brutes but for the purest in heart, for the perfectly continent. For the human brutes the Lord has not prescribed any Asrama. In no scripture can it be found that the householder’s life is to give free reins to our passions. Just imagine for a moment how pure is that Asrama where saints and monks and even the Lord Himself, come to be born ! What great caution one must exercise here !

No welfare without Brahmacharya, be he a student, a householder, a recluse in the forest or an itinerant monk; neither can national welfare come without it; nor will the world know of peace.

It is not only in our country or our religion that Brahmacharya is so much needed or has such a great hold; all the countries and all the religions of the world extol it. In ancient days absolute continence was not observed in other parts of the world; it was the Vedic Rishis who first practised it in India. We have it in the *Prasna Upanishad* that when six Rishis—all devoted to Brahman—came to Rishi Pippalâda to acquire the highest knowledge, the latter asked them to observe Brahmacharya for one year more at the end of which he promised to initiate them into the highest knowledge. Moreover, in the *Chhândogya Upanishad* we have the dialogue between Indra and Virochana and Brahmâ where Brahmâ taught Indra the knowledge of Brahman after making him undergo Brahmacharya for 101 years.

From India this idea of Brahmacharya spread to Egypt among the Neo-Platonists and to Greece among the Pythagoreans, and more or less to many other countries of Europe, in later days. It was again from India that this idea spread to various countries of Asia. The Persians took it from India. Then the Buddhist preachers carried it far and wide. The Assinis took it from the Buddhists; and the Christians partly from the Neo-Platonists and partly from the Assinis. These Christians, in their turn, spread it in many other countries. It is seen that in all those countries where this idea of Brahmacharya has gone—there have arisen many great men. And none have done greater service to their countries and to the world at large than these men

of continence. For example, we may take St. Paul or Sir Isaac Newton. So I say that those who want to do any real good to themselves or to their country, should practise Brahmacharya irrespective of the stage of life they might be in.

One should not think that Brahmacharya is to be observed only by the pious; it is equally efficacious to those who do not care for religion, who do not believe in God or transmigration of the soul or in the Vedas. Because “the six treasures” as they are called viz., the control of the senses and the mind, forbearance, abstinence, faith, and mental concentration—all of which are included within Brahmacharya—are of the highest value to those who want their own good and that of their country, be they materialist or unbelievers in salvation or in the hereafter. Those among the materialists who are good and great have a very high regard for these “six treasures.” Those who do not possess one or other of these six treasures, can never achieve anything really great. These are indeed six treasures. What do they care for in the world—those, who have control over their passions and their mind? He is really poor, a beggar, if he does not possess these six merits even though he be a mighty emperor. A monied or propertied man passes his days in fear or anxious thoughts, but the possessor of these six virtues is greater than monarchs, is even worshipped by the gods. He is filled with bliss and contentment to overflowing. Out of the fullness of these ‘six’ earned by him he can freely give to others. What can give more joy than this? In times of danger the rich flee for their lives leaving their friends and relatives to their fate, whereas those who are rich in these six superior merits pass their days without least trace of fear,

—nay they encourage and help others. Those who possess Brahmacharya are real lovers of their country. Blessed indeed are they.

Now it might be urged against these world-renouncing Brahmachârins or monks that they go against the commandments of the Lord as they do not marry and enter the householder's life. From the very beginning of creation the two paths of reaching God, viz. through restrained enjoyment and complete renunciation, are in vogue. The Lord has willed it so. The Vedas say that whenever the spirit of renunciation comes, one should renounce and be a monk, no matter, whether it comes before or after marriage. "One should undertake that supreme journey (i.e. should take to the monk's life) even from the first stage of life or from the householder's or from the recluse's life; one should undertake the supreme journey the very day one is seized with the spirit of renunciation." Sanaka, Sananda, Sanâtana, Sanatkumara, Suka and others were all monks even from their very birth.

Some might say that if one renounces the world without marrying and begetting children, he is not absolved from the natural debts¹ and cannot get liberation. But in the *Bhâgavatam* (11. 5.37.) Srikarbhajan, son of Rishabhadeva says to Janaka, "The man who leaves off all works or duties and takes whole-heartedly to the worship of Mukunda (God), has no debt whatsoever to be discharged—be it to the gods,

Rishis, relatives, manes, men or other beings." In the *Mahâbhârata* (167.26) the sage Nârada says to Sukadeva, "Without marrying be the controller of your senses." Jesus Christ too says, "And there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake" (Math. XIX. 12.)

Some apprehend that if one is to lead a celibate life he will be prone to many desires. It is wrong. Dr. Nichols says: "It is a medical—a physiological fact that the best blood in the body goes to form the elements of reproduction, in both sexes. In a pure and orderly life this matter is absorbed. It goes back into the circulation ready to form the finest brain, nerve, and muscular tissue. This life of man, carried back and diffused through his system, makes him manly, strong, brave, heroic. If wasted, it leaves him effeminate, weak, and irresolute, intellectually and physically debilitated, and a prey to sexual irritation, disordered function, morbid sensation, disordered muscular movement, a wretched nervous system, epilepsy, insanity and death." In the *Jnâna Sankalini Tantra*, Siva says, "Torturing the body is no austerity—Brahmacharya is the best austerity. A man of unbroken continence is no man but a god."

We too see it often before our very eyes how weak, chicken-hearted, and narrow-minded are those who are wicked and slaves to their passions, and how gloomy and miserable are their lives. And how forceful, vigorous, courageous and blissful again are the lives of those who are virtuous and have brought the senses under control.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "Whoever can give up the sex idea, can spurn at the world." He who has given up the sense enjoyments, the outgoing tendencies of whose mind have been stopped—know for certain that

¹ A Hindu is said to be born with three natural debts viz. the debt to the gods, to the Rishis, and to the manes. The first is to be discharged by sacrifices (Yajnas), the second by the study of the Vedas, and the third by begetting children. The scriptural injunction is that no sacrifice can be performed without the assistance of the wife. Hence unmarried persons cannot discharge the first and the third debt.

God is not far away from such a heart, His shadow has already fallen there, He can no longer keep Himself away from such a devotee who cares not for anything else. Then he feels an ecstatic joy in every pore of his body. So intense is the joy that caught in it he loses all outward consciousness. He goes into trance and enjoys this ineffable joy in one continuous stream of consciousness. If that highest bliss is to be got and enjoyed without any break, the desire for these fleeting pleasures of sense-objects which ultimately lead man to terrible miseries should be mercilessly eschewed—not that kind of hypocritical renunciation which lasts for a day or two, but the wholesale uprooting of even the least vestige of such desires. If anyone succeeds in doing this, he will feel that what he was so long enjoying was but an infinitesimal part of that ocean of bliss filtering in through one or other of the sense-organs, and that now through every cell of his body he is enjoying this infinite bliss—that this flesh-and-blood body has been changed and transfigured into something divine, to be a worthy receptacle for the divine Bliss. Can perversity go any further than forgoing this infinite Bliss for petty sense-enjoyments?

The only way to conquer lust is to look upon all women as our own mother, as images of the Divine Mother. Just as one is filled with devotion and prompted to worship when one sees an

image of the Divine Mother, so should one be filled with devotion, be prompted to worship when one sees a woman. Never should we allow the idea of sex to rise in our minds. To know a woman as woman is to open the gateway to hell, while to know her as the Divine Mother is the way to salvation. We have to change the angle of vision. If we do so, we shall be free from the fear of temptation.

We have been born again and again, but what have we done to raise ourselves, to become divine? We have run again and again after these sense-enjoyments and suffered untold miseries. But never mind, it is never too late to mend. A moment's sincere resignation of oneself and everything one possesses, at the feet of the Lord is quite sufficient to ensure this. Yes, it must be sincere. This single act will revolutionize one's whole outlook on life. One will no longer see men and women as such but as divinities. The hellish idea of sex and all sense of worldly enjoyments will appear stale or vanish altogether, and instead will be found a joy infinitely superior in blessedness. The world as it is, is full of misery, but it lies within the power of each man and woman to transform it into all bliss. Every man is God, every woman is none else but the Divine Mother. Change thus your present outlook on life and the kingdom of Heaven is now and here. Brahmacharya is at once the means and the goal of life.

SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO VEDIC CULTURE

BY PROF. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

THE NEW LOGIC OF POSITIVISM AND FUTURISM

To those who follow objectively the statal experiences of the diverse races of India from the epochs of Mahenjo Daro culture (c 3000 B.C.) to those of the Bharatas and Jadus (c 1200 B.C.) and from Sudasa and Parikshit to Baji Rao and Ranjit Singh the following statement of Emile Senart's will appear to be essentially unhistorical and anthropologically misleading: "*L'Inde ne s'est élevée ni à l'idée de l'Etat ni à l'idée de la Patrie*" (India rose neither to the idea of the state nor to the idea of the fatherland). This proposition was propagated by Senart in 1897 in his *Les Castes dans l'Inde*. In the edition of 1927 (p. 222) Senart remarks in the preface that although thirty years have rolled away since the publication of the first edition he does not find any reason for modifying the conclusions of his old thesis.

Here, indeed, we encounter a chip of the traditional indology of the nineteenth century as prevalent in Eur-America. Another chip from the same workshop (p. 228) reads as follows: "The Hindu spirit is very religious and very speculative. Obstinate guardian of traditions, it is singularly insensible to the joys of action and to the demands of material progress."

Max Weber's essays on the relations between religion and economic life or "economic ethics" (*Wirtschaftsethik*), finally published in book form as *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* (Tuebingen 1922-23), may be said to offer one of the most "represent-

tative" and substantial interpretations of modern Eur-America on Indian culture as developed in and through Hinduism and Buddhism (Vol. II). In his analysis as in that of others the conventional message is propagated to the effect that worldly life was despised and secular activities condemned by Indians of all ages. The Hindus and Buddhists are described as being alike in the aversions to material pursuits and in the predilections for meditation and other-worldly salvation.

The indological researches of Eur-American scholars are dotted over with such Sûtras, formulæ, conventions. With rare exceptions (e.g. Formichi in Italy) indology in Eur-America is sicklied o'er with this type of disquisitions. And they have not failed to capture also the indology as cultivated by the Asians, including Indians, especially those scholars who are as a rule wrongly described as philosophers simply because they have translated or paraphrased some old Hindu philosophical texts. Nor is this all. The social thinkers of Asia also have fallen a victim to the fallacious sociological methods and messages of the modern West, to which the postulate of an alleged distinction between the Orient and the Occident is the first principle of science.

It is to furnish such Sûtras, formulæ and conventions of Eur-American and Asian indology with correct perspectives that the chapters of the first edition of the present author's *Positive Background of Hindu Sociology* and the *Folk Element in Hindu Culture* were publish-

ed in Indian journals during 1910-14. A few lines from the foreword to the *Positive Background* (1914, p. xi) would throw light on the kind of perspectives presented at that time :

"The transcendental and other-worldly aspects of Hindu life and thought have been made too much of. It has been supposed, proved, and believed during the last century that Hindu civilization is essentially non-industrial and non-political, if not pre-industrial and pre-political, and that its sole feature is ultra-asceticism and over-religiosity which delight in condemning the world, the flesh and the Devil.

"Nothing can be further from the truth. The Hindu has no doubt always placed the transcendental in the foreground of his life's scheme, but the positive background he has never forgotten or ignored. * * * The *Upanisads*, the *Vedanta* and the *Gita* were not the works of imbeciles and weaklings brought up in an asylum of incapables and a hospital of incurables."

The principles of the writings of that period were developed at length on diverse fronts of sociological investigations for publication in Eur-American journals.*

The general attitude of Eur-American indologists, culture-historians, philosophers, economists, and sociologists in

regard to Hindu civilization and "view of life" was described in my *Political Institutions and Theories of the Hindus* (Berlin 1922, p. 155) as follows :

"The impression has got abroad since Max Müller wrote the *History of Sanskrit Literature* (1860, pp. 18, 25, 29, 31) and *India: What can It Teach us?* (1883, pp. 97-101, 105, 107, 117) that the literature of the Hindus deals mainly with vague idealism, unpractical mysticism, and other-worldly absurdities, at best with metaphysical philosophizing. Besides, a few alleged pessimistic passages from one or two Buddhist books in the Pali language are erroneously taken to be the watch-word of all Hindu speculation."

In all these publications the methodology of prevailing indology was criticized as being generally speaking fallacious on three grounds. First, it ignored, overlooked or failed to attach due importance to the positive, materialistic, secular, energistic and allied institutions and theories of the Hindus. In the second place, it was prone, even subconsciously or automatically, to compare the ancient and medieval conditions of India with those of modern and even contemporary Eur-America. And finally, it neglected, as a rule, to observe the distinction between institutions and ideals, i.e., factual achievements and "pious wishes."

The attempt in all these writings consisted, first and foremost, in exhibiting the data (both institutional and ideological) of Hindu culture from the positive, objective, humanistic and worldly side. Secondly, comparison with Western conditions was introduced on a large scale, but care was taken to point out, first, that it was against the ancients and medievals of the West that the ancients and medievals of the East were to be weighed in the balance, and secondly, that

* See the *School and Society* (New York 1917), the *International Journal of Ethics* (Chicago 1918, 1920), the *American Political Science Review* (1918, 1919), the *Political Science Quarterly* (New York 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921), the *Journal of Race Development* (U.S.A., 1919), the *Journal of International Relations* (U.S.A. 1919, 1921), *Open Court* (Chicago, 1919), *Giornale degli Economisti e Rivista di Statistica* (Rome 1920), *Revue de Synthèse Historique* (Paris 1920, 1930), *Séances et Travaux de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques* (Paris 1921), *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (1921), *Deutsche Rundschau* (Berlin 1922, 1930), *Annali di Economia* (Milan 1930), *Koelner Vierteljahrshefte fuer Soziologie* (Cologne 1931).

the institutions were not to be mixed up or compared with ideals whether for Asia or for Europe, but that *Realpolitik* was to be compared with *Realpolitik* and idealism with idealism.

It is as an illustration of the application of this methodology that on fundamental points, as indicated in the preface to the *Political Institutions and Theories of the Hindus* (Leipzig 1922, p. VIII), the volume delivered "a front attack on the traditional Western prejudices regarding Asia such as are concentrated in Hegel, Cousin, Max Müller, Maine, Janet, Smith, Willoughby and Huntington." About the same time the *Futurism of Young Asia* (Berlin 1922) was published to indicate how as a result of the application of this method in the near future the social sciences were likely to be transformed and the relations between the East and the West placed on a really humane although rigidly scientific and philosophical basis.

At the moment of writing the present paper it is possible to note that the cry for positivism in the approach to the problems of Hindu culture as well as the futuristic demand for reform in the methodology of social sciences have to a certain extent justified themselves. Not only indologists and other Orientalists but students of anthropology, psychology, economics, politics and sociology have embarked upon a transvaluation of values according to a humaner albeit rationaler method. Perhaps the world is gradually approaching the condition that was looked for in my *Chinese Religion Through Hindu Eyes* (Shanghai 1916, p. XV.) where it was claimed that the "twentieth century demands a new synthesis, a fresh transvaluation of values, and, as prolegomena to that, a new logic in order that the *idola* of the nineteenth century might be subverted."

An important publication of recent years may be singled out in this connection. This is the Russian-American sociologist Pitirim Sorokin's *Contemporary Sociological Theories* (New York 1928). This work, encyclopædic as it is in its structure, is well calculated to furnish the "new logic"—the "critique" of sociological reason,—with which to demolish the *idolas* or superstitions associated with all the latter-day *isms* in social science. From the standpoint of the present author as developed since 1910 this historical and critical study by Sorokin is to be appraised as an embodiment, although mainly in a destructive form, of the "futurism" that is a desideratum in the study of human achievements and potentialities, race-questions and class-problems. Coming nearer home, i.e. to the special field of our present investigations, it is possible to mention one or two documents of substantial importance such as may be regarded as containing the germs of a new indology.

An exponent of this new indology in Germany is Alfred Hillebrandt who in his *Altindische Politik* (Jena 1923, pp. 1-2) commences his study with a criticism of the old indology almost in the manner of the *Positive Background*.

"One who takes only the religious and philosophical literature of ancient intellectual life," says Hillebrandt, "will tend to the belief that it was exclusively given over to the eternal and transcendental questions and considered the things of this world as but nothing. The majority of modern writings, even of those which are directly based on the original sources, devoted as they are to the object of understanding the theory of the oneness of the Vedanta or the Nirvana of Buddhism have created the impression as if the sages of India lived only on one thought, namely, as

to how to escape the series of births and pains and to fly the actual world."

Hillebrandt's own position is then recorded as follows: "But this was not so," says he. "By the side of the forest ascetic and peripatetic monk such as fled the world there was the unnumbered mass with its living and activities, there was the state with its solicitude for supervising and directing this life and work, and the groups of those whose concern was to investigate the requirements of life and help the state."

According to Hillebrandt "India possessed not only the world-escaping thinkers but also political heads and realists who were not inferior in equipment to the former." "These latter," says he finally, "did not live in the world of dreams but entirely in the actual world. They took men and things as they are, with fine understanding of their weaknesses."

As representing a transformation of the same character in the orientations of European indologists may be cited A. B. Keith's *History of Sanskrit Literature* (Oxford 1928 p. 450). In the same spirit as Hillebrandt Keith refers to the prevailing indology as follows:

"The Vedic literature, permeated as it is with religion, affords a quite false impression of the Vedic Indian as a person given to reflection and religious practices without regard to practical life."

In his own judgment "nothing of course can be further from the truth; the East, in lieu of bowing before the West in disdain or otherwise, confronted Alexander with an obstacle which he did not attempt to penetrate, and his garrisons had soon after his death to be withdrawn."

The proper approach to Hindu culture has been described by Keith in a comprehensive manner such as accords

to the "positive" aspects their due. "If we are to judge India aright," says he, "we must add two other objects to the Dharma, religious and moral duty, which is dwelt on in the Vedic texts. Already the *Hiranyakesi Grihyasutra* (II, 1916) knows of the three objects in life, Dharma, Artha, politics and practical life in general, and Kama, love etc. The epic (I. 2, 381) recognizes this set, the *Visnu Smṛiti* (LIX 30) and Manu accept it. It is found in Patanjali (on Pāṇini II, 2, 34, *Varttika* 9), in Asvaghosha and in the *Panchatantra*."

One might easily challenge Keith as to whether Artha and Kama were really ignored in the Vedic complex. He, therefore, anticipates that challenge by making his position perfectly clear. The Vedic antiquity of the economic and sexological elements in Hindu culture is established by him when he says by way of self-criticism that the "older system (Vedic) no doubt combined these subjects as parts of Dharma in wider sense; the *Dharmasastras* deal with royal duties, capitals and countries, officials, taxes and military preparations as they do with justice, and the epic (XII, 58, 1) in a list of authorities of the science of kings (*Râjasâstra*) includes Brihaspati, Visalakṣa, Usanas, Manu, son of Prachetas, and Gaurasiras who pass also for authorities on Dharma." Further, we are told that "the *Bṛihadâraṇyaka Upanishad* (VI, 3) incidentally shows that a wide knowledge of the arcana of love was prevalent in Brahmanical circles, the holy Svetaketu becoming a recognized authority later on the topic." "Gradually there must have sprung up," says he, "schools who studied Artha and Kama in themselves and this is attested to us by the *Smṛitis* and the epics."

In these clear-cut and synthetic statements of the British indologist we have

already the principles of positivism accepted in a forceful manner. The principles of positivism and humanism as developed between 1910 and 1922 have become integral parts, so to say, in the intellectual apparatus and cultural orientations of Indian indologists. Not only the direct quotations but the very words and phrases and the manner of presentation as well as the style of treatment found in the indological investigations of Indian scholars bear testimony to their assimilation of the "new logic".

It only remains to observe that, as has been often repeated by the present author, the futuristic logic of "positive background" does not contemplate, as it should not, any "monistic interpretation" of culture from the materialistic side. The monistic economic, political or other interpretations of cultural origins or developments are as wrong and misleading as the monistic mystico-religious interpretations.

THE CATEGORIES AND CHRONOLOGY OF VEDIC TEXTS

It is then interesting to observe that the beginnings of a new indology have already been in evidence. This new indology will not stand the "religious interpretations" of civilization as presented by de Coulange in his *La Cité Antique*. Nor is it prepared to accept the somewhat similar but modified position of Max Weber.

In his *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* (1922-23) Weber speaks of the commanding rôle of religion in economic life. But his thesis is untenable as an explanation of historical facts. It may be admitted that religion was a social force in Hindu culture only in the sense in which it is used by Durkheim in his *Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, namely, that the very

concept of society is in every region and age essentially religious. But using Max Weber's language we can concede that in India as elsewhere religion was but one of the diverse determinants of *Wirtschaftsethik* i.e. economic ethics. While dealing with the landmarks of Hindu literature we should therefore take care not to be misled simply because of its religious externals and envelope.

For the time being, it is out of the question to discuss the literature, political or otherwise, created by the Mohenjo Daro culture. Our oldest documents for some long time to come must be the Vedic. And as we are interested chiefly in the Saptânga (seven-limbed organism) or the state, i.e. political institutions and theories, in our present study it is worth while to define the kind of topics covered by this comprehensive category.

For the purposes of the present author's *Political Philosophies Since 1905* (Madras 1928) politics has been taken to comprise five different topics: (1) constitution and law, i.e. public and private law, (2) economic policy, (3) international and inter-racial relations, (4) societal organization, and (5) mental and moral philosophy. Our problem consists in discovering in the field of Hindu literature all those texts which bear on one or other of these five different aspects of group life.

The important literary documents of Vedic ideology are, as is well known, four-fold: the *Rig*, the *Sama*, the *Yajus* and the *Atharva Samhitas* or collections. The question cannot be taken to have been finally closed as to whether these four Vedic *Samhitas* represent any chronological sequence or only four different principles of classification or indexing. One should be justified in holding that the *Sama*

*Veda** which equals *Rig Veda* for the purposes of chanting cannot be taken to belong to a later period of time than the *Rig Veda*. The recital of hymns and the chanting of the hymns must have constituted one institutional complex and therefore belonged to the same age. Similarly, there is no sense in believing that the ritualistic material of the *Yajur Veda* which is nothing but formulæ for the priests in connection with the hymns and chants of the sacrifice could have originated separately from or later than either the recital or the principles of chanting. The materials of the three Vedas constitute one organic whole, being but three aspects of one and the same thing. The synchronism of the three collections or *Samhitas* may be taken therefore to be an ideological, nay, a factual necessity.

As for the *Atharva Veda* it seems to be a specialized collection of certain items and incidents in the "folk-lore" of the age of which the "culture-lore" was collected in the three other *Samhitas*. One can easily understand that the *Rik Samhita* wanted to bring together the *Riks* exclusively. This is why the charms, incantations, medical recipes, the manners and customs of the people etc. did not happen to find a place there. It is in these aspects of Vedic life that the *Atharva Samhita* specialized. But simply because one specialization led to the collection of the *Riks* and the other to that of spells and incantations etc. we cannot be automatically forced to believe that the world of *Riks* had nothing to do with the other items of life. Normally speaking, we

should hold that the materials of the *Atharva Veda* are as old as those of the *Rig Veda*. Oldest Vedic life comprised the experiences embodied in both these collections. Nay, one may take the *Rig Veda*, as does the French indologist Barth, to be younger than the *Atharva Veda*. Only a part of the faiths of the period is opened up by the *Rig Veda*. The authors of the *Riks* or rather their compilers have overlooked or ignored many of the institutions such as are to be found, for instance, in the *Atharva Veda*.

There is another problem to attack. Each of these four collections or *Samhitas* is incomplete as literature without certain appendages. These appendages are known as *Brahmanas*. The *Brahmanas*, again, are incomplete without the *Aranyakas* and these last again are incomplete without the *Upanisads*. Logically, therefore, we should expect the four items, the *Samhita* of a Veda, the *Brahmana* of the *Samhita*, the *Aranyaka* of the *Brahmana*, and the *Upanisad* of the *Aranyaka* to go together, and constitute one complex. Naturally, therefore, the *Upanisad* may be taken to be as old as the Veda. It is almost senseless to believe that during certain periods, people took interest only in the *Samhita*, that afterwards they began to take interest in the *Brahmanas*, that later they cultivated the *Aranyakas*, and that several hundred years after the compilation of the *Samhita* people composed or compiled the *Upanisads*. From the standpoint of social experience a process of successive emergence of new classes of literature within the orbit of the same *Samhita* would have hardly any meaning. Sociologically, we should rather be prepared for the circumstances that the *Upanisads* were being composed or compiled while the *Samhitas* were being brought together. The process must

* The hymns of the *Sama Veda* are not, however, to be taken as direct reproductions from those of the *Rig Veda*. The *Sama Veda* has strung each one of its hymns together by taking verses out of the *Rig Veda* from here and there everywhere. The *Sama Veda*, besides, does not cover the entire ground of the *Rig Veda*.

have been one of *pari passu* collection rather than of chronological sequence.

The chief documents of Vedic literature may now be indicated as follows :

Samhitâs	Brâhmanas	Aranyakas	Upanishads
I. Rig Veda	1. Aitareya	Aitareya	Aitareya
	2. Kausitaki, or Samkhyâyana	Kausitaki	Kausitaki
II. Sama Veda	1. Panchavimsa	...	Chhândogya
=Rig Veda for chanting purposes	2. Jaiminiya	Jaiminiya	Kena
III. Yajur Veda			
(a) Black			
1. Taittiriya	Taittiriya	Taittiriya	Taittiriya
2. Kâthaka			
3. Maitrâyani			
4. Kapisthala			
(b) White :			
Vâjasenayi	Satapatha	...	Brihadâranyaka
IV. Atharva Veda	Gopatha

But the problems of chronology cannot be dismissed or dealt with in a naive manner simply because of logical or sociological necessity. The fact remains that we are dealing with long periods and extensive regions.

To a certain extent the problems of Hellenic culture from the earliest pre-Homeric and Homeric times down to Lycurgus of Sparta (c 650 B. C.) and Solon of Athens (c 550 B. C.) may be taken as parallel to those of pre-Vedic and Vedic culture down to Bimbisara, Mahavira and Sakyasimha (c 550 B. C.). The subsequent periods in Greece and India for about two centuries were likewise more or less similar both in form and content. The Socratic, post-Socratic, and sophistic speculations down to Aristotle and Alexander (c 300 B.C.) might be easily treated as synchronous with the Upanishadic and post-Sakyan or "Buddhist" and other speculations

of the Hindus to Kautilya and Chandragupta Maurya (c 300 B. C.).

The regional and racial factors of the Vedic culture-complex are essentially similar, although on a much larger scale, to those of the Homeric. The theatre of the Homeric culture-complex is furnished by such heterogeneous elements as Asia Minor, the Islands and the mainland of Greece. And in the problems of chronology also Vedic India does not present a special case. These considerations might suggest relatively modest conjectures as to the antiquity of the most ancient *strata* of the Vedic texts. We have to fix our attention on the fact that Hesiod is generally assigned the ninth century B. C. and that Homer is not placed anywhere previous to the middle of the eleventh century B. C.

Until the researches in the Mohenjo Daro fields compel the archæologists to

push back the epochs of Vedic India in point of time it may not be reasonable, therefore, to think of the oldest Vedic texts as older than 1200—1000 B. C.

Vedic literature may be conveniently although somewhat arbitrarily taken to be a literature of nearly a thousand years from, say, 1500—1200 B. C. i.e. the epoch of the Bharatas, the Tritsus, and the Yadus etc. to the beginnings of Jainism and Buddhism say, c. 600 B. C. i.e. to the powerful kingdoms of Kasi, Kosala, Magadha, etc. This is an extensive period and the literature indicates the rise and fall of myriads of races or tribes as well as the gradual submission of virtually the whole of Northern India to Vedic institutions and ideas.

In regard to the region and epoch of origin, each and every hymn, Sûkta, rite, ruling, ceremony, incantation, magic, and what not will have to be treated on its own merits. A generically Vedic culture can hardly be a sociologically scientific category.

Although the question is anything but clear Vedic chronology can for certain purposes be tentatively taken to be as follows :

1. Rig Veda Samhita : c 1200 B.C.—1000
2. Other Samhitas : 1000 B.C.— 800
3. Brahmanas : 800—600 B.C.
4. Upanishads : 600—400 B.C.
5. Sutras (i. Srauta,
ii. Grihya,
iii. Dharma) : 400—200 B.C.

While it is extremely difficult to avoid using the terms Vedic in a generic manner as covering practically everything from the *Samhita* to the *Upanishad* and the *Sutra* it should be proper always to mark out the precise text and let it speak for itself. One word Vedic must not be permitted to cover the most varied transformations or revolutions, racial and social, institutional as well as ideological, that took place in Northern India during nearly one thousand years from Sudasa to Bimbisara.

(To be continued)

PROBLEM OF THE FUTURE GENERATION

BY PRINCIPAL SOHRAB R. DAVAR, Barrister-at-Law

The question whether the present educational system is suitable to modern requirements as well as that of the future generations of this country, has been engaging the attention of most of our prominent countrymen. The object of this short article is to lay down some ideas which the author has evolved out of his experience as an educationist of over 34 years' standing during which period he had the opportunity of watching the progress of India's rising generation from decade to decade who hailed from the most distant parts for their education in Bombay both for the University Degree

in Commerce and for the professional Diploma Courses.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

We planted our educational system in India on Western lines on the foundation of University learning. We never had professional bodies like those prevailing in the United Kingdom who make professional practical education for the vocations in which they are interested, their special preserve and care. The deep-rooted idea among the University Dons is the old prejudice in favour of "culture" and cultural side of education, with the result that even

where they have tried to plant a professional or vocational course, they have spoiled the syllabus by overcrowding it with what they call "cultural subjects" which are of not the least value in practical life, with the result that the actual branches of study in which the professional student has to specialize and earn his living are not only neglected, but for the scholar and the professor concerned there is very little time left after the so-called cultural subjects are dealt with, to give sufficient attention to the same.

A DEGREE IN ARTS

Let us first of all take up the question of our graduates in Arts. The Degree in Arts follows the theoretical syllabus of so-called liberal education as laid down originally by the old Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in the days when the special business of the Universities concerned was to produce clergymen or platform and parliamentary orators. It is a degree which leads one nowhere and the result is that thousands of our young men who persist year after year in joining colleges for this course as a matter of habit created by the deep-rooted prejudice of ages in its favour, find themselves stranded when the time for earning a living and standing on their own feet arises. It is said that the old East India Company introduced this education with a view to producing clerks for Government offices. I am not sure whether that view is correct, but even in the clerical line, there is not even the standing room for our University graduates in the Government offices. Thus, it would be to the interest of the nation at large, if the leaders of public opinion were to dissuade the largest proportion of our young men from taking up this course and encourage them to follow vocational and practical

teaching for professions and industries, so that, in the race for improving the prosperity and progress of the country, they may lend a substantial helping hand instead of doing menial jobs after graduating or wasting their time hunting for the same. Many employers in large business and industrial concerns in Europe and America, as well as in India, have declared that an Arts graduate employed by them, in majority of cases is found to be unfit to pick up the reins of practical training and adapt himself to the same, because prolonged theoretical study seems to have incapacitated him for this type of work. The other explanation may be that after wasting so many years in a College he has attained an age when the formative period had passed and his brain had got crystallized. In the opinion of Mr. Hall in his excellent book entitled *Why Men Fail*, where he talks of graduates of the Universities of the United States of America: "A College education sometimes helps, but it is not a passport to success. Some of our greatest failures were college educated, while most of the great ideas and inventions have been contributed to the world by unschooled thinkers. The scholar's education is largely artificial, while the thinker's is natural. That accounts for the difference in the results obtained. It is very difficult to unlearn a wrong method, to learn Nature's way. Learning of any kind that we cannot make use of is valueless. And even correct learning is profitless unless we set it to working for us."

PROFESSIONAL AND INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

If we go back to the country from which our Arts education was originally imported, we find that all professional education and examinations are more

or less under the control of professional bodies, independently of their universities, such as the Inns of Court for the Barrister, the Incorporated Law Society for the Solicitor, the Chartered Institute of Accountants for the Accountant, the Royal Institute of Architects, Institute of Engineers for Engineers and so on. They have not only laid down a syllabus of practical studies, but also insist upon some form of apprenticeship for practical work, side by side with theoretical education of the scholar concerned. They universally provide in this syllabus an "Entrance Test" of their own, where emphasis and importance is given to such subjects of general education as are most useful to the profession concerned. They, thus, do not possess the "slave mentality" of admitting only the "Matriculation passed," as our people do into these vocations. The Vice-Chancellor of our University thus was quite practical when he said that the University Entrance test was not meant as a qualification for entrance anywhere else excepting the University. Being a practical man of long standing, he naturally realized this position.

PROFESSIONAL COURSES IN UNIVERSITIES

Let us now take up such professional or vocational courses as are provided for by the Universities both in the United Kingdom and in India. In the United Kingdom a University Degree is not considered a qualification for practice at law. The only profession where the University Degree is recognized is in case of medical profession, because there, hospital practical work has to be conducted side by side with theoretical training, and in case of theoretical training also professors are practising surgeons or physicians. In all other vocational branches the Uni-

versity degrees are either not at all recognized or are considered to be of subordinate value or importance in the vocations concerned while compared with the Professional Diplomas.

Let us now take the case of our University where the Degree in Law has been given a recognition for admittance in the profession, the result is that the largest number of practising lawyers in the junior bar, not having received any practical education, are failures and if they want to succeed at all, they have to struggle for a large number of years to pick up their practical experience in one form or other. As against that the examination of a solicitor conducted independently by the High Court provides for articulated clerkship with the result that a young solicitor is equipped with both theoretical and practical training and starts his practice without much difficulty and gets on without blundering or spoiling cases, before he acquires the necessary practical training so essential to success. No wonder that before the Civil Courts Committee which the Government appointed some years ago a number of expert witnesses argued that the University Degree in Law should not be recognized for practice, i.e., for the Sanad of an advocate.

Let us take now the Degrees in Commerce. All over India, Universities have now started granting Degrees in Commerce, but none of these Degrees are recognized for practice of a profession. The Bombay University gives a Degree in Commerce with specialization in professions such as Accountancy, Banking, Actuarial work, etc. None of these Diplomas are recognized for either the profession of Accountants and Auditors or of Bankers or of Actuaries, with the result that the University graduates in Commerce have to study once over again to become accountants, bankers, actuaries, etc.,

by taking up the professional diploma courses and serving articles or working in banks or insurance companies.

OBVIOUS REMEDY

The obvious remedy which appears to me is that we should encourage the formation of Professional Boards who should lay down a syllabus both for practice and theoretical training for their respective professions, and supervise the whole education. A beginning has already been made by the establishment of the Institute of Bankers in this country. The All-India Accountancy Board as established by the Government

is the first step towards the establishment of an Institute of Accountants for India. I trust that similar steps will be taken by professional men concerned to find their independent Associations and Examination Boards along the lines of European countries, particularly that of Great Britain. We have already Associations like that of Engineers, Architects, Insurance Company Officers, etc., and I would appeal to them to formulate their respective syllabuses and take up the educational side of the question in the interest of their respective professions. In the industrial line also, a similar development is most desirable.

DEATH AND ITS OCCURRENCE

BY TEJA SINGH, B.A., LL.B.

The problem of Life and Death is as old as the creation of this universe and had frequently been the topic of the wise men and saints of all ages and nations. But inspite of its being the chief centre of all interest and attention of the wise minds, it is still the same as before, and ever afresh to arise curiosity in the mind that has got the capacity to judge things critically, and that probes deep to find out the truth in them. Such being the nature of the subject and the subtleness of its origin, it is hardly justifiable to declare that the essay attempted is alone the truth and admits of no other explanation. But myself being a humble student of Nature that tries to peep into the mysteries of creation, I only venture to put forth a few of my meditations that have been impressed upon me for such dreary a thing as Death. But before treading upon the dark and dreary course of Death and

its nature, it is better to live awhile upon the smiling aspect of Life which the human mind is easily accustomed to grasp, and a critical dilation thereon shall pave the way to reach our destination.

When we look upon the universe, and see its bright and dreary aspects, our minds admit recognition of the fact that there are some existences that endure upon the destruction of the other ones. The one enjoys and acts, while the other is enjoyed and acted upon. If the animals live upon herbs and fruits, then the herbs do for themselves draw forth their nourishment from the matter excreted by the animals. There seems an all-pervading force that shines bright in the life-aspect of the universe, and whose emanation leaves behind the course the dreary aspect of Death in the universe. But leaving off the general aspect of Life and Death in the universe, we

come to a more subtle and concrete case of man and try to find out the reality of the subject from this human fabrication.

Our critical analysis of a living man at once divides him into two broad categories. The one may be termed in the words of Hume as 'human make and fabric' or the human physical, and the other as the 'human mind' with its sensory and feeling activity. Or viewing 'Life' as 'Activity' itself, we may divide 'Life' into physical and mental activities. Human activity is confined to two broad categories:—(1) physical action (matter) and (2) feeling and cognition broadly termed into one category called mind (Chitta or Manas). We should carefully note the distinction of the two and have familiarity with their Laws and relation to each other.

The popular saying, 'what is mind is not matter and what is matter is not mind' clearly expresses the differentiation of the two. The one is the substratum for the action of the other in its own kind, *i.e.*, we cannot have the cognitive or sentimental attitude realized in us, were we devoid of this physical body. But at the same time the physical body, too, is not by itself inactive. It does also act in its own way. It realizes its action in terms of space. All its acts are confined to, and included in, spatial ones, whereas those of the second category can in no way be actualized in terms of space. It shall be foolishness to talk of the thinking attitude or the recalling facts of memory as strained to so many feet wide, and so many inches long. Similarly it is only the figurative way of speaking 'the stretch of memory' to designate the mental acts in terms of physical ones, only to convey the notion of gravity of mental action to the other minds which are accustomed to see and feel everything in spatial

atmosphere and whose minds are too low for abstract thinking. To me, mental action is as different and separate from the physical as the latter from the former. There is no similarity in one another. Their provinces are quite different and distinct from each other, although it is true that there is much resemblance in the province of cognitive faculties and feeling faculties, and that is why I put them both together in one category broadly termed as mind (Chitta or Manas). Secondly, it appears to me that neither of them is subordinate to the other. They are running on the co-ordinate lines and a slight change in the movement in one sphere is causing a concomitant variation in the other. And that is why many of the Western Philosophers have dwelt much upon the parallelism of the human mind and physique. But failing to recognize the origin of this trinity, many of them had laid stress upon the first, and asserted the theory of the precedence of the physical actions to the mental actions. Mr. James is the pioneer of this school of thought. But quite a large number of philosophers from Kant to modern Idealists have asserted that it is the mind whose activity precedes the movement of the physical body. Neither of them have transcended the bounds of Time and Space, and have propounded the correct theory. The mind which is the arch-dupe to attain the reality of the universe and whose mischievous lurking from the right path ever baffles the efforts of man to attain the nectar of immortality, is to be constrained and transcended, before we could come to realize the absolute Truth. The actions of the mind are only the knowing or feeling actions, and free from the law of Causation; whereas the physical acts are wrought within the sphere of 'space'; and doomed to the

law of causation. Every atom of the physical body is realizable within space, and a congregation thereof gathers the existence of a being to our view. But that is not so with the mental body. To talk of the mental body is merely figurative and an abuse to right thinking, because there can be no congregation of the mental actions. The mental sphere is like the essence of a camera whereon the one picture or scene is transcribed awhile, and is gone anon, yielding way to new. They take their origin in Time which is ever flying and yet ever present. And just as everything is happening with Time and is passing therewith (yet none identical with Time, only giving clue to infer the existence of Time), so the mind could not be identical with the image flashed mentally, or the feeling felt. Their appearances give out the suggestions to infer the existence of a thing or a substance or an attitude which is totally different and quite distinct from themselves in its origin and behaviour. They are the objects grasped, realized and actualized by the being to itself; and so could be measured spatially; whereas what we call mind is not the substance akin to the objects realized, or actualized to oneself but is of no substance in which sense we have got the notion of substance. It is the one whose existence could be inferred by its grasping attitude and can never be identified with spatial objects; yet its existence is as real as the existence of any object or substance hitherto felt or cognized. It is a non-spatial and grasping or actualizing substance which can never be perceived in the way of the objects felt or actualized to our senses. Therefore if we try to perceive or visualize this component portion of human existence, our efforts shall fail and it would appear to us no other than Zero or non-entity.

It is at this stage that we should change the angle of our vision and instead of taking it for an object realized or actualized, we should turn our attention to its nature of realizing and actualizing attitude. This is the proper step towards the development of the mind and the various other means and exercises practised to train and develop its growth are only leading oneself astray and deluding oneself in the mock-practices of mental and intellectual exercises.

Such being the nature and behaviour of the mind we try to find out its reality. Viewing it objectively, it is a mere negativity and is no better than a Zero or a mere silence; but the very occurrences of ideas and feelings go to establish its existence and make us admit of vivacity and potentiality. It is the very existence of this element and the occurrences of its movements that distinguish a living body from a corpse, otherwise in both the cases we are objectively seeing the like objects in the like dimensions. It is the Yogic Silence which is full of energy and vivacity and which is distinct from the ordinary silence and far, far away from the ordinary ken. The Silence-State (शून्यावस्था) of Yoga denotes the seclusion of the human energy-current from the physical human inhabitation and its direction along the metaphysical side. It is the centralization of the energy from the surrounding human physical and so is more potent, more enduring and more promising to acts of curiosity. But such is not the case with the idea of silence state (शून्यावस्था) of an ordinary intelligence. He only thinks of it objectively, and finding it out as non-entity rests satisfied with such idea and never tries to direct his attention along the subjective. Thus his idea of Silence-State (शून्यावस्था) is of a lifeless impotent object; and whoever tries to realize this Silence-State (शून्यावस्था)

without knowing the proper way of discharging the human magnetic current subjectively, is sustaining the whole force of electricity (hitherto surcharged physically) which must break upon his health and physique, and shall be a source of thousands of miseries and calamities. We thus think that mind is a magnetic current whose proper function and nature is seeing, grasping, realizing and actualizing; and could only be inferred of its existence; but could never be physically perceived or actualized. It is a subjective current.

So far with the nature and existence of the mind (Chitta). Let us also look upon the physical side of the being and try to find out its constituents; and its necessity with the other side. Thus when we begin to examine the human physical and try to attain the absolute Truth, or Reality, then one by one the more concrete parts give way to thinner and more subtle constituents till at last our concrete existence drops away, and we realize the source of our existence in some thinner and vapoury substance which too subsequently melts away out of our sight and thought. It is the experience of daily occurrence. The trained experience of a Yogi reveals us the truth that there is a far finer, livelier and brighter substance which is more pervading and potent than any of these five elements. It is designated with no particular qualities, yet is the source of all qualities and is termed as विषयविशेष i.e. a region unique in itself. All these five elements take their origin from this source of potency and quintessence of life. It is the centre of physical and mental forces and henceforth the soul diverges itself into the duality of mind and matter. At this stage the soul (आत्मा) is single, and retains its *status quo*. But as the Atman (Soul) desires to realize or actualize itself into external (physical) objects, its unique singleness

is broken and it becomes affected by the external influences. It partly becomes subject to the law of Causation and suffers the fruition of its activity. The author of the yogic system of philosophy defines, at the very outset of his treatise, Yoga as the constraining of the mental tendencies, and further lays down that at this stage the Atman (spirit) stands in its own existence. It is only the fullest control over the mind that makes a man realize his own self in the very self. So long as the mind is in its progress of thinking and feeling (which means in the scientific sense the affectation and influences of the external objects upon the soul), the soul is not realized fully in itself, but is partly affected by the external objects.

That mind disposed to innumerable worldly attachments exists for others due to its gathering attitude. This doing something or other for the ever-continuing activity of the mind. It says that the mind by itself does no work for its own sake. It is always doing something or the other for the sake of another. It only causes the aggregation of various elements for the sake of someone, and not for its ownself. Its chief nature is that of a faithful servant that most faithfully and obediently serves his master and makes accumulation of things for his convenience and use. Thus what we were talking of the mind as cognition and feeling, was in fact the manifestation of the soul through its direct agency of the mind, and is happily worded as the subjective self. But its inevitable accompaniment, the realized or actualized portion of the universe could not be ignored at the same time. It is that portion of the being which the spirit has drawn out of the universe, has come to identify itself with it and has made a part of its own self. Here the spirit

acts indirectly. First it actualizes the external objects with itself, and then controls it with the agency of mind. Secondly this portion also becomes subject to the laws of external objects, i.e. the law of causation. Thus we find that this portion which is commonly known as the physical or the objective self is the product of two different sources and should naturally serve the two masters, the Nature and the Spirit. It is only due to this fact that our physical body is governed both by the external and internal laws and the mind is independent of the law of causation.

We have thus traced out the origin and nature of the subjective and the objective self and have seen that the spirit (आत्मा) has a direct control over the mind, and an indirect control over the physical body through the agency of Nature. But nature is an irresistible agent to the spirit (पुरुष) for its action. She paves the way for its actions whenever it wishes to move.

I have stated above that the physical system and mental system run on the co-ordinate lines, and none is subordinate to the other. It therefore follows that so long as the mind is capable of thinking and feeling, the essence of life is rolling within the physical body and the being is not dead. The logical conclusion, therefore, seems to be that the improvement in the first category is an automatic step towards the improvement of the second category and *vice versa*. But the former shall be a conscious step in the Evolutionary tread of the being, whereas the latter would be an unconscious step towards the self-improvement. The relation of body and mind to each other is the same as that of 'space' and 'Time'. In every action, the presence of both is inevitable. The one cannot exist absolutely without the other in the universe, yet the one is quite distinct from the other. The

notion of their contiguity and separatedness may be conveyed by an yellow circle. Is there any portion of, or particle in, the circle which is not yellow? Or is the colour "yellow" existing unspaced in the circle? Certainly not. So long as we have had the idea of the circle, we will have to admit that every particle or portion of the circle is coloured, and the colour is bound by the circle. Still both are not identical with each other. Their natures are different. The one is quantitative, whereas the other is qualitative. Space and the subsequent elements gather by quality of the same material, while the mental processes never accumulate. They are like circles and in order to give occurrence to the next, the present one must recede. So at one time, we can have only one mental occurrence, and this is why the Indian Philosophers have likened the mental action with a circle (चित्तवृत्ति i.e. the circle of mind), so that the student should from the beginning of his lessons inculcate the different nature and working of the mind, and should not confuse it with the physical system either in its inception, or in its conception. The mental system is purely qualitative; and to actualize it requires the aptitude of the highest abstract thinking in us. Without such aptitude and capacity, we would only infer its existence with the assistance of the physical system. We see everything in this universe mixed with quality and quantity. There is not a single object that can own its existence independently of the one or the other. Any being or any object conceivable gathers its existence out of these two elements (if elements they might be called) and it would not be misleading to the public, if I identify these two elements—quality and quantity—with the Kantian notion of Time and Space. We will have to make

our existence recede from quality and quantity, before we could attain the actual existence of the spirit. Without such jump, we cannot see the Eternal Truth; nor the workings of the mental side.

We have already noticed that in this universe we observe everything as a composite of two different elements—quantity and quality. Not a single object could be traced independent of the mixture of this duality. Man is the highest form of development in the Evolutionary process of Nature. He has got first class qualities, and none in the whole creation at present could equalize him. But he is not the final and the most perfect fruit of the process of Evolution. But without discoursing upon this topic, we stick ourselves to our present topic and remind the reader of विषयविशेष (a region unique in itself) which is full of potency, and is the source of quality and quantity, and whenceforth the unique singleness of the spirit breaks into the duality of mind and matter, quality and quantity. The Atman or the soul perturbs, and moves to actualize itself with the objects it desires to attain. This divides the potency into two forces, and the duality or the creation is effected. The first force retains the subjective attitude with the senses as medii, whereas the other gathers substratum, and paves the way for the satisfaction (or realization) of the subjective self. The entity of the Atmic force is thus broken, and due to its contact with the natural elements, it becomes subject to the mixture of opposites. The individuality is now no longer free from the external influences. They now begin to act upon the individuality, causing a circle of action and reaction in that entity of the soul. Instead of the composed absoluteness of the soul, we now get a

reactionary cycle of different forces. The struggle for existence commences, and it is no longer an absolute entity unaffected. It is now under the clutches of the theory of Karma and must endure the sufferings of its own deeds which it has willingly set itself to embrace. As a sequence to these turbulences we have creation of different varieties out of the potential cosmos. Thus we see that the creation is nothing but the manifestation of the potential cosmos in quality and quantity. Such manifestation of the potential cosmos into quality and quantity is Life and the cessation of its current therefrom is Death. Death is a correlative term of Life, and I repeat that the one could not be fully appreciated without the knowledge and the significance of the other.

I have tried to discuss the origin and significance of Life and have also shown that in this universe everything has got its own opposite. We have cold and heat, bliss and woe, fortune and calamity, aversion and attachment, and so forth. Similarly we have got Death as opposite to Life. Death is the negative aspect of what Life is the positive one. The reason of this opposition is not far to seek. The very origination of this creation springs from the duality of quality and quantity. Naturally, therefore, there is no wonder if our potential cosmos is placed in the stretched existence of quality and quantity, Time and space, Mind and Matter. To escape the misery of opposites we will have to transcend this stage, and to realize our existence in that potential cosmos which has been declared in the Indian Philosophy as Eternal Being. Therefore if a man has not been able, before the so-called occurrence of Death, to have control over his physical body so as to transcend this duality

of Time and Space, quality and quantity, mind and body, he is under the clutches of Karma, and Death is an inevitable occurrence. The highest possible control is needed to transcend Time and Space. So long as the man is whirling round in the cycle of Karma (desired move), there is no composing rest. If he leaves off this physical body, his is not the permanent existence in the potential cosmos. The unrealized cycle of Karma (desired move) bringing about a changing variety of mental disposition shall perforce draw him out of the potential stage into the region of this duality, or the universe; and the man shall not enjoy the permanent bliss of peace.

Thus we see that Death is a negative metaphysical phenomenon—the negation of the potential current into the human duality. By no means can it be regarded a positive phenomenon. It is the cessation of the manifestation of the life current in the physical being. We cannot actualize it (Death) in our physical existence. When we try to know here of it; we only get the phantom of it and not the real object. To know of the real essence of it, we will have to restrain our physical endurance, and live the metaphysical existence, before we should be in a position to ascertain to both the negative and positive sides of our endurances. The Yogic philosophy teaches us that the union with God is possible only at the time when the mental tendencies are constrained and we are still conscious of our existences. We are then living the true existence of our spirit or we are the self-realized—a stage highly praised in Indian Philosophy, and in fact, the true communion with God. Such a stage is impossible to be thought of. It is beyond thinking. The mind cannot encompass

this region and its reason is quite plain. It is an admitted fact that cause is not the same as effect. The one cannot be identical with the other in toto. The one is the potency of which the other is manifestation. Similarly the mind and body cannot be identified with their sole cause, call it soul or spirit. The mind which is a conscious current and which by itself is a dynamic force is only a manifestation of something which is the source of potency. It is its manifest existence that gives rise to dynamic dilation in the mental sphere and whose absence silences the sphere.

Destruction has been defined by the author of the Sâmkhya philosophy as immersion into the cause (नाशः कारणलयः) According to him nothing dies. It is only the grosser elements that are cast off, and the finer and more subtle constituents of the thing still remain combined. The potential element never dies. Its deprivation of the grosser elements is called Death; and its compact with the new ones is creation to our view. As a matter of fact, it is the change of forms that occurs to the potential cosmos; but it can never die. The beings who have not attained to live this potential cosmos at will are doomed to ally themselves with the physical elements, and, consequently, are subject to their depreciation. They are unable to keep themselves divested of these elements at their free-will, and when the deprivation of these elements occurs to them, they are pained at the loss of their possession, because they have not attained the capacity to endure themselves without the physical substratum. Their treasure in the potential cosmos is little, and for their satisfaction they will have to seek this universe of duality; hence are they whirling round in the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.

But to the few blessed who have attained the capacity of living energetically absolute, and who require no physical substratum to endure themselves, the mystery of heavenly bliss and ever greenhood opens, and the iron bars of Death and Duality are automatically shut out.

Now the one idea naturally suggests itself to the mind. Is such existence possible? Can we be immune from Death; or is it a mere fantasy of lazy minds, and indulgence in it for happi-

ness is the life in fool's paradise? First of all we should reckon the fact that there is nothing impossible provided we have the courage to do, and sufficient means to set ourselves aright. How few are the souls that move to know of the mystery of Nature, and fewer still to have the adamant courage to open the lid of mystery. It is the courage and action that crown the man with success and glory; but the mere indolent wish withers away in its very bud.

THE MESSAGE OF RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA

BY SHIB CHANDRA DUTT, M.A., B.L.

The present writer had occasion to read a few books about Ramakrishna and a few by Vivekananda when reading in the lower classes of a Calcutta School. At that time those books, particularly because of the force and energy in their language and the directness of the teachings contained therein, made a deep impression upon his mind. In the earlier years of his College life, in the struggles of his soul against the forces of darkness, it was the teachings of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda that provided him with a strength and a support that none living could give. And, at the present time, in the fullness of his manhood and with the foresight and depth of vision engendered by much study and more experience he believes in the principle embodied in Ramakrishna-Vivekananda as not only the moral and spiritual guide of himself or his country but of the entire world. It is this strong conviction that leads him to pen these few lines.

The world today is advancing in many directions. Man's capacity to

produce, to transport and to communicate has advanced and is still advancing beyond our wildest dreams. The possibilities of our material comfort are increasing by leaps and bounds. But in other respects man is either falling back or is not advancing at all. Our selfishness or greed is hardly, if at all, decreasing. Each nation is trying to strengthen itself and no nation believes in the other. Man's respect for woman-kind is probably on the decline. Materialistic ends are regarded as supreme, and sincere souls trying for the ennoblement of themselves and of others are few and far between.

This, in fact, is the condition of the present-day world. The question is, how to improve it? How to make way for a better state of things? How to make the world safe for purity, honesty and sincerity and cast greed, dishonesty and lust into their proper places? How to make the world a happy place where men and women will live side by side as brothers and sisters with an infinite faith in themselves and the rest and an abounding love for all?

Materialists no doubt will laugh outright and regard our conception of the future world as mad, visionary and idealistic. However mad, visionary and idealistic it be, we believe that the world needs being shaped like this and hence we have the boldness to hold up the dream before ourselves and others as a dream which we do seriously intend to turn into a reality.

How to do it? That is the next question. The way to do it is to alter man's nature wherever man is not what he should be. Man is a complex of divinity and animality, with his divinity suppressed in various degrees in different men. If we succeed in gradually reducing the animality of man to the minimum and of arousing his divinity to the maximum, we can reform and re-make the world in the way we want it to be done. The very fact that there have been individuals in our history down the ages who have expressed divinity in their personality in a high degree proves that it is possible even for the lowest and the lowliest to become divine, and the extent to which we shall succeed will depend upon the force, the earnestness and the sincerity of our teachings and example.

There are people who dream of India arising in the political sense. There are others who dream of her economic uplift. There may or may not be any utility in such dreams. We are not concerned with that. But, there is certainly a greater sense in which India can arise—she can arise as a teacher and mother of humanity at large, to hold men and men, and nation and nation with the sheer force of love into one great solid mass in which the component men and nations will cease to regard themselves as, or behave like, so many con-

flicting entities and with delight to regard themselves pre-eminently as members of a vast, infinitely ennobled and happy human family. It was the courage of Vivekananda, the spiritual offspring of Ramakrishna to dream that dream and to think that it was for India to lay the foundation of the great world-to-be. It was he who nobly dreamt of India as 'again resuming her march with gentle feet that would not break the peaceful rest even of the road-side dust that lies so low.' It was he who accosted India saying, "The world in need awaits O Truth! No death for thee!" Let those who are worthy, whether within or outside India, fully grasp the true import of those sayings and give a fitting reply not by empty sentimentalism but by the manner they lead their lives. "The world is burning in misery, O great souls, can ye sleep?" The spirit of Mother India is synonymous with the central teaching of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. And that is this—that man is Divine, his divinity is sleeping, it has got to be awakened. Look at the whole modern world from China to Peru and from the Arctic to the Antarctic and you will not find any other person who has preached or lived this great principle with such single-mindedness or fervour as that great twin-soul, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda. The world in and outside India demands in the present age that this great principle be spread like a blazing fire round and round the world until it reaches the inmost core of the heart of every human being and then we shall see the birth of a new Humanity and with that of a new India much greater and more glorious than the past or the present.

NATIONAL REGENERATION THROUGH EDUCATION

BY DR. TARAKNATH DAS, PH.D.

I read with great interest the editorial comment entitled "The Real Want of Our Country," published in the *Prabuddha Bharata* of May, 1935 (pages 254-255). It pleases me to see that the editor of the *Prabuddha Bharata* has pointed out the real weakness in field of all activities of national reconstruction of India—the lack of leadership, lack of vision among Indian leaders who are anxious to start a mass movement or make mass demonstration, but not anxious to educate the masses of India in such a fashion that they will be able to wield power effectively. . . .

This editorial is possibly one of the most hopeful signs that true Indian patriots have begun to take stock of the exact situation of the country. What is the exact situation according to the editor of the *Prabuddha Bharata*? I shall quote some extracts from the editorial comment :

"It is a half-truth to say that India lacks in men and money. . . . Who have ever told these thousands of students who are annually turned out by the Universities to devote their life or a portion of their lives for the education of their brothers and sisters? Who have ever tried to create fields for them? . . . Is money wanting? During and after the last Behar Earthquake how many funds were started and what an enormous sum collected from the country? And then, look here, the Harijan fund is being collected and the sum is not at all disappointing. All these funds and many more were, and are being collected, from the same fields over and over again! Whence this money? Money and men there are enough, though not much, for our purpose. Only our leaders are either incapable of doing any serious sustained work or they do not really feel for the country. Or else why has a quarter

of a century slipped by without giving us any perceptible results?"

During the last ten years, I have repeatedly suggested through private letters and articles in Bengalee papers that those who are interested in removing illiteracy among the masses and to serve them should start an "Educational Volunteer Movement", which will be led by true patriots, and not politicians who are often interested in exploiting sincere and self-sacrificing students. The spirit behind the movement should be that every educated Indian should pay his Guru-Dakshinâ in the form of at least one year's service towards spreading education among the masses. Just as in Germany today, no German student is allowed to enter a German University unless he performs a year's service in the labour camp or render a year's military service to strengthen Germany's national defence. Similarly it should be arranged that the truly patriotic youth of the country, instead of merely taking part in political agitation, will find an opportunity to serve his country in the field of constructive work of spreading true education.

Like the editor, I am convinced that there is no lack of young men and women who are ready to volunteer their services; and also there is no want of money to start such a movement. Swami Vivekananda once told, "Man can make money, but money cannot buy a man; therefore we need Men." If there be proper leadership, there is no lack of money and men to carry out the great constructive work of spreading education.

The question that is of vital importance is, "Who is to bell the cat?" "Who should take the initiative to organize such an educational movement on non-political basis?" Many of the Indian politicians will suggest that as Mahatmaji has started the "Village Reconstruction Movement" all should be satisfied with it and extend their aid to Mahatma Gandhi. Others may suggest that let some educational organization like the All-Bengal Teachers' Association or the All-Bengal Students' Association undertake the responsibility. It has been also suggested that the municipalities, district boards, and such bodies should take the initiative in the matter. This may be effective; but I feel that it would be more effective if the Ramkrishna Mission extends its educational activities in this field.

Lest I may be misunderstood, I wish to make my position clear. I do not mean that the Ramkrishna Mission should undertake some activity which might be regarded as a rival movement of Mahatma Gandhi's Village Reconstruction Movement; but what I urge is that the Ramkrishna Mission should widen the scope of its existing educational programme. Let me be concrete and cite an example. The Ramkrishna Mission has been in the work of extending medical relief to the needy for good many years and their activities in this field only supplemented the work carried out by many hospitals, charitable dispensaries, etc. Lately in the city of Calcutta, the Ramkrishna Mission started its "Child-Welfare Centre" (*Sishu Mangal Pratisthan*). It has become a

model institution of its kind and it is being directed by an able Executive Committee, composed of many responsible public men of Bengal. It is receiving support from intelligent men and women of the country. Similarly, if the Ramkrishna Mission inaugurate an "Educational Volunteer Movement" as a part of its general educational activities, it is to be expected that many well-educated, really patriotic young men and women will offer their services, and with the co-operation of the awakened public much effective educational work—such as establishing village schools—may be undertaken.

When we read the records of educational work of the Buddhist missionaries all over the world, when we visualize the gigantic educational activities of Christian missionaries—especially the Jesuits—, when we see the expansion of the Service of the Ramkrishna Mission in all fields, during its forty years of existence, I feel that under competent leadership and sound organization and with a small beginning much can be done for national regeneration through education. I am also convinced that there will be no lack of sincere *Educational Volunteers*, and sincere workers will draw financial support. I sincerely hope that the Ramkrishna Mission should start a movement for spreading education with the aid of Educational Volunteers. If it is undertaken, it will be no less successful as its experiment in Child Welfare work in Calcutta has been crowned with success.

WHAT SHALL MAN BELIEVE ?

BY MADELINE R. HARDINGE

Many thousands of years ago Zarathustra the Pure lifted his heart in earnest prayer to his God, Ahura Mazda, saying, "This I ask Thee, tell me truly, O Ahura, the religion that is best for *all Mankind*, the religion which based on truth should prosper in all that is ours, the religion which established our actions in order and justice by the Divine songs of Perfect Piety, which has for its intelligent desire of desires the desire of Thee, O Mazda."

Ages have passed since then and all down those ages the same question has been asked and is being asked, though not always with the same disinterested motives—the good of all mankind and the glory of God. People are continually talking of the need for a universal religion and endeavouring to bring about religious combines as though contemplating some big business deal. Usually this suggested joining-up appears to imply agreement on formulas or methods of worship which have successfully appealed to a section of the human race. Mankind in general seems to think that there can be no true unity without unity in doctrines and forms of worship.

Recently in England a weekly newspaper published a series of articles entitled, "What shall man believe?" The underlying motive we do not know because most subjects, sacred or mundane, which are likely to increase the circulation of a paper, find a place. The subject of religion is becoming a growingly fruitful source and almost a daily theme in publications of various kinds.

This particular course of articles set out briefly the tenets and beliefs of different denominations and sects and in doing so it was stated that the articles were presented only as statements of fact and that there was no intention to influence the beliefs of readers. Pictures of pioneers, who in some instances had suffered martyrdom for their cause, and pictures of episodes in the history of the organizations, illustrated the articles. But in the end only a mere handful of sects were dealt with—perhaps two dozen—not many when it is estimated that there are 360 varieties alone, all based, according to their followers, on the true interpretation of the Christian Scriptures. Smaller still do the two dozen dealt with appear when we are told that there are two thousand religions in the world today. They, no doubt, all fill a necessary place in the life of mankind; it is the claim on the part of many of them to be the repository of the whole truth, which is repellent to those who know anything of the need there is for the greatest variety, in order to make up the perfect unity.

Just lately it was stated of a small and little known sect, which was originally a break-off from Christian Science, that it "believes it has discovered the basis of the future world-religion." But as the writer of an article remarked, "So has every sect which ever began with enthusiasm." Another small sect, not yet inaugurated but only about to be, "believes that the formation of this Church is the greatest step which has been taken *by the Deity* for two thousand years."

According to one record, nine thousand years have passed since the great prophet Zarathustra lived; and the question is still being asked, "What shall man believe?" The chief difference is that Zarathustra appealed to his God, Ahura Mazda, for guidance as to what religion would be *best for man*, whereas down the ages which have followed, it appears to have been the aim of man to try to convert the world to his own particular methods of worship because certain statements of belief or creeds or dogmas have appealed to him. How thankful we can be that such a time can never come but that the All-pervading, All-creative Life will ever manifest and be differentiated according to the soil in which it takes root. In the words of the *Bhavagad-Gita*, "Whatsoever is glorious, good, beautiful and mighty, understand thou that to go forth from a fragment of My splendour."

Trees and flowers are almost infinite in variety but how impossible to look upon any one as the embodiment of all the varied beauty. The strength of the Oak may appeal to one, to another the drooping loveliness of the Willow. One may love the brilliant beauty and fragrance of the Rose, another the sweet-scented delicacy of the chaste Lily. Not only do they make different appeals to different natures but in various circumstances may in turn appeal to one and the same person according to his need. A scene of rare beauty may appear almost drab when the eye has become accustomed to it, as a beautiful face may lose its charm when it lacks animation and variety of expression.

In Spring-time, walking through a lovely spot in England in the bluebell season, one is attracted by what appears to be a perfect carpet of azure-blue extending far into the dis-

tance. But after a while one becomes accustomed to it, there is nothing fresh to call up one's admiration. Suddenly giant Rhododendrons of brilliant hues loom above the bluebell carpet, and towering trees laden with bloom of various shades make one raise one's thoughts from what had become almost the ordinary, and the whole scene has changed. Little wild flowers of delicate shades growing around these monster trees and bushes, as though trying to gain inspiration from their grandeur and beauty, appear more lovely because of their loneliness and attract more than the furlongs of bluebells to which one had become accustomed. The little Forget-me-not or Violet standing all alone can make a curious appeal. And often it is in viewing some phase of Truth outside the beaten track that we find our inspiration.

The various existing and constantly increasing number of sects are witness to the impossibility of hindering their birth or growth and of the uselessness of attempting to try to put all mankind into one mould. In spite of persecution of by-gone days in some cases and of ridicule in others, they have persisted and some have been carried to the ends of the earth. Those with any fragment of truth in them have lived and, maybe, have become stronger because of cruel persecution and ridicule in the attempt to destroy them. It is only when these sects put the barriers of creed and dogma around themselves that criticism may be justified. It not only hinders their own growth but makes them appear cold and lifeless to the seeker after Truth. If only they could be made to realize the words of Sri Ramakrishna that, "The goal of every religion is the same"! Followers of some of these sects may appear undeveloped, unprogressed but, after all, as Swami Viveka-

nanda said, they are all going from lower to higher truth; or as some teaching speaks of them, they are fruits, not fully ripened. How inspiring are the words of the *Vedas*: "Truth is one; men call It by various names." But so often the great principles are set aside for insistence upon unimportant little details! Jesus of Nazareth gave two commandments only. He said, "The first of all the commandments is: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love Him with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." So often His supposed followers set these aside and emphasize only the unimportant externals! And people become almost bewildered, forgetting that great truths are changeless and immutable and that they have need to get back to the centre, instead of endeavouring to view spiritual things from the medley of the material.

Apart from all these, there are other attitudes of mind to take into account when considering a so-called universal religion. Among self-styled followers of Christianity there is a large army which still believes that salvation can be obtained only by blind faith. Their religion is often based on inherited beliefs or on the statements of others, and no matter how impossible certain dogmas may be to the intellect, they must be believed. It is understandable how outsiders, looking on, often see only that which appeals to the humorous side, and instead of arguing, put their criticisms into amusing anecdotes. Recently it was said of an old lady, so thoroughly convinced was she that salvation was by faith only—

meaning *blind* acceptance of course—that at night she would kneel beside her bed and say, "O, God, give me something even more difficult to believe"!

Again there are so many who still hold to what they call the justice of God, on which they base the doctrine of vicarious atonement and the terrible retribution which must follow its non-acceptance. The story was recently told of a preacher who so emphasized this retributive aspect of God that his congregation appeared greatly depressed. Noticing this the good man is said to have wound up by saying, "But mind you my friends, there are many things which God is obliged to do in His official capacity which He would scorn to do as a private individual"! Stories such as these, although probably not true happenings, anyhow show how these materialistic anthropomorphic ideas of God strike the man in the street. This belief in the vengeance of God, or what some call justice, is beginning to lose its hold to a great extent and many find it more and more difficult to try to harmonize a God of Love with a God who acts as punisher or rewarder. In illustration of this attitude a story is told of a little boy who was receiving some spiritual instruction on the awfulness of incurring the anger of God. Being told that when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the stone containing the ten commandments and found the Israelites worshipping a golden calf, for which the Almighty wanted to slay them but was turned aside by the pleading of Moses, he said, "Yes, of course, but anyone else would have laughed"! There are many stories of this kind which seem light but they illustrate more or less the attitude of mind of many, even in what are called the present enlightened days; and the

crudeness of the beliefs held, appeal to those capable of seeing only the funny side of things, and in light banter they reject them.

Quite recently a prominent member of a very narrow sect, refusing to hear anything outside his own tiny limits, turned angrily upon the writer, who had casually mentioned the beautiful all-embracing aspect of the Vedanta, and said, "The East, the East, don't speak of spiritual teaching from the East. Don't you know the verses in the *Bible*, in the Book of Exodus, where it says that it was the *East* wind which brought the plague of locusts destroying everything in their train, showing what God thinks of the East. And on the pleading of Moses 'the Lord turned a mighty strong *West* wind which took away the locusts and cast them into the Red Sea.' " Such an interpretation seems almost incredible, but there are vast numbers who still believe in the *verbal* inspiration of

the *Bible* and that every statement has a spiritual interpretation. He had evidently forgotten that the Lord Jesus, he was supposed to worship, was the product of the East.

Such minds as these have all to be taken into account when we in the West talk so glibly of a universal religion, when what is really meant is the impossible task of an attempted amalgamation of human beliefs and ideas and forms and ceremonies. We realize with thankfulness how far away such a day must be! Moreover, when we remember the words of Swami Vivekananda that all religions but the Vedanta centre around some person or some incarnation, such a harmonizing of beliefs appears more than ever impossible. Until men see the uniting point, the great central truth,—the Oneness of God, man, and the universe,—a universal religion appears to some of us only a beautiful day-dream.

TODAY MY HEART SINGS LIKE A JOYOUS BIRD

BY DIANE ROBBINS

Today my heart sings like a joyous bird
Divinely thrilling music, and the fears
Of lesser hours bow their heads, while tears
Fall rapturously unnoticed and unheard.
Intrusion cannot venture in this place,
In which my spirit soars alone with thee;
No mundane measure dares to lift its face
To break the sweetness of this harmony.

No flower in your garden holds more free
And brave a countenance to meet your eye,
No prayerful supplication flows from me
That in your wisdom you might well deny.
Lord of my joys and of my sorrows too,
With tremulous breath I yield myself to you.

WHERE DO WE COME FROM ?

BY BHIKKHU SUVRATA

The child is ushered into the world and lights up the home with the joy of its smile. The mother with the newborn babe on her lap forgets to ask it, in the joy of the moment, where it has come from. Such is the case with many in the world. We go out in the world, and so long as we get pleasure and happiness, deeper problems of life do not arise in us at all. We drink deep the joys of life and hanker after more and more, and this intoxication of greater and greater enjoyment sustains our life. We forget every other thing so long as our happiness and enjoyment find no obstruction. But then every intoxication gives temporary relief or at best momentary pleasure. It is artificial. So long as it is not natural, we cannot be sure when the dream will break and leave us more miserable than ever. So, as we go on in our life, moved and propelled by its joys and pleasures like a piece of cloud sailing listlessly through the blue sky, there comes a sudden halt. Perhaps we get a blow in life—much more severe than our joys were great. We are rudely awakened into the consciousness that there is another side of life, so long unknown to us.

Most often we are not ready to welcome the miseries of life so readily as its joys. We want to escape them. But we, to our great discomfiture, find ourselves strongly tied. We can no more escape the darker side of life than we can be the authors of our enjoyments. They come by turns as passing shows, and, in fact, we are no more affected by them than a mountain is by the clouds that come across them. But in

our everyday life we do not realize that. So we are constantly tantalized in life by its joys and sorrows. Then tired and wearied by such dual experiences, we want to escape the clutches of life and ask ourselves, "What is the origin of life?"—"Whence do we come?" We take a retrospective glance and want to penetrate through the thick mist that covers the beginning of our life. To escape the burden of life, we want to know what life is; but here again, a new world opens up for us, where we find ourselves completely lost. The disciple asked the Guru, "Well, Sir, by knowing which everything else will be known?" We also ask ourselves, what is that by knowing which the whole mystery of life will be unravelled for us? We knock and knock against the problem and find ourselves dashed but not the problem solved.

It is interesting to note how people of different climes in different ages, approached the same problem in many ways, though impelled by the similar urge. Thus the ancient Egyptians believed that there was, before the beginning of creation, a master-workman and master-potter, who fashioned man out of the mud of the Nile on a potter's wheel. According to the Iranian philosophy creation came about in the eternal conflict between Ahurmazda (the Good Forces) and Ahriman (the Evil forces). According to the Chinese of ancient days there was one Pan-ku, whose eyes became the sun and moon, flesh earth, breath wind, sweat rain, hairs plants, and worms of whose decay became mankind. According to North American legend, the earth was first

covered with all waters; a goddess fell from heaven, and land bubbled up at her feet; and out of two doves that brooded over waters the living creatures came out. Early Christians believed that man was formed out of dust by God and put in the garden of Eden. But as he was in want of a suitable companion, out of man's ribs came Eve to be his helpmate. Similar is the theory of creation according to Islam. If we look into the *Puranas* to find out the theories of creation given therein, we find many things which the modern minds will shrink from believing unless a modern interpretation is given to them. Thus in all these theories of creation legend, mythology, allegory religion and science are hopelessly mingled up, and we do not know how to distinguish them, what to accept, and what to reject.

Nor has the modern science given any decided theory about the origin of life. True, Darwin's theory of evolution cut at the very root of the Christian belief that creation came all on a sudden out of nothing, but Darwin himself as also the Evolutionists up to the present day deal with only the *process* of creation. The origin of life still remains unknown. Science also is in hopeless bewilderment to solve this enigma.

According to modern beliefs, earth was first in a gaseous state. Until the earth cooled and consolidated, it was quite unfit to be a home of life. It follows that at some uncertain but inconceivably distant date, living creatures appeared on the scene. The question is: What was the manner of their coming into being, upon the previously tenantless earth? Our answer is that we do not know. According to a great scientist, Lord Kelvin, life came to our earth embosomed in meteorites. This suggestion simply shifts the problem to some other spheres,

If life came to this earth through meteorites from some other planets, what was the origin of life there? Thus the difficulty remains unsolved as ever. The second theory put forth by the scientists is that "living" came out of "non-living," as a result of spontaneous generation in favourable conditions. According to this theory, the first germ of life was contained in Cyanogen (CN)—a semi-fluid carbon-compound, which perhaps came into being in incandescent condition, when the earth was still aglow. They gradually entered into combinations with other molecules and produced a simple, undifferentiated living substance. Now, if that be true, what is the hidden force which became the cause of this combination? And as yet no scientist has been able to build life out of any chemical substance in the laboratory. Some biologists, like Charles Darwin, Lamarck and others, want to reject the problem altogether. They say: Anyhow, we can have a speculative picture of the first living germs upon the earth or in the waters of the seas and oceans covering the earth, which through gradual process of evolution became plants and trees, beasts and birds and as also the acme of creation—man.

"Thus the secret of life is baffling the human intelligence refusing to be formulated. Often when the conception of life has seemed to the biologists to be within reach, it is perhaps the farthest away. It recedes as we approach it."

According to the Vedanta Philosophy the whole creation has come out of *अज्ञान* (Ignorance). Out of ignorance was created first the five subtle elements—ether, sky, fire, water, earth; and these in turn entered into some combination and became the gross elements we see. These gross elements are the materials of all that we can see and perceive—the body of all creation,

animate and inanimate, as well as of the whole universe. Science may go as far as that state when some of the gross elements came into existence, but beyond that everything is enveloped in darkness. But when Vedānta says that ignorance is the starting-point of creation, what is meant by it in reality? Does it also mean that the cause of creation is shrouded in mystery, for frail human beings like us? According to Vedānta, there is only one entity—Brahman. When we see this creation, we see it out of ignorance,—as a rope is mistaken for a snake, as mirage is seen in a desert land. It is out of ignorance that we fear the rope, mistaking it for a snake; duped by the mirage it is that a deer runs and runs till it dies. In the same way, where everything is Brahman we see diversity—we see creation, we see the world in which we weep a dance—to our great misery. A lion saw its reflection in water and got startled; and in the same way we suffer by seeing the reflection of our own Self in the form of everything that is “Not-I.” The sun is reflected in water, and foolish people see another sun therein. But when water is removed there is only one sun shining in its own glory. Similarly

when ignorance is removed, the whole creation vanishes for us and there remains only one Existence—that is, Brahman. So the *Upanishads* say,

“यत्र त्वस्र सर्वमाकांक्षमभूत् तत् केन क पश्येत् ।”

—When he finds everything as his own Self, then which will be seen by whom?

Now, are we in any way better for all this knowledge? Have we really known the origin of creation and the meaning of life? No. Unless we have realized Brahman, our own Self, all knowledge has no meaning for us, it is all अपरा विद्या (lower knowledge). So when the disciple approaches the Guru with the question—“What is that by the knowledge of which everything else will be known,” what the Guru taught was परा विद्या the knowledge about the Supreme Self. He said in thundering voice :

यस्मिन् बी. प्रथिवी आकाशदीपदीपं

मन, सद्य प्राणिषु सर्वे ।

तमेवैकं ज्ञानं ब्रह्मात्मनम् ।

Know that one Self alone in which Heaven, the earth, the sky, and the sensorium with all the vital airs are woven. Give up other words. It is the way to Immortality.

Let us all give up all other words and strive to know That alone.

THE BRAHMA-SUTRAS

By SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA

Topic 10: Brahman's power of Māyā established.

सर्वोपिता च तद्दर्शनात् ॥ ३० ॥

सर्वोपिता Endowed with all ष and तद्-दर्शनात् because it is seen.

30. And (Brahman is) endowed with all (powers), because it is seen (from the scriptures).

Generally we see that men endowed with a physical body possess such powers. But since Brahman has no body, it is not likely that It can possess such powers—so says the opponent.

This Sutra gives proof of Brahman's being endowed with Mâyâ Sakti, the power of Nescience. Various scriptural texts declare that Brahman possesses all powers. "The great Lord is the Mâyin (the ruler of Mâyâ)" (Svet. 4.10). See also Chh. Up. 3.4.4 and 3.7.1.

विकरणत्वान्नेति चेत्, तदुक्तम् ॥ ३१ ॥

विकरणात् Because devoid of organs न not इति चेत् if it be said तत् that उक्तम् has been explained.

31. If it be said that because (Brahman) is devoid of organs (It is) not (able to create, though endowed with powers), (we say) this has (already) been explained.

As Brahman is devoid of organs, It cannot create. Moreover It is described as "Not this, not this," which precludes all attributes; so how can It possess any powers? This Sutra replies that it has already been explained in 2.1.4 and 2.1.25 that with respect to Brahman the scripture alone is authority and not reason. The scripture declares that Brahman, although devoid of organs, possesses all capacities. "Grasping without hands, moving swiftly without feet" etc. (Svet. Up. 3.19). Though Brahman is without attributes, yet on account of Mâyâ or Nescience It can be taken to possess all powers.

Topic 11: Brahman's creation has no motive behind except a sportive impulse.

न प्रयोजनवत्त्वात् ॥ ३२ ॥

न Not प्रयोजनवत्त्वात् on account of having a motive.

32. (Brahman is) not (the creator of the world) on account of (every activity) having a motive.

Granting that Brahman possesses all powers for creation, a further objection is raised against Its being the cause. Nobody engages himself in anything without a motive or purpose. Everything is undertaken by people to satisfy some desire. But Brahman is self-sufficient, therefore It has nothing to gain by the creation; hence we cannot expect It to engage Itself in such a useless creation. Therefore Brahman cannot be the cause of the world.

लोकवत् लीलाकैवल्यम् ॥ ३३ ॥

लोकवत् As is seen in the world तत् but लीलाकैवल्यम् mere pastime.

33. But (Brahman's creative activity) is mere pastime, as is seen in the world.

Even as kings without any motive behind are seen to engage in acts for mere pastime, or even as men breathe without a purpose, for it is their very nature, or even as children play out of mere fun, so also Brahman without any purpose engages Itself in creating this world of diversity. This answers the objection raised in the previous Sutra against Brahman's being the cause of the world.

वैषम्यनैर्घृण्ये न, सापेक्षत्वात्, तथा हि दर्शयति ॥ ३४ ॥

वैषम्यनैर्घृण्ये Partiality and cruelty न not सापेक्षत्वात् on account of Its taking into consideration (other reasons) तथा so हि because दर्शयति declares.

34. Partiality and cruelty (cannot be attributed to Brahman) on account of Its taking into consideration (other reasons in that matter), because (the scripture) declares (it to be) so.

Some are created poor, some rich ; hence the Lord is partial to some. He is cruel, inasmuch as He makes people suffer. To such an objection this Sutra replies that the Lord cannot be accused of partiality and cruelty, because He dispenses according to the merit and demerit of the individual soul. The scripture declares to that effect. "A man becomes good by good work, bad by bad work" (Brh. Up. 3.2.18). But this does not contradict the independence of the Lord, even as the king's status is not compromised by his giving presents to his servants according to their action. Just as rain helps different seeds to sprout, each according to its nature, so God is the general efficient cause in bringing the latent tendencies of each individual to fruition. Hence he is neither partial nor cruel.

न कर्माविभागादिति चेत्, न, अनादित्वात् ॥ ३५ ॥

न Not कर्माविभागात् for want of distinction in work इति चेत् if it be said न not अनादित्वात् because of (the world) being without a beginning

35. If it be said (that is) not possible for want of any distinction in work (before creation), (we say) no, because of (the world) being without a beginning.

Since before the first creation the individual soul cannot possibly have had a previous existence, whence comes the difference in the condition of beings in that first creation, unless the Lord has caused it out of His partiality? This objection is answered by the Sutra, which says that creation is without a beginning and the question of first creation cannot arise. It is like a seed and its sprout. So the individual souls have always had a previous existence and done good or bad deeds in accordance with which their lot in a subsequent creation is ordained by the Lord.

उपपद्यते चाप्युपलभ्यते च ॥ ३६ ॥

उपपद्यते Is reasonable च and अपि also उपलभ्यते is seen च also.

36. (And that the world is without a beginning) is reasonable and is also seen (from the scriptures).

Reason tells us that creation must be without a beginning. For if the world did not exist in a potential state in the form of Samskāras (impressions), then an absolutely non-existing thing would be produced at creation. In that case even liberated souls might be reborn. Moreover, people would be enjoying or suffering without having done anything to deserve it—an instance of an effect without a cause, which is absurd. It cannot be attributed to primeval ignorance, which, being one, requires the diversity of individual past work to produce varied results. Scriptures also posit the existence of the world in former cycles in texts like, "The Lord devised the sun and moon as before" (Rig. Veda. 10.190.3).

So partiality and cruelty cannot be imputed to the Lord.

सर्वधर्मोपपत्तेश्च ॥ ३७ ॥

सर्वे-धर्म-उपपत्तेः From the possibility of all attributes च and.

37. And because all attributes (required for the creation of the world) are possible (only in Brahman, it is the cause of the world).

This Sutra answers the objection that because Brahman is attributeless It cannot be the material cause of the world.

Objection: Material cause is that which undergoes modification as the effect. Such a cause is generally seen to possess attributes in the world. Therefore an attributeless Brahman cannot be the material cause of the world, as it goes counter to our everyday experience.

Answer: Though the material cause undergoes change to produce the effect, yet this can take place in two ways. An actual modification, as when milk turns into curds, or an apparent modification due to ignorance, as when a rope is taken for a snake. Therefore though in the attributeless Brahman an actual change is impossible, yet an apparent modification is possible owing to Its power of Mâyâ. Because of this power all the attributes required in the cause for such a creation are possible only in Brahman. Therefore Brahman is the material cause of this world, not through actual modification, but through apparent modification, and It is also the efficient cause of the world. Therefore the fact that Brahman is the cause of the world is established.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Last month we discussed about the significance of life and its purpose. In this issue we dwell upon *The Practical Problems of Life*. . . . Swami Trigunatita was a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. *Brahmacharya or Continence* shows the importance of self-control at every stage and occupation in life. . . . *Sociological Approaches to Vedic Culture* is a thought-provoking article by Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar who has already won fame by writing several books on the same lines. . . . Mr. Sohrab R. Davar is the Principal of the Davar's College of Commerce, Bombay. He is our new contributor. He discusses whether the present educational system is suitable to modern requirements as well as that of the future generations of India in his article, *Problem of the*

Future Generation. . . . Mr. Teja Singh is a new contributor. He deals with the problem of *Death and Its Occurrence*, basing his arguments on Hindu systems of Yoga. . . . Mr. Shib Chandra Dutt is our old contributor. He gives his personal impressions about *The Message of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda*. . . . Dr. Taraknath Das refers to our editorial comment on "The Real Want of our country," published in May, 1935 and in the present article, *National Regeneration through Education* he emphasizes the need of starting educational movements in modern India. . . . Mrs. Madaline R. Hardinge shows in *What shall Man believe?* that in Vedanta alone, we can find out the fundamentals of a universal religion. . . . *Today my heart sings like a joyous bird* breathes the perfume of a

devout heart. The poem is written by Diane Robbins. . . . Bhikkhu Suvrata is our old contributor. *Where do we come from?* gives us valuable informations about the origin of life.

THE QUARREL OVER TERMS

Hinduism is a term which the Hindus never used to name their own faith nor do they use it at present when they talk of their faith among themselves. To themselves they are Vaishnavas, Sâktas, Saivas, Gânapatyas, etc., or one or other of their numerous sub-divisions. But this does not mean that they do not think themselves as belonging to one main religion. The word that is most often used in the scriptures to indicate this is Sanâtan a Dharma or Arya Dharma; and it includes not only the religion but everything that is connoted by the two words, culture and civilization. The word that the modern writers of Indian history use to indicate later Hinduism is Brâhmanism. It is a much better word than Hinduism, a foreign word imposed by a sneering conqueror nation, which does not convey any idea of the religion for which it stands or is made to stand. Brâhmanism on the other hand is a word which is most frequently used in the scriptures and which conveys the quintessence as well as the whole conception of the religion it represents. We are only to make a slight alteration in spelling and pronunciation without changing the basic word. It is not Brâhmanism but Brahmanism, *i.e.* the religion of Brahman, the religion whose central and the only real entity is Brahman. There is hardly a sect of Hinduism, ancient or modern, that will have the least objection to the term and the conception it carries. It is needless to add here what it means.

If Hinduism carries any meaning, it is Indianism, which is too narrow to

mean and include what Hinduism really is. Moreover, the term has a bad odour of exclusiveness about it, whereas true Hinduism is all-inclusive. Whoever or whatever group or section of mankind will all himself or itself Hindu has already become Hindu. It has kept its two doors of entrance and exit wide open for all times. There might be men and women in countries outside India who think, feel and live the spiritual life in exactly the same way as many Indian Hindus do, or it might be, aspire to do. Still with all their love and respect for India they might reasonably object to calling themselves Hindus, which means Indians. There are sects even in India, which have objections in calling themselves Hindus merely on sentimental grounds or simply because the term, somehow or other, has been exclusively appropriated by a certain section of humanity, and thus been narrowed down.

Whoever understands Hinduism can have no reasonable ground in refusing to call himself a Hindu, be he a Brâhmo, an Arya-Samajist, a Jain or a Sikh. For by calling himself a Hindu, he does not by any means become less a Brâhmo, or so forth, but only enlarge himself so much by embracing a large section of humanity, whose members are not only tolerant to all his views of social and religious life but help him in every possible way in realizing his own end of life with brotherly love and veneration, even to the extent of converting others to his own smaller fold, just as Hindu of one sect are daily becoming converts to another sect without causing the least disturbance anywhere.

Hinduism, but for that narrow word, is really synonymous with Religion. Whoever believes in God, personal or impersonal, is a Hindu and has every right to call himself a Hindu. He has no

rigid social binding. He may or may not believe in the caste system, he may or may not worship images, he may or may not marry widows. These are, to the Hindus, social and religious conventions which help different types of men to the realization of their deepest and widest Self. They are the kindergarten of the social and religious training, and as such are not binding on all.

All these are true. Still when we utter the word Hinduism, a narrow concept raises its head, the figure of an exclusive religion rises in our mind. And it is due to this unwelcome figure that some faiths, having no difference whatever with the mother faith, resolutely refuse to be called branches of Hinduism. Most of them actually have the term Brahman or Atman and worship It whether in Its personal or impersonal aspect. Even those that do not have the term do not differ in the concept. In fact it is impossible to differ, since so wide is the Hindu concept of Brahman. Why then quarrel about a name, which the Hindus themselves do not like and do not have in their own scriptures? Why not unite under the name of Brahmanism, if a baseless sentiment keeps you apart and divided?

THE AIM OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Dr. Shafaat Ahmed Khan, President of the last All-India Modern History Congress, has drawn the pointed attention of all researchers in Modern Indian History to two very important aspects of research, its aim and yet untrod fields. He asks the scholars to devote their energies to the writing of "local" histories or histories of important towns or spots, of economic history, of the history of arts, of the history of village organization, etc. He deplures

the unfortunate identification of history with only one aspect of it viz. the political. "Our preoccupation with the purely political history of India", says Sir Shafaat, "is responsible for the most unfortunate conception of Indian Society; and trite and mechanical repetition is often indulged in, for instance, to illustrate the anarchy and confusion in the 18th century India. This would have lost a great deal of its force, if some of us had undertaken a systematic study of those fundamental bases of our national life which have acted and are still serving as sustaining pillars of Indian Society. None has seriously undertaken a scientific study of village organization in India in the 18th Century."

Important as these fields are, the more important is no doubt the aim of all researches, any improper idea about which will not only spoil all labours but would do, as it has already done, positive harm to the country. Historians are not mere recording machines. They are neither miners nor collectors of curios. Theirs is a difficult job which would make dead and inanimate things talk, and liars and speakers in hyperboles yield the precise truth. Revealing of past facts too is not true history. The historian must find out and show the developing idea or ideas struggling for expression through these apparently disconnected facts and events. He must be able to show the slow working of cultural fusion of races, of the formation of a larger nation with a wider outlook on life behind the bloody battles and revolts, and the rise and fall of ruling dynasties.

Research students of Indian history have shown that Indians are a conglomeration of races widely differing from one another, each living its narrow separate life, desiring nothing but non-

interference from others, and rarely showing a feeble united front to a common enemy and tending towards disruption at the earliest opportunity. The picture, no doubt, is not wholly wrong; but it is not the whole truth either. These are but the waves of the ocean; the undercurrent lies deep below them. And the researchers are to find this out. The progress of the urge for fusion, the appreciation and incorporation of the good points of the different cultures and the silent falling off of the incompatible baneful things, the triumph of nationalism and universalism over communalism and sectionalism—these should be held up before the youths of the country. Patriotism must be based on the sound foundation of truth and must not be allowed to run wild at the perorations of political propagandists and self-seeking opportunists.

Man is by nature a universalist; his history cannot but be an expression of his struggle for universalism. Histories of all nations show how tribes and races went on combining till mighty nations were formed; and in these combinations hatred played as important a part as love, battles were as essential as treaties. But quarrels, revolts, wholesale assassinations—all these were submerged and nations were born with new hopes and new fields of action.

India's case cannot be otherwise. Truly has it been said by Dr. Khan that history has but one voice and it holds good for all nations. Indian history too is a history of fusion of races; and it is the most interesting history because it records the wonderful amalgamation of a very large number of widely differing races. True reading of Indian history will reveal interesting data of race-fusion, which will be of great value to the coming world. But unfortunately

that history has not yet been written. Its materials are lying buried in archives, museums, archaeological pits, and yet undiscovered spots of similar value. It is for the Indian research students to make them yield the true history of their land. But to do so they must rise above all narrowness, all sectarianism; they must learn to think in terms of India. With this qualification and this end in view if Indian students take to rebuilding Indian history we shall have a totally different history, which will be both truthful and patriotic. Sir Shafaat deserves our thanks for holding up this true aim of history before the young researchers.

AN UN-CHRISTIAN ACT OF TRAVANCORE CHRISTIANS

Days of fanaticism are not yet over, however much we want it. People are prepared for it. But what is deplorable is the association of the name of the most tolerant and gentlest of prophets with wildest fanaticism. Why should Christ be dragged to participate in these hellish things is what passes our understanding. We are speaking of the Christian agitation in Travancore against a grant of Rs. 10,000 by the Maharaja to the Kerala Hindu Mission. If the writer of "Is Hinduism to die in Travancore?" in the June issue of the *Hindu Review* is to be believed we find no earthly reason for such an un-Christian-like Christian agitation.

The Maharaja himself is a Hindu. He "exercises his authority", we are told, "as the representative of Sri Padmanâbha", a deity. The grant, moreover, is not made from the state funds but from the "Devasvam" or the property of the deity. And the money is to be utilized for no other sinister purpose than "the elevation of the depressed classes." We ask, what

is wrong in the whole affair? Where does irreligion come in that "petitions and memorials are being sent to the Government of India and ill-informed missionaries are being persuaded to focus attention in England"? The attitude and action of these followers of Christ seem so absurd that one feels disinclined to believe in them even though they are authoritatively stated to be true.

Even if the whole amount is to be spent for conversion into Hinduism of the Christians, we do not find anything wrong in that, so long as the conversion is peaceful and the converts are willing. If the Christians have the right to convert others into their faith, others have the same right to convert Christians into theirs. If the British Government can spend large sums of money on the maintenance of its Ecclesiastical Department, and if the Nizam can do the same for the Mohammadans, why should the Maharaja of Travancore be not allowed to spend money from the *state funds* to ameliorate the conditions of the Hindus? But he has done

nothing of the sort. He has simply sanctioned a portion of the Hindu money accumulated in a Hindu temple to be spent on a section of the Hindus, who deserve better attention not only from their own co-religionists but from all humanity, even from the Christians themselves.

And what do these "petitions and memorials" mean? Do these Christians mean that the India Government will interfere in the matter and deprive the Maharaja of his right to spend money for the depressed classes? Is there anything in the past which has led them to make such an absurd request to the paramount power? Nobody in his senses will believe it.

We hope all Christians, even of Travancore, are not so mean-minded. Followers of Christ cannot degrade their sweet Jesus to such a level. If, on the contrary, all these turn out to be facts and if all the Christians of Travancore are a party to such actions, people will not have much reason to denounce Russia's anti-God propaganda. Religion, then, is a drag to humanity.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE SECRET PATH. By Paul Brunton. Messrs. Rider & Co., Paternoster House, Paternoster Row, London, E. C. 4. Pp. 222. Price 5s.

Last year we saw Mr. Brunton, an earnest, critical student of things spiritual and also magical; and this year we find him giving up the latter; but no longer is he a student but a Guru instead, preaching "The Secret Path"—a rather too rapid transformation. One thing that his readers should know is that his "Secret Path" has nothing really 'secret' about it. It is as free from harm or danger as it is from novelty or originality. What is really admirable in the author is his strong common sense and fine power of observation and expression. He is an artist and a thinker, one might say, a deep thinker.

The path that he says to have chalked out is characteristic of the type of man that he is. Any earnest seeker of God, who has common sense enough as not to be hoodwinked by religious charlatans, and is acquainted with some important Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian religious books, and is fortunate enough to come in contact with some truly spiritual personalities, cannot but come to a conclusion more or less similar to that of Mr. Brunton's "Secret Path." The 'Path, however, may yield good results to those who will follow it doggedly and believingly. There is every reason to believe that the book will appeal to a large section of mankind and will do it some good. Religion and psychology are fast approaching each other to shake

hands. And books on religion written psychologically have a greater claim on and sway over modern rationalist man. The book is an achievement in that it has beautifully expressed what true spirituality is and has shown a practical path to the busy West or at least to a section of it. The book is strewn throughout with fine bits of holy and wise thoughts.

SRI K. P. PUTTANNA CHETTY, Kt., C.I.E. *The Man and His Work.* By G. Rudrappa, M.A., (Oxon.), Bar-at-Law. *Public Library, Bangalore.* Pp. 16. Price two annas.

The book is a life-sketch of a really great man—a man of large heart and noble action. “All the great schemes started by Sir M. Visvesvaraya for the material and moral development of the country had the hearty co-operation of Sri Puttanna Chetty who executed, as it were, in action, all his great ideas.” Mysore is fortunate in having such a child.

SAKTI OR DIVINE POWER. By Sudhendu Kumar Das, M.A., Ph.D. (Lond.). *Published by the University of Calcutta. Senate House, Calcutta.* Pp. 298.

The book is an interesting study of the Sakti cult in India with a fairly exhaustive account of the Trika philosophy of Kashmere. The Vira-Saiva account of Sakti and the Chapter on “Sakti in Mimâmsâ and the other Orthodox systems” seem to have been written only by the way, the author’s main purpose being to show the logic and beauty of the Trika philosophy, where he has borne himself perfectly well. In the brief space of 121 pages he has acquainted his readers with all the more important books of the cult, compared the doctrines with similar ones in Sankara Advaita and other systems and brought out the philosophy clearly, after having explained the important technical terms, carefully quoting authorities in every case, and having added a powerful defence in case of each category that seem at first sight to be either redundant or round about. Hence so far as the Trika philosophy is concerned the book is undoubtedly one of the best guides.

The Chapter entitled “Evolution of the Idea of Sakti in Vedic Literature” is also well written. In this the author has shown, quoting corroborative passages from almost all the Mandalas of the Rigveda Samhitâ,

Brâhmanas, and Upanishads, that the words Sachi and Sakti though originally meant nothing but “help or friendly assistance,” came very early to signify the “vivifying powers of (1) reproduction and (2) fertilization, either in the animal . . . or vegetable world”. . . . In the philosophical sense this idea of generation, meaning “to give birth to the world of names and forms,” played an important part in the post-Vedic connotation of Sakti as the Female Creative Principle fashioning the world. . . .’

GITA EXPLAINED. By Dnyaneshwar Maharaj. Translated into English by Manu Subedar, B.A., B.Sc. (Econ.) London, Barrister-at-Law. *Published by Manu Subedar, Palli Hill, Bandra.* Pp. 330. Price Rs. 2-8-0.

Of all the commentaries on the *Gita*, written up till now in the Marathi language, Dnyaneshwari, the one by Dnyaneshwar is generally accepted as the best. Dnyaneshwar who lived in Maharashtra in the thirteenth century was the disciple of Nivrittinath, like his brother, Sopan and sister, Muktabai. The original commentary of Dnyaneshwar is said to be the ‘Kohinoor’ of the Marathi literature. It was a hidden treasure to the English-knowing public till now. Mr. Manu Subedar must be congratulated on his successfully translating it into English. He admits that he could not do full justice to the original. It is but natural that some ideas and words cannot be translated into English with the same force and exactness. Still, the translator has spared no pains in making it easily intelligible and enjoyable to the reader. The style of the book is simple and charming. We highly recommend the book to the public for its literary and spiritual value.

BENGALI

MANAVATVA KI? BY SRI — . Messrs. Gurudas Chatterjee and Sons. 203/1/1, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Pp. 199. Price Re. 1-8.

The book, as its name implies, is an enquiry into the nature of man. But directly and indirectly all things of heaven and earth have been dealt with in a serio-comic way and in an authoritative tone. The book belongs to that class of literature which is highly appreciated by the admirers of authors and attracts little attention of others. It has neither a table of contents nor any index, which debars busy men from

enjoying it fully. Its reading is of course paying to those who have sufficient patience to plod through its pages.

SANATAN DHARMA. By Dharendra-krishna Mukhopadhyaya. *Sudarsan Printing Works, 84, Bechu Chatterji Street, Calcutta.* Pp. 178. Price Re. 1-8.

There are few books in Bengali which give in brief a correct comprehensive account of Hindu religion and society, and the result is Bengali Hindu boys and girls have a very poor knowledge of their religion and society. The volume under review supplies a much felt want and the author is to be congratulated on this production. The book represents the liberal view of the orthodox section and breathes throughout a spirit of catholicity and goodwill. The import and beauty of the philosophy and practice of Hinduism have been brought out in a way that can be understood even by school children, for whom perhaps it has been specially written. The picture it draws from scriptures is simply charming; but it is an ideal one, which, however we might deplore, has little chance of being revived in modern times. Circumstances and man's outlook on life have changed so much that all attempts at the revival of good old ways will always remain a mere pious wish. It does not however affect the worth of the book, whose main purpose is to depict what Hindu view of life is, or rather was, for it does not obtain at present anywhere at least in Bengal. Here the author is quite unassailable.

SRI-SRI-MAHAPURUSHJIR P A T R A. *Belur Math, Howrah, Bengal.* Pp. 111. Price 12 as.

The book is a collection of 65 letters written by Swami Sivananda, the Second President of the Ramkrishna Mission, to his admirers and disciples mostly on matters religious. Though written to individuals they have universal applicability and might prove to be of some help to many aspirants after spirituality. The printing and general get-up of the book are fine.

SANSKRIT

VALMIKI RAMAYANA. *Published by Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.* Pp. 420. Price Re. 1-4.

This handy volume is an abridged edition of the Râmâyana in the language of the great sage himself, thus giving a taste to the readers of the beauty and sweet pathos of those simple, direct, and touching expressions that are peculiarly his own. Verses, given in Devanâgri type, are followed by a lucid English translation by Prof. P. P. S. Sastri of the Presidency College, Madras. The compiler, Pandit A. M. Srinivasa Achariar, has achieved a unique success, inasmuch as, without adding a single sentence of his own, he has been able to give the narrative such an easy natural flow—it is difficult to detect his dovetailing of slokas. Both the compilation and the translation are such as ensure a wide circulation of the book. We recommend the volume to each school and college boy who can read Sanskrit.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RELIEF WORK OF THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION

(THROUGH THE HEADQUARTERS)
REPORT FOR 1934

1. *Earthquake Relief in North Bihar*

The earthquake that occurred in North Bihar on the 15th January, 1934, is known to be one of the greatest shocks in the history of the world. 12 towns, with a population varying from 10 to 60 thousand, were wrecked; and all communications extending over 15,000 Sq. miles were cut off. Extensive areas were severely damaged by fissures, ejection of vast quantities of water,

and deposits of sand. The areas of greatest destruction comprised large portions of Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur, Champaran and Monghyr Districts, as well as parts of Saran, Purnea, and Bhagalpur Districts. The population of the affected areas were nearly one crore and a half, of whom six hundred thousand lived in towns. The total number of deaths is estimated at over 20,000, mostly in towns.

The Mission workers reached the affected areas post-haste and opened centres at Muzaffarpur, Sitamari, Pupri, Gangeya, Laheri Sarai, Samastipur, Jaynagar, Motihari, Teteria, Patna, Manjha, Monghyr,

Jamalpur, and Bhagalpur. They served 8 towns wholly and 5 towns partly, 12 Mahallas, and 265 villages, distributed to 12,561 persons 2,978 mds. 35 srs. 8 ch. of rice and 202 mds. 13 srs. 4 ch. of other food-stuffs, 10,898 new cloths, 2,513 new dresses, 10,334 old clothes, 1,713 woollen blankets, 7,706 cotton blankets, 100 Durries, 11 bales and 25,200 yds. of hessian, 58 tarpaulins and 41 mosquito curtains; 5,031 utensils, 938 buckets, and 124 lanterns, besides books, pencils, etc. and umbrellas, shoes, soap cakes, phenyle, gunny bags, Electrolytic Chlorine, raincoats, etc. Moreover, 1,933 temporary huts, 1,104 thatched and 324 tin or khapra semi-permanent houses were built; 193 houses repaired, and materials or cash or both supplied for constructing 944 houses, and 222 wells cleaned, repaired or sunk; besides khapras, bamboo poles, straw, rope, etc., 1,356 corrugated iron sheets were distributed to 122 families; and some more corrugated iron sheets were supplied at half rates. Total receipts of the Quake Relief Work were Rs. 1,16,828-12-1 pie and disbursements Rs. 1,14,028-5-3 pies.

2. Assam Flood Relief

From the third week of June, 1934, owing to heavy rainfall in the Khasia and Jaintia Hills, the Districts of Sylhet, Nowgong, etc. in Assam were in the grip of terrible floods. In the strong current cattle, trees, and, in some places, even houses were swept away. In many places, owing to the influx of water into houses, stored paddy and other food-stuffs were destroyed. The annual harvest was completely ruined. People somehow saved their lives by taking shelter on the railway embankments and on tree-tops.

The Mission worked through 8 centres—4 in the Sylhet District, 2 in the Nowgong District, and 2 in the Habiganj Sub-Division of the Sylhet District. The centres distributed in all among 7,434 persons of 166 villages 3,328 mds. 9 srs. 1 ch. of rice, 5,392 new cloths, and 1,910 old cloths. In three of the first four centres money was advanced or gratuitously given to make people self-supporting by enabling them to undertake their usual works. Besides this some seed-grains were also distributed. In the Nowgong District centres 56 houses were newly built and 14 were repaired. The Habiganj Flood Relief was hardly finished when that part of the country was visited with a famine, for which relief work was going on at the end of the year and whose report was,

consequently, not included in it. 3,006 sick persons received medical relief during the whole campaign. Total receipts of the Flood Relief Work Fund came to Rs. 11,244-7-8, and disbursements to the same amount.

3. Cholera Relief Work at Maligram (Midnapur)

An outbreak of Cholera at Maligram drew our Tamluk centre workers there who nursed and treated 48 persons of whom 40 were cured. 27 houses and 7 tanks were disinfected. The total expenditure was Rs. 61-10-0 only.

4. The Shiyali Taluk Cyclone Relief Work (Tanjore)

A severe type of cyclone in the Bay of Bengal passed in the third week of December, 1933, through several Districts lying on the East Coast of Madras, which suffered great loss of life and property—Shiyali Taluk being the worst affected area. The number of human lives lost in the Taluk was 109, and that of cattle 3,650; 7,730 huts and houses were damaged, and fields were laid waste over an area of 4,000 acres. Workers from the Branch Centre at Madras started relief work from two centres covering 11 villages. Altogether 1,647 huts including 22 schools, temples, and churches were rebuilt. As the people could not earn their livelihood while engaged in hut-building, rice was distributed in just sufficient quantity for food, and this amounted to 6,058 Madras measures. During the period of work, instruction and entertainment were also provided to the people in various places through lantern lectures. Total receipts of the Cyclone Relief Work Fund came to Rs. 6,221-1-0; and disbursements to the same sum.

RAMKRISHNA MISSION VIDYAPITH, DEOGHAR

REPORT FOR 1934

Ramkrishna Mission Vidyapith is a residential High School run on Brahmacharya line, which, besides preparing boys for the Matriculation Examination of the Calcutta University, teaches them to love labour and to develop organizing capacity. The average number of students during the year under review was 110. Applications for admission had to be rejected for want of accommodation, which, however, would be soon

removed when the new dormitory under construction would be completed.

The result of the last Matriculation Examination was good, all the sent-up boys having passed in the first division. Three of them obtained more than 80 per cent. marks in some subjects. The health of the boys was, on the whole, quite good, there being only a few cases of fever, all imported from their homes. The majority of the boys showed increase in weight and muscular development. Both the junior and senior football teams of the Vidyapith acquitted themselves well in the local matches, winning a shield and a cup respectively, the latter conjointly with the local H. E. School.

Volley ball, Foot ball, Basket ball, Dhâpsâ and other country games, ji-jut-su, boxing, lâthi-play, scientific physical exercises with and without instruments, scouting, and excursions are some of the arrangements, made by the authorities and handed over exclusively to the boys for management, for the improvement of the health and activity of the boys. "Boys' Court," manuscript and printed periodicals, literary societies, vocal and instrumental music, typewriting, tailoring, gardening and dairying are some of its extra-academic activities.

Its library and laboratory could not, however, be brought up to the desired standard for financial difficulties ; nor are its practical classes in keeping with the other departments, for the same reason.

Daily worship, religious classes and discourses, and the loving association with a band of self-sacrificing workers inspire the boys with high idealism and a zeal to translate noble thoughts into activity.

The institution conducts a homeopathic dispensary which helps the poor patients of the locality.

A gymnasium, a prayer hall, a separate house for the Library and Reading Room, books and laboratory equipments, a cowshed and some cows, and funds for the maintenance of poor students and paid teachers with special qualifications and for the maintenance and expansion of the vocational classes are some of its crying needs.

Its total receipts together with last year's balance came up to Rs. 33,243-12-3 pies and its disbursements, to Rs. 22,202-3-6 pies only. All contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by:—The Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, Bihar.

RAMKRISHNA MISSION FLOOD RELIEF WORK

The public is aware of the heart-rending reports that are pouring in from the devastated areas by the recent Damodar floods in four districts of the Burdwan division of Bengal. We have already announced that a batch of workers has been sent to Bankura with a view to proceeding towards Khanda-gosh and Indas Thanas in the Burdwan and Bankura Districts respectively.

In the Arambag sub-division of the Hooghly district, relief has been started in the Bankura Thana. Over ninety per cent of the huts having collapsed, hundreds of men and women as also cattle were found to have taken shelter of the embankment of the Damodar. We have been distributing rice and other foodstuffs. Further details of the work will be published later on.

But the funds at our disposal are almost exhausted, while we are continually receiving piteous appeal for help from other equally affected areas. Unless sufficient funds are forthcoming we shall be greatly handicapped in carrying on our work. We therefore earnestly appeal to all generous souls to contribute liberally to our funds for alleviating the distress of their unfortunate brothers and sisters. All contributions in the form of new cloth and money will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses :

- (1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.
- (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta.

Sd. MADHAVANANDA,
Acting Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission.