

Prabuddha Bharata

No. 48—Vol. V—JULY 1900

GLIMPSES

Do thou always meditate upon the Supreme Shiva residing in the body. This Self illumines all our perceptions with the light of consciousness. He is the doer of the acts of lying down, eating, touching and leaving and of the states of awakening etc., and the giver of their individuality. Worship Him not in images of clay, stone or wood. Worship the All-Silence alone, whose only image is objectless cognition.

— *Yoga Vāshista.*

BOUNDED in his nature, infinite in his desires, man is a fallen god who has a recollection of heaven.

— *Lamartine.*

It has been well said, that the day selfishness vanishes from the world, the millennium will have dawned. *Mukti* is absolute unselfishness or the universal selfishness. The whole history of the evolution of life on the earth is the history of the metamorphosis of selfishness to its opposite.

ALL the exertions of all in the world are unconsciously tending to form the conditions most favourable to *Mukti*—the highest development. Conscious will and action are more powerful than unconscious. Let us therefore contribute our own share to this world-process *consciously*.

As a cloud, though deriving its existence and apprehensibility from the sun, covers the sun, even in the same manner does *Ahamkara* (the sense of 'I'), though born of and made perceptible by Brahman, stand in the way of the manifestation of the true nature of Jiva which is a part of Brahman.

— *Bhāgavata.*

THE performance of charity brings in as its effect the enjoyment of things. When performed with the object of gaining some merit, the enjoyment comes in another incarnation, and when done for its own sake, the reward is obtained here in this life.

— *Bhrigu in Moksha-Dharma Parva.*

(Of all forms of worship) image worship is the lowest, repeating holy names, chanting hymns of praise &c. is higher, mental worship is better still, (while) to worship as "I am He" is the very best of all.

— *Bhava Chuddamani Tantra.*

As oil resides in mustard, ghee in milk, scent in the flower, and juice in the fruit, even so does the universal and all embracing mind reside in the body and the Deva (*Paramatma*) resides in the mind.

— *Uttaragītā.*

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

ADVICE TO THE WORLDLY-MINDED—II

THE caterpillar gets itself imprisoned in its cell of self-woven cocoon. So the worldly soul gets itself entangled in the meshes of its desires. But when the caterpillar develops into a bright and beautiful butterfly, it bursts the cocoon and enjoys freely the light and air. So the worldly soul can burst through the meshes of *Maya* by the wings of *Viveka* (discrimination) and *Tairagya* (dispassion.)

LITTLE children play with dolls in a room apart, just as they like, but as soon as their mother comes in, they throw aside the dolls and run to her crying, 'Mamma, Mamma dear!' You also are now playing in this world deeply absorbed in the dolls of wealth, honour, and fame, and have no fear or anxiety. But if you once see the Divine Mother entering in, you will not find pleasure any more in wealth, honour, and fame. Leaving off all these you will run to Her.

A WORLDLY man may be endowed with intellect as great as that of Janaka, may take as much pains and trouble as a yogin, and make as great sacrifices as an ascetic; but all these he makes and does, not for God, but for worldliness, honour, and wealth.

As a nail cannot be driven into a stone, but easily into earth, so the advice of the pious does not affect the soul of a worldly man. It enters into the heart of a believer.

THAT man, who, living in the midst of the temptations of the world, attains perfection, is the true hero.

THE heart of the devotee free from desires is like a dry match—which ignites directly it is struck, the slightest mention of the name of the Deity kindles the fire of love in his heart. But the mind of the worldly, soaked in lust and greed, is like the moist match which does not get lighted however long you may rub it. Similarly the worldly-minded man can never be heated into enthusiasm, though God may be preached to him innumerable times.

THE worldly men will not act up to your advice if you ask them to renounce everything and give themselves up to the lotus feet of God. Hence after much deliberation as to the means of attracting these worldly souls, Gour and Nitai hit upon the plan of holding out to them a temptation, and taught, "the soup of the Magur fish, the company of the youthful maiden, have, ye brothers, with the name of *Hari*." Many flocked to them to utter the name of God in expectation of getting the first two. But they were generally caught in the trap. When by and by they came to have a little taste of the nectar of God's name they understood the hidden meaning of Nitai's teachings. The soup the of Magur fish is nothing but the tears of ecstasy which flow out of the fulness of the heart in love for God; the youthful maiden is the ever-youthful earth; so the company of the youthful maiden implies the blessed stage of the God-intoxicated man when he falls down on the earth unable to keep his balance owing to excess of God-drunkness.

THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF RELIGION*

THIS age may be called the "Age of Science." Science to-day dominates human thought, human reason and all human activities, physical and mental. After exploring almost all the departments of nature, she has now begun to investigate the vast and mysterious domain of religion.

We find in the Western world to-day two scientific tendencies arrayed in opposition to and fighting against each other. One tendency is to decry religion because it is not in harmony with modern science, because it lacks scientific basis; while the other is to harmonize religion with logic and science, to make it stand on scientific principles.

Those who see no harmony between religion and science, say that the aim of religion has been to find out the truth and to explain the phenomena of nature but that its attempt to accomplish that has proved to be a complete failure; and this because religion asserts that this universe has been created out of nothing by a personal Being, having a certain name and a certain form. These two assertions are disproved and rejected by scientists. Consequently they say, what is the good of following any religion? The majority of those who decry religion and take science in its place, say that the ultimate truth as posited by modern science is unknown and unknowable. There is, then, no necessity to struggle for the knowledge of that ultimate truth, such struggles being useless. Yet in the same breath they ask us to take up ethics, to be moral, and to do good

to society. But here a question arises. Why shall we be moral? Why shall we do good to society? For what motive? In answering these questions many motives are brought forward, such as for the sake of posterity, etc. These motives are not satisfactory, they do not appeal to our reason, nor do they explain the aim of our life. If pleasure and happiness be the end of all humanity, and if all our actions end with death, why should we not try to make ourselves happy without considering others? I do not see any reason. Thus, the conclusions of those who decry religion and take science in its place not only prevent them from knowing the nature of the ultimate truth, but leave them no rational basis for the practice of morality.

Another class of people try to harmonize religion with science, but many of them fail. Some, for instance, by stretching the meaning of the Scripture texts to their utmost tension, try to make them agree with the conclusions of science. But that process is not satisfactory. Mr. Gladstone, the great statesman of England, admitting that there is some truth in the doctrine of evolution, tried to interpret in a most ingenious way the different passages from the Old Testament which give the daily order of creation. But, if we examine closely Mr. Gladstone's interpretation of Genesis, and if we compare the order of creation and the division of time as explained by him with the order and division of time which we find in natural science, we shall see how illogical and unscientific is Mr. Gladstone's interpretation. In the first place, how absurd it is to assume that the morning and evening which we find mentioned in the Scripture have not

*Copyrighted by Swami Abhedananda. Published in a condensed form by special permission.

the least reference to the natural day, but mean a period of any number of millions of years. I think the writer of Genesis never dreamed of such an interpretation of the word "day." Secondly, the word "creation," which for over five thousand years has been taught, explained and held by millions of pious Jews and Christians to signify a certain act of the Deity, will, from the time of Mr. Gladstone, stand for a gradual evolution of one species out of another, an evolution extending through measureless time. Above all, is it possible to conceive of a period of vegetation on the earth antedating the appearance of the sun? Every point of Mr. Gladstone's arguments has been refuted scientifically and logically by the most eminent scientists of Europe. Prof. Huxley has spared no pains to refute Mr. Gladstone from a scientific standpoint. After pointing out the absurdity of Mr. Gladstone's interpretation of Genesis, he says: "I think it is advisable to point out that the facts, as they are at present known, not only refute Mr. Gladstone's interpretation of Genesis in detail, but are opposed to the central idea on which it appears to be based." Thus, the attempt to harmonize Genesis with modern science has been shown to be impossible by one of the most eminent scientists of this century. So that process also fails.

Others are trying to build a religion of their own by accepting some passages of the Bible and rejecting others; or by selecting according to their choice certain acts of a certain prophet and making those acts the standard of their religion and the basis of their faith. As for instance, Jesus cured diseases without giving any medicine. Some people think that this power should be the standard of religion, and that a religion which teaches the cure of diseases without the use of medicine is the only true and scientific religion. But I have seen persons who are

not at all religious, nor spiritual, who can cure diseases without using any medicine at all.

There are growing up in different parts of the country hundreds of sects and creeds, and each is trying to give a scientific basis to religion. The majority of these accept the ultimate conclusions of science, but at the same time do not know how to harmonize these conclusions with philosophy, metaphysics and religion. Some of them have succeeded in doing this partially, but others think that it is almost impossible to give a scientific basis to religion.

The advocates of scientific thought will say: We do not want to have a religion which narrows our ideas, or makes us think that our religion is the only true one, or forces us to find fault with every other religion except our own. The time has come when such narrow views ~~must be broadened~~, and their places taken by more liberal and more rational ideas which are in harmony with science, philosophy and logic. Prof. Huxley says: "The antagonism of science is not to religion, but to the heathen survivals and bad philosophy under which religion herself is often well-nigh crushed. True science will continue to fulfil one of her most beneficent functions, that of relieving men from the burden of false science which is imposed upon them in the name of religion." Herbert Spencer says: "The most abstract truth contained in religion and the most abstract truth contained in science must be the one in which the two coalesce. To reach that point of view from which the seeming discordance of religion and science disappears and the two merge into one, must cause a revolution of thought fruitful and beneficial in consequences, and must surely be worth an effort." (First Principles) That abstract truth must not be a particular phase of truth discovered by a particular branch of science,

or by a particular sect or creed, but it must be the one where all the various branches of science and philosophy end—the truth which is the goal of all religions, sects, and creeds that exist upon the face of the earth. Truth discovered by science cannot be different from truth discovered by religion, because truth is one and the same. The same truth is the object of science, of philosophy, of metaphysics, as of religion. It can, therefore be reached through any one of these.

Science asserts that there is one reality, and that that reality is manifested in the universe in various forms. It teaches us that there is one life principle manifested in all the various forms of nature that we call living. Herbert Spencer says: "Matter, motion and force are not the reality, but the symbols of reality." Moreover, he says in his "Psychology": "The same reality is manifested objectively and subjectively." The same reality expresses in the objective world as matter, in the subjective world as mind. One is the basis and the many are nothing but the expressions of that one. You may call that one God or X, it does not make any difference. If a religion teaches the same unity in variety, then there will be harmony between religion and science, and not otherwise. Is there any religion which teaches unity in variety? If we read the different scriptures of the world, do we find the expression of that idea? If we read the Zendavesta, the Bible or Koran, we do not find it, because these scriptures teach the existence of two spirits, the one good and the other evil. The former is the creator of good and the latter is the creator of evil; there is incessant conflict between them. But if we read the writings of the ancient sages of India we find many expressions which describe in the simplest possible language that unity in variety. Some of these were written one thousand years before

the birth of Christ, some five hundred years, some two hundred years, etc. I will quote some sentences from the Upanishads, in illustration: "As the one fire coming into this world manifests itself in various shapes and forms, so the One Reality expresses itself in and through the innumerable names and forms of the phenomenal universe." "As the same vibration of ether appears in various shapes and forms, so the One Reality in the universe manifests through a diversity of forms and names." "As from a blazing fire proceed innumerable sparks, so from that One Reality have evolved life, mind, all the organs of the senses, heat, ether, and all that is gaseous, liquid and solid." Many such passages can be quoted from the oldest writings of the Vedic Sages.

Do they not teach the same truth which has been explained by modern science? Why is this so? Because in India the ancient seers of truth did not believe in supernatural revelation. Their standard was reason and experience. The philosophy of these ancient seers accepts all the truths that have been discovered by science, and all that may be discovered in future. It has room for them all. At the same time it claims that that truth which science calls "unknown and unknowable," can be realized. It is more than known and knowable; it is the nearest to our hearts; it is nearer than the mind, nearer than the intellect, nearer than the body, nearer than the senses. It is nearer than our souls even, for it is our real nature. Our real nature is Truth, and not falsehood, and that real nature is expressed within each individual soul. We shall not have to go outside of this universe to find that Truth. If we look within, we shall find it there. Vedanta says it is unknown and unknowable by the mind, but known and knowable by the Spirit. By Spirit it means that which illumines our intellect, our mind, our senses, our bodies,

and all the external things of the universe.

The world now needs a scientific religion. It needs the supremacy of reason over blind faith. It needs a religion which will teach, with science, unity in variety, and which will accept all the conclusions at which modern science has arrived. Nay, more, the world to-day needs a universal religion that will accept all sects, creeds, denominations and religions that exist upon the face of the earth as so many manifestations of an underlying unity. We do not want this religion, or that religion, this sect or that sect, but we need

a religion, without any name; a religion which is the basis of all special religions, a religion which can include them all, and one which harmonizes with science, philosophy and metaphysics.

"Truth will triumph and not falsehood. The worship of Truth leads to the eternal abode of Truth; and fulfils all our desires." Let us therefore worship Truth in silence; let us not be followers of error; let us continually struggle for the realization of Truth.

ABHEDANANDA.

LESSONS FROM NATURE

III

So much about some of the great natural laws. Let us now take into consideration some of those laws which regulate only the course of certain elements. Water we see flows downhill; wherever there is a depression there will water go. From the snow-clad tops of the mountains the streams descend to the low plains, and fertilize the land, thus doing the greatest good to mankind. In the same manner, then, and only then, could one do the greatest good to humanity, when one, casting off all pride of superiority, comes to the level of the common people. Lord Buddha and Christ could have done nothing extraordinary, had they not associated with the low. Howard could never have won a name as a philanthropist had he not moved among the prisoners. One cannot feel the condition of the poor and the low unless one comes in contact with them. What can a great lord or a millionaire do for his fellow-countrymen if he thinks it below his dignity even to converse with the poor? From experience it is found that a great man

of position coming down to the level of the common people can do a greater good for community at large than one of low position. The poor listen with a greater attention to the rich, and when a Lord Shaftesbury or a Mr. Clarkson gives them an impulse, they at once advance towards civilization. Let such great men appear on the scene of Indian distress and help the poor Indians out from the marshland of poverty and ignorance.

Fire has from times immemorial been considered a great purifier. Put an iron ore into a furnace, it is at once separated from sulphur and other impurities. Whenever there is an alloy in gold, we put it into fire and get the sterling quality. In other words fire frees from impurity. Our conscience is like unto fire. It at once separates the good from the evil thoughts. At every moment it tells a person whether what he is going to do is good or bad. It is a touchstone wherewith the accuracy of thoughts and deeds can be tested. If one takes a thing with the full knowledge that it is bad,

it is one's own folly, not the error of the touchstone. Let every one, if one wishes to follow the right course, obey one's conscience. Let one do what the conscience says is good, and reject what is bad.

Turning to the earth let us see what this mass of matter has to teach us? Humility and patience are the two chief lessons we can learn from it. Innumerable creatures tread on it yet it grudges not their existence; on the contrary it feeds them and provides them with all their necessities. Treasures lie in its bosom. Search and you will see them, dig and you will get them. Our mind is also like the earth in one respect, that is, valuable treasures are hidden in it. Remove the layers of selfishness or in short take away the veil of Maya, and then you will find the Great Treasure—Self, Atman. Let us ornament this material mind of ours with the other qualities of the earth—Humility and Patience.

Next let us take the air. The air is invisible every one knows. It has no colour, no taste, no smell. But sometimes we see air of brown-colour in dust storms, at another time when walking by a garden we smell fragrant air. In hot weather scorching air blows and in cold, chill. These all are facts, and none can deny them. What is air then? It is some fluid which in its nature is pure and is never affected by anything. When it passes through a heap of filth, it brings with it bad smell, and when the same air passes through a garden of roses it gets perfumed. But neither the bad smell of filth, nor the perfume of the roses has any lasting effect upon it. In the same manner let man be constant in his nature, worldly pleasures and griefs may come and go, but he should not be affected in the least by them. Let him be pure in nature, then neither good nor evil could alloy him. Let him be like Raja Janaka of yore whom the caresses of the beautiful maids and the burning of his own hand could not affect in the

least.

Nature, in reality, is the manifestation of the Supreme Being. He who thinks about Nature, or he who minutely examines it, cannot but discern the nature of its Maker. Every flower in the garden, every star in the sky, mighty waves of the ocean, huge avalanches on the mountains, all remind us of some Power working behind all these. The more we study nature, the more we perceive the glory of the Lord. To man God manifests Himself through Nature. A poet says :—

“All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the Soul”.

The best way to have a knowledge of the Supreme Being is to *merge* into His Nature, and become one with it. Every one who studies Nature with an open heart, and finds something beyond all the external beauty, would exclaim with Milton :

“These are Thy glorious works, Parent
of good,

“Almighty, Thine this universal frame,

“Thus wondrous fair : Thyself how wondrous then !

“Unspeakable, who sitt'st above these
heav'ns,

“To us invisible or dimly seen

“In these Thy lowest works ; yet these
declare

“Thy goodness beyond thought, and pow'r
divine.”

BAWA BUDH SINGH.

THE beauties of Nature sometimes make one realize the true connection between life and death; for the colored petal of the rose growing wild by the roadside is but the realization of the ideals of the dried-up and dead-looking seed inclosed in its dark brown casket. What is the life of the rose but a fulfilling of the divine laws of Nature; the creating of higher standards of living; the endeavor to spread broadcast its sweet influence, which is to enter into the life of the higher forms and strengthen them with courage and perseverance: teaching them that after the hard struggle for existence on this earth—after having passed through many trying conditions—they at last come safely out of them all, leaving their shell behind? So, our life on this earth is but the endeavor to work out the ideals for which our special spirit is chosen; for can we not be likened unto the rose and its seed?

W. HARGRAVE KELSEY.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PLAY

FOUR friends A, B, C, and D began one day to play at cards. They handled the cards for a long time, till their interest in the play flagged and they were almost tired of it, when a gentleman came into their midst. He instantly realised the situation and noted the state of dejection into which the players had fallen. For want of a better occupation he was tempted to join them and suggested a new turn, to create a fresh interest in the game. So Mr. Shrewd, for that was the name of the new comer, proposed that the play be continued on a new plan, viz. that the winning party should be paid a certain sum by the others, to be spent for the good of all, to which the others agreed. Thus the game was turned into gambling and of course it instantly produced a feverish excitement characteristic of it. It turned out that the five gentlemen had between them Rs. 5,000. At the beginning of each round of play a definite sum of money was pledged, which would be the winner's due at the end. Thus to the interest of every one was added the prospect of a substantial gain that gave a charm and excitement, to the occupation unknown to A, B, C and D before. They began to praise each other's cleverness as a cunning stroke, or a sleight of hand was turned into shining silver. In this way the art of turning every movement to profit began to be cultivated, before which all other objects vanished. Of

course there were some set rules as to the procedure of play, the conduct of the players towards each other and so forth; and as the play proceeded, these were made finer and finer till they appeared to the outside observers as the most perfect safeguards, making it impossible for any foul play to take place. But alas! the players became in a short time so much engrossed with the gaining of money that it was only seemingly they respected the rules while in reality they invented a thousand ways to defeat them.

Mr. Shrewd in the meantime excelled, in this dexterous trait, all the rest of the players; and poor A, B, C and D although robbed of almost all their money could not help praising the winner's sense of justice, wisdom, gentleness, politeness and sympathy and at the same time his consummate art of turning every stroke into money.

The play however soon began to take a new course, that of necessity. Hitherto it had been a play between the five gentlemen. Suddenly A found himself without a single pice, so his share in the gambling ceased. To keep him even as an observer required something for his bare living. So after a great deal of intelligent and sympathetic discussion he was allowed a pittance. That settled his fate and the play was resumed between the remaining four. Within a short time B's position was reduced to

that of A.

This alarmed C and D and they began to question whether the gambling was at all a desirable pastime. They expressed to Mr. Shrewd that it was impossible to continue the play if all the money were to be his, as was very likely to be the case within a short time. So they proposed that there should be some safeguard against the utter ruin of any of the players. But Mr. Shrewd got exasperated at this blunt proposal and bawled out "Fair play and no favour".

At this juncture there appeared another gentleman, whose name was Mr. Wise. His very appearance was reassuring to every one and the question of the play was referred to him. He asked the players the cause of their difference. He heard both sides, read the rules of the play and ascertained how far they had been followed and at last gave his verdict thus:—

"There can be no doubt that the spirit of this gambling has been bad and that the way in which it has been carried on must stop it altogether in the very near future. The so-called rules although followed seemingly have not always been respected in principle; and the gain has oftentimes been made by an interested interpretation of the letter of the rules. It is impossible for one to be perfect if his sole purpose is to *appear* to be so.

To give this gambling of yours an appearance of an innocent game you have pointed out that money is required for its power of doing good to others. I would advise you to keep an eye al-

ways on this object of your play and count your winnings as the opportunities of doing good to your fellow players. This process, if adopted, will never bring your play to a deadlock, neither will it allow the base impulses in you to thrive. To be more explicit I would advise you to play thus:—

Say you five begin to play again with a thousand rupees each. Suppose Mr. Shrewd wins Rs. 500 from A, and he either returns the same to A or distributes the sum among A, B, C, and D on condition that a work of merit be done by them. By so doing Mr. Shrewd gets the credit of doing a good work which is a real gain and is neither himself impoverished nor does he make any of his fellow-players the poorer thereby. There is a limit to the gaining of money, but there is no limit to doing good to others. Thus it is evident that my scheme, if followed, will never spoil your play, nor will it allow any of you to debase yourselves."

The above piece of advice offered by Mr. Wise is herewith submitted most respectfully to every reader, so that he may try to find out its practicability to-day in the environments about him.

Our life in this world is at best a play, a pastime for a very short period. Races and nations however have longer lives, but taken as a whole their careers may also be regarded as courses of play.

There was a time in India when the greater number of its people followed the advice of Mr. Wise. Their glory was in giving and not in taking. It is said that Indian kings used to distribute amongst their subject at the end of

every five years all that accumulated in their treasuries.

That interesting play, in all its grandeur, has no doubt stopped, but the ideal remains and the glory of giving is still

given a higher place than that of taking, (however skilfully it might be accomplished) by every Hindu of the present day.

H. D. C.

A REMINISCENCE

THERE are days in the Himalays, when the weather reaches perfection : earth seems a harmony and productive of great and tranquil thoughts. It was a typical day, when one noon-tide resting quietly on the bank of a lake, I drifted into dream-land.

In my dream, I heard the sun sportively remark, "I shall become many." Scarcely a minute elapsed before it projected itself into innumerable reflections on the surface of the water. Simultaneously, an enchantress joined in the play, and divesting her ethereal form of its iridescent covering—a veil of gossamer texture—interposed it, with a lightning-like gesture between the sun and the lake, at the same time deftly and swiftly weaving blue, red, and black hues into the airy fabric. This sudden action, invested with a marvellous degree of fascination and magic, took me greatly by surprise, and I assumed it must have some hidden meaning, which at that time, I was unable to fathom.

I awaited the development in breathless interest. Then a transformation occurred, owing to the illusive power of the enchantress and singular was its effect upon the counterparts of the sun, for they apparently became endowed with life and speech.

To my amazement, I gathered from the converse of some of these fluctuating phenomena, that they imagined they were separate entities, and entirely independent of the sun, not understanding that only through its presence could they be accounted for. Incredible, as it seemed, others declared they were superior to their fellows, considering themselves larger and brighter. Here, I perceived that the reason of these seemingly incomprehensible fancies was caused by the red tissue of the veil undulating above them, thus giving colour to the illusion. A larger group of these limited projections were less brilliant, their tremulous reflections being broken owing to a ripple on the water. In their case this difference arose from the position held by them under the veil, as the darker portion of its vibratory movements screened the direct rays of the sun from their vision, casting a lazy glamour around them. A few of the shining semblances were clear, and truly reflecting their projector : on examining the cause of this, I saw that it was the result of the blue tint of the veil, suspended over them, which was very transparent just there, almost permitting the glory of the sun to penetrate it.

A small minority of the reflected gleams, —mystical representations who seemed pure, bright and happy, well-nigh peeped through the gauzy disguise, which I fancied was rent in places, enabling faint glimpses of the radiant sun to be obtained, and they strove to identify themselves with it. To their companions they expressed in strong terms, the belief that they were inseparable from the sun : that they were reflections of his light and that there was no "I" or "Thou." But views like this, as might be expected were too much for the majority of the illusive manifestations, and the question of cause and effect was a problem beyond their ken : therefore, they tabooed the subject as being only a vain imagining, and of no interest to them. Others allowed there *might* be something in the idea, but were not inclined to admit it. Amid them all, only a trifling remnant listened, consulted together, and tried to discover, if aught of truth was concealed in the theory propounded, having an inkling, that they were perchance labouring under a false apprehension of their position, and willing to have their fallacies dispelled, if that

were possible.

My attention was rivetted on this scene, when lo, and behold!—in a flash—the enchantress ceased her acting, whisked away the evanescent veil, and everything straightway vanished.

I awoke, sat up, and looked around, slowly regaining consciousness, but could see nothing different from usual. The unrivalled sun gleamed and scintillated as before : the delicious balmy air fanned my cheek and revived my drooping senses.

As a searcher after Truth I endeavoured to solve the riddle of the transient show, that had so captivated my sight, and after a little while, it became perfectly intelligible to me. The sun evidently signified the One True God—the lake exemplified this manifold and ever-changing world, in which man, the image of the Supreme, deluded by the Enchantress, Ignorance—the cause of the phenomenal world—falls into error, and comes under her sway again and again, until, eventually rectifying his mistake, he rises to the knowledge of his unity with the One Universal Spirit.

ADVAITIN

AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT—

Our esteemed sister, Miss Waldo who has been since the news of the famine in India and the opening of the Kishengurh Orphanage reached her, sending almost every fortnight contributions from American friends, chiefly collected through her own untiring industry and loving solicitude, writes : "Enclosed I send you another contribution for your famine work at Kishengurh. It is especially intended for the relief of the orphans there, being sent by the children of the Sunbeam Club in the Sunday school class of Miss Eleanor I. Keller, Fifth Ave., N. Y., to their suffering sisters and brothers

in India. The amount is \$50."

The little members of the Sunbeam Club hardly know how many little hearts will be bathed in sunshine by their kind gift, how many little hearts will throb quick in emaciated, bare and worn-out little bodies in inexpressible gratitude to them and how many little hearts will pour out the blessing that their little benefactors, in the intricate uphill path of the world and the mixed cup of life, may ever have as their own, goodness, love and plenty !

Our sincere thanks and heartfelt gratitude to Miss Eleanor I. Keller. Miss Waldo's services are beyond all acknowledgment.

THE BHARAT DHARMA MAHAMANDAL

WE publish the following communication, dated Delhi, July 1st, 1900, signed by Pandit Din Dayalu Sharma, General Secretary, Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, with great pleasure :—

"The Bharat Dharma Mahamandal or the august religious assemblage of the Hindus of all parts of India will hold its anniversary this year in Delhi under the distinguished patronage and presidency of His Highness Maharajah Rameshwar Singh, Bahadur, of Durbhanga from the 8th to the 12th day of August next. A very influential Committee of the respectable *rajas* of Delhi has been formed for general management, and reception of visitors and guests with the well-known Rai Bahadur Lala Shri Krishna Das Gurwala at its head. Arrangements to invite all the *Acharjyas* of the *Sauntan* Hindu religion, erudite scholars of the Sanskrit language in all its branches, Hindu preachers, Editors of Hindu newspapers, delegates of the Hindus from all the considerable towns and representatives of all the Hindu religious bodies and associations in India are being made. This year the gathering is expected to be unusually large, the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal now standing as the accepted leader of almost all the Hindu movements in the land. Formal invitation letters will shortly issue."

We are exceedingly happy to note that the Maharaja of Durbhanga will preside over the deliberations of the Mahamandal this year. No better choice could have been made. A worthy scion of the race of Janaka—India's traditional sage-king, he who showed in himself the highest example of work without attachment, in the world, though living too far beyond it—we have great hopes of Maharaja Rameshwar Singh. His position, by birth, in the Hindu Society is unique, and his personal attainments, culture, and deep and earnest faith in the religion of his forefathers, which, by the

way, they had by no means an inconsiderable share in making what it *really* is, single him out as the leader *par excellence* of the Hindus of whole India. Might not we expect then that some practical results will come out of this grand assemblage? We know what a strong hold the descendants of Rajarshi Janaka have upon the affection of the Hindus as well as the vast personal influence the President-elect of the Mahamandal exercises over them. Would it be too much to expect therefore that he would seize this opportunity to introduce some effective measures in the whole of the Hindu society to remove those social evils which have nearly eaten out its vitals? Every day we see hopeful signs of the awakening of the nation; but all the same we cannot overlook the potent sources of mischief that have been at work there all the time, sapping the strength and life of our society, for the last few centuries. Let us name a few of them in the hope they will be taken up for disposal by the Mahamandal :—

(1) The immature age in which boys and girls are married and neglect of the practice of the safeguard of *dirigaman*; (2) the continued isolation of the subdivisions of a caste as far as intermarriage and intereating are concerned; (3) the practice of the exaction of money by one party from the other and the expenditure of large sums of money on marriage occasions; (4) the continued hostility towards foreign travel; (5) non-admission of converts; and (6) nonflexibility of caste-rules in many parts of India in regard to the so-called lower castes.

We all know and perhaps Maharaja Rameshwar Singh knows best of us all, that chronic indifference to the above-mentioned evils and probably a few others, are largely responsible for the present degeneration and misery of the whole Hindu race. We repeat our strong hope that his presidency will be productive of some practical social good.

CORRESPONDENCE

Editor, Prabuddha Bharata.

SIR,

I saw an enquiry on page 79, Prabuddha Bharata, May, 1900, and I think the following lines may be given as an answer.

Environment, heredity, and the like are due to Avidyā which is *triguṇātīkā*, i. e., consists of *satva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. "They (the Guṇas) are the nature of Avidyā or nescience," says Śrī Saṅkarācārya (vide his comment on the Gītā, XIV, 5). The question is "What gave different tendencies to different minds, or souls &c". Now, since the three Guṇas constitute the *upādhi* of Avidyā and form the seed whence the body is evolved in accordance with the nature of each of them, Avidyā or the three Guṇas "gave different tendencies to &c".

Thus, surely they must have been equally circumstanced in the beginning by Avidyā which has *jīva* or individual soul as its locus.

[If one asks why Avidyā consists of the three Guṇas, the question is absurd as—why is water the compound of hydrogen and oxygen ?]

Jīvas become *sātvik*, *rājasik*, and *tāmasik* according to the extent to which they make the best of their free-will by rising superior to the Guṇas. For, the Lord says—"Man should raise himself by himself (or his mind or will); he should not ruin himself for he (his mind) is his own friend as well as his own enemy. The mind is the friend of him who, by himself, has conquered it, but to him who has not restrained himself, the mind becomes an enemy". (Gītā III, 5-6). Also the Upanishads say :—

"Mind (or will) is the cause of man's bondage and freedom". (Amṛitabindūpanishad, V. 2)

"Awake, arise, seek the great ones and obtain wisdom". (Kathōpanishad iii. 14)

Hence, it is seen that some *jīvas* became *sātvik*, whereby they chose that in which perpetual happiness was soon secured; while others, *rājasik* or *tāmasik*, whereby they chose lines of action which resulted in misery or darkness (See Gītā, XIV, 16).

Now, the answers of the questions "What gave &c" and "What made &c" have been known both as stated by reason and authority. There arises, however, a new question from the second answer—what made a *jīva*, or why did one *jīva*, exercise his free-will in a different way from another, all of them being equally circumstanced and equally endowed with free-will? Here comes forward the Advaita philosophy which enlightens us on the point. The very essence or nature of Avidyā is this: that its ways stand against law, logic, and reason; that it cannot bear investigation even for a moment as darkness cannot bear the sun-light; that it is self-standing (?); and that it is an impossibility:—all these contributing more to the beauty and charm of it. Otherwise it would have been a *vasthu*, a reality; which would have meant there were two realities, Brahman and Avidyā, in which case the Advaita philosophy would fail. (See Naishkarmyasiddhi iii, 66; Bṛihadāraṇyavārthika, verse 181; and Ishtasiddhi). Kant proved that time, space, and causality are merely the subjective forms of the intellect, i. e., they exist only in the mind. Now, since time, space, and causality are simply subjective forms of mind and they cover all the phenomena in the outward world, the whole world is necessarily in the mind and has in itself no objective existence. This is what is meant by calling the world a dream and that is why Dr. Deussen

says "that the doctrine of *Māyā* (or *Avidyā*) wonderfully agrees with the best that occidental philosophy has produced". (For Kant's proof, vide Dr. Deussen's *Elements of Metaphysics*). Hence, causality (what, why etc) is a figment of *Avidyā*.

Now, therefore, our last question (or the final cause) takes leave of itself and its answer vanishes into nothingness or the unreal. And it may also be said that the answers to such questions as "What gave &c." "What made &c." lie in a nutshell: true knowledge or investigation convinces the enquirer that they (the questions) are the phantasms of the mind which itself is unreal. If one persists in knowing the final cause or says that the *Avidyā* theory does not stand to reason, this itself is a better proof that Advaitism is profoundly, nay, wisely and truly sound.

Such is the glorious success of the Advaita philosophy!

Yours &c.,

D. S. RAJA SARMA.

Editor, Prabuddha Bharata.

Sir,

I shall feel much obliged if you will kindly publish the following report of the receipts and disbursements of the Ramakrishna Orphanage, Murshidabad, from May 1899 to December 1899.

RECEIPTS.				Rs.	As.	P.
Donation	...	...	154	3	0
Subscription	...	...	416	0	0
Balance brought over from April 1899			16	7	9	
Total			586	10	9	
DISBURSEMENTS.				Rs.	As.	P.
Fooding	...	...	210	14	7½
Fuel	...	...	14	14	9
Conveyance	...	...	39	13	6
Medicines	...	...	27	13	0
Clothes, bedding &c.	...	...	67	12	9
Furniture, utensils &c.	...	...	62	13	4½
Books, pictures &c.	...	...	25	1	9
Stationery	...	...	10	13	0
Postage &c.	...	...	16	13	3
Materials and instruments for carpentry and tailoring	...	...	36	8	3
Estbt. wages and miscellaneous	...	...	53	1	9
Out-door charity	...	...	19	3	0
Total			585	11	0	

Total Receipts	586	10	9	
„ Disbursements	585	11	0	
Balance in hand	Rs	0	15	9

Our heart-felt thanks and gratitude are due to those ladies and gentlemen, whose kindness and liberality have all along been the main support of the Institution.

Our special thanks to Babu Wopendra Narayana Dev, Intally, Calcutta and other benevolent gentlemen of that place, who have taken a great interest in our work by subscribing Rs. 107-8-0, beginning from May 1899 to December last.

Our hearty thanks to the local European official and non-official gentlemen, the zemindars, pleaders, and mukhtars, who have taken a keen interest in the Institution by subscribing regularly the amount of Rs. 271-8-0. Our special thanks to the kind-hearted Rao Jogendra Narayana Roy Sahib of Lalgola, Murshidabad, who has kindly helped the Orphanage with a gift of 36 Mds. of rabi crops and clothes and in cash Rs. 50. The balance of the monthly subscription we have received from a few gentlemen of Calcutta and Darjeeling.

The sum of Rs. 149 as occasional donations we have received from our good friends at Calcutta and from a few ladies and gentlemen of Madras and N. W. Provinces. We have also received some clothes from the Math, Behar and a few maunds of grain from a local friend.

We had to give a few maunds of grain and some clothes to the physician, and others for services rendered to the Orphanage.

The boys have made four pieces of furniture and several little boxes. They have also woven nearly 40 yards of cloth out of which they have sewed coats and pants for themselves.

We beg to acknowledge the following receipts with our heart-felt thanks and gratitude as grants of monthly subscriptions and donations.

Major J. H. Tullwalsh, the Civil Surgeon of Berhampore, has kindly contributed Rs. 50 towards the Orphanage Building Fund. Our special thanks to this noble and high-minded gentleman who has been helping the Institution in various ways. Through his recommendation we have received Rs. 200 from H. H. the Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad. He kindly paid a visit to the Orphanage in April last and it was a great encouragement to us.

Mr. J. R. Blackwood, the late officiating Magistrate and Collector of Murshidabad and now Deputy Chairman of the Calcutta Municipality has kindly

contributed Rs. 50 towards the benefit of the Orphanage.

Babu Mani Lall Mullick of Sinduriapati, Calcutta has kindly contributed Rs 50 towards the benefit of the Orphanage.

Babu Kally Kishen Tagore, the well-known Zemindar of Calcutta has been subscribing Rs. 10 per month to the Orphanage from February last.

Miss F. H. Müller, the noble lady who helped us so much when she was in India, has been kind enough to show her sympathy towards the Orphanage by subscribing Rs. 10 per month from last May.

Babu Kherode Chandra Bose of Bagbazar, Calcutta has kindly contributed Rs. 20 towards the Orphanage Building Fund.

The Maharaja Manindra Chandra Sundry Bahadur of Cossimbazar has kindly given us 300 maunds of coal to burn the bricks for the Orphanage Building.

We are very glad to inform you that Mr. W. Maxwell, the good Magistrate and Collector of Murshidabad kindly paid a visit to the Orphanage in the morning of the 27 ultimo. The Orphanage was beautifully decorated on this occasion. The kind-hearted Collector was pleased to see the works done by the boys and we were highly encouraged by his sympathetic words. It was a very happy day and the boys and a few others were given a hearty dinner.

YOURS &c.
AKHANDANANDA

Editor, Prabuddha Bharata.

Sir,

On April 6th Swami Abhedananda left New York on a lecturing tour to Boston, Mass., and its vicinity. He gave a very successful lecture in Lynn, Mass., on the 9th before the Outlook Club.

There was an attendance of over 300, who appeared much interested in the subject, "The Religion and Philosophy of the Hindus." It being a Woman's Club, much interest was evinced in the position of women in India, which gave Swami an opportunity to correct some of the many erroneous ideas which most persons in this country entertain on that subject.

The "Motherhood of God" was the subject of the next lecture, given in Waltham, Mass., which was highly complimented by Mr. Charles Malloy, a friend of our late poet-philosopher, Ralph Waldo Emerson. At the conferences for the Comparative Study of Religions in Cambridge, Mass., on the 22nd Swami lectured on "Ramakrishna, a Real Mahatman." On the same occasion, Professor Lanman, the Professor of Sanskrit in Harvard University gave an address on the "Spirituality of the Hindus." Professor Lanman has since been made an honorary member of the Vedanta Society, as has also Mr. R. Heber Newton, Rector of All Soul's Episcopal Church in New York. On April 23rd Swami was invited to a reception given by the Channing Club of Boston at the Vendome Hotel. Many distinguished guests were present who enjoyed a short address which he was requested to make, notably among them, was Miss Longfellow, daughter of the famous poet. From the 24th to the 29th of April, a Liberal Congress of Religions was held in a prominent Unitarian Church of Boston. Mr. R. Heber Newton, a minister of national fame, gave a talk on "Symbols of Religion," in which he showed from historical evidence, the use of the Cross as a religious symbol, by the Hindus of antiquity long before the Christian era. In the course of this address, Mr. Newton expressed most appreciative sentiments regarding the Hindus both, in point of spirituality and learning.

Before this above-mentioned Congress of Religions, Swami Abhedananda lectured on the 26th. About 800 persons

were present. "The Religious Ideas of the Hindus" was the topic. At the expiration of the allotted half hour, when Swami had concluded his talk, he was requested to say some more on the subject, much interest being aroused. Time not permitting however, he was unable to comply with the wish of the audience. That evening was spent with Professor Lanman, who is much interested in the work of the Swamis in America and asked many questions regarding it. President Eliot, of Harvard University, whom Swami met at a reception tendered the Congress of Religions in the Phillips Brooks House, also seemed interested. He conversed at some length with Swami upon the subject of the condition of India, in regard more particularly to education, but inquiring also as to the cause of famine.

On April 29th, Swami attended a lecture on Nietzsche, the German philosopher, given by Professor Royce. After the lecture he was asked by the chairman to make some remarks on the subject. He thereupon gave a short talk, contrasting the philosophy of Nietzsche with the teaching of Vedanta.

On the 30th, he returned to New York. During his absence the work had been carried on by Swami Turiyananda, who proved himself an efficient teacher in every particular.

The Vedanta Society has lately removed to 102 East 58th Street, a very desirable locality, where an entire house has been taken, to the great satisfaction of all the students and friends.

Yours &c.,

A STUDENT OF VEDANTA.

NĀNĀ KATHĀ

THE number of destitute children in the Kishengurh Orphanage has increased to one hundred and forty one, and the three houses that had been taken for them are quite full. Besides looking after the needs and comforts of the children directly under his care, the Swami Kalyananda has been helping three hundred hungry souls daily. The Swami has, we are much glad to say received great encouragement from Mr. Irwin, c. s., the Resident at Jeypore, who has contributed Rs. 1,000 to the Orphanage. Our kind and esteemed friend of Bangalore who has all along been helping the Swami Kalyananda has made a fresh grant of Rs. 100 each to the Kishengurh and Khandwa centres. We express our heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Irwin and our Bangalore friend for their acts of benevolence.

It is however needless to say that considering the severity and extent of the distress now prevailing in the country the famine relief fund

of the Ramakrishna Mission cannot be too largely increased. Since our last acknowledgment we have received from America in four fresh instalments, the sum of Rs. 185-4 for the famine fund. Of this, the great portion came from the Vedanta Students of New York, \$5 was subscribed by Miss E. H. Dutcher of Thousand Island Park, \$5 by Mrs. Wilhelm, and \$20 was given anonymously. But the most pathetic part of the account is contained in the following lines :

"\$ 3.25 came out of the little toy Savings Bank of a dear little child who died, and the mother brought in the money just as it was, pennies and other small coins and emptied it out for us to send to the starving little ones of India."

We offer our hearty thanks to these generous friends of poor India and to Miss Waldo for the pains she has been taking for collecting funds.