

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

OR

Awakened India

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Arise ! Awake ! and stop not till the goal is reached

Katha. Upa. I. iii 4

No. 56, MARCH 1901

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Prabuddha Bharata

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BY THE WAY

IN the ancient days of India, when a great king or queen died, the state coffers were emptied and the money gathered during years from the people, was freely distributed to the poor and the needy among them. That was the ideal form of memorial in those days. But with change of time and conditions the custom is reversed. It is the people now who find the money for the memorial.

THE Indian ideal, however, of the highest form of memorial to the great, is bound up with the alleviation of misery. With the spectre of famine stalking over the land we cannot think of a worthier memorial to Victoria, the Great and the Good, than the inauguration of some effective and permanent measure for strengthening the people against the ravages of the scourge. Everybody is agreed that this can be best done, by founding a large and thoroughly well-equipped central institution for the industrial development of the country. We all know very well that the Indian people cannot take the initiative in this matter. In her gracious proclamation of 1858, her Majesty expressed an *"earnest desire to stimulate the peaceful industry of India."*

Could there be a better time than the present to do this? We submit therefore, that no memorial could be more fitting, more in accord with the traditions, needs and wishes of the Indian people, and we doubt not, more acceptable to their late beloved Sovereign, than the founding, on a firm financial basis, of an institution such as we have suggested. It would be an exceedingly happy arrangement if the Tata Research University scheme could be combined with this, for the princely gift of the Parsi patriot is fully deserving of the honour of being associated with her Majesty's memorial. Thus the path of a new era of prosperity, a new lease of life and happiness for India could be paved. Would not our farseeing and sympathetic Viceroy seize this supreme opportunity?

APROPOS of the excitement created in the public mind by Bishop Welldon's suggestion of introducing Bible study in Government schools in India, the following extracts from an article on "Religious Training in Public Schools," from the pen of an experienced teacher in the January number of "Mind" (American) will be found interesting. She begins by relat-

ing how she was taken to task by the "irate fathers and mothers" for "teaching heresy", when she replied to the query of her pupils, if animals had souls, in the affirmative.

"WOE to the teacher who attempts such a thing (to explain the text and apply its precepts)! When each member of the Schoolboard and each parent represent some Scylla or Charybdis of exegetical belief, where is the teacher with enough pilot skill to avoid shipwreck?" A book whose pages are the battleground of sectarianism cannot in its entirety, be used as a text-book of religion and morals in a common school."

And if the teacher attempts teaching, it "will be wholly on the negative plane—a series of dreary 'thou shalt nots,' all appealing to the child's lower nature."

"THE first thing I saw on entering a school-room recently, was a large chart on which were printed the Ten Commandments. I never before realised the awful immorality of the moral law. There were the crimes—murder, theft, lying, adultery—placarded before the eyes of those innocent children, each word suggesting an ugly mental picture to be photographed on the conscious and subconscious minds of the pupils. And this is called 'religious training!'" Comment is needless.

WE do not believe in the oversensitiveness displayed by a class of our social reformers in the nautch-girl business. The other day they approached the Viceroy with a prayer to discountenance the evil. Lord Curzon served them right by declining to recognize it. They have fared better with Bishop Welldon though. The good Bishop, never procrastinating, has already taken advantage of advising

Government officials to boycott entertainments in which the wicked nautch will form a factor. That is quite consistent. We shall not say anything to the good Bishop. But we ask our social reformers if they would like the decency of a London music hall better? If they do, why strain at this gnat? If not, what substitute do they propose for it? Certainly they do not dream that they can abolish a section of the community—however bad it might be—by a resolution in a social reform meeting. We are afraid there is a little too much of protestation in this matter.

WE beg to draw the particular attention of our Indian readers to the following resolutions of the last Social Conference:—

"Resolved that in the opinion of this Conference it is desirable that every community should establish orphanages and other similar institutions in which the large number of children left helpless through famine or other causes may be brought up and instructed in a suitable manner. The Government might be requested to help and encourage the maintenance of such institutions where it does not already do so, by means of liberal grants-in-aid".

"The Conference notes with satisfaction that an organized movement has been started in the Deccan to secure renewed sanction of the religious head of the Brahman Community to intermarriages between the sub-castes of that community which at present dine together; and as this is a reform which is not opposed to Shastras, the Conference recommends the subject to the special notice of all caste associations; since unless such unions are encouraged in the smaller castes, no

practical reform as regards several marriage customs is permanently possible under existing conditions".

No words of ours can add to the immediateness of the importance of these two subjects. We cannot repeat too many times, that individual initiative, unflinching devotion of time and money, in a word, great personal sacrifice is required to successfully introduce any reform in any society. Things do not take care of themselves. Nor does that community ever make a step forward, the members of which vie with one another in thinking that it is the business of somebody else,—not his, to take the lead in a new departure.

A writer in the *Indian Witness* comes "to the conclusion that were it not for what it would have cost them in the severance of family ties and the terrible blow it would have been to their respective family-circles, the convictions of the late Mr. Justice Telang and Mr. Justice Ranade would have led them into the Christian fold".

BUT writes the *Indian Mirror*: "Though a leader of the Prarthana Samaj—a body akin to the Brahmo Samaj—the late Mr. Ranade in recent years returned wholly to the fold of Hinduism, as the ancient Hindus understood it. * * * And the final proof is given by the consigning of the ashes of his mortal remains, at his express parting wish, to the waters at the confluence of the sacred rivers Ganga and Jamuna at Allahabad." Perhaps that was the way into the Christian fold!

THE "conclusion" of the writer in the *Indian Witness* reminds us of the Indian youth in *Punch*, who went for some study in England and thought all the girls in that country were madly in love with him, *because so many would converse with him!* What freedom with woman in conversation with man, was to the silly Indian youth, broadness and toleration in religious opinion, is to the average Christian. He cannot understand it, so he *mis*-takes it.

THE sixty-eighth anniversary of the birth of our Lord Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva was celebrated in a fitting manner as usual at the Math, Belur, Calcutta, on the 24th ultimo. About twenty thousand people of all denominations and sects, with numerous *Sankirtan* parties assembled on the occasion.

The anniversary was also celebrated at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras, with great enthusiasm, when over six thousand poor of all castes were fed. Swami Ramakrishnananda delivered an address on "Sri Ramakrishna and His Mission". Several other well-known speakers addressed the assembly.

We deeply regret having published the news which we copied from a contemporary, about Mrs. Balakram, on page 3 of our January issue. We have been informed by Lala Madho Ram, Accountant, N. W. Railway, Lahore, father of Lala Balakram, the new Panjabi civilian, that Mrs. Balakram is a Hindu lady, and that the announcement above referred to is false. Our apology is due to Lala Balakram and his father for unwittingly causing annoyance to them.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

KAMINI KANCHANA—II

MASTER to a young disciple :— "Like men of the world you have accepted service. But you are working for your mother. Otherwise I should have said 'For shame! For shame!'" He repeated this a hundred times and again said, "Serve only the Lord"

MONEY can procure bread and butter only. Do not consider it therefore as if it were thy sole end and aim.

WOMAN and gold, remember, keep men immersed in worldliness and away from God. It is remarkable that everybody has nothing but praise for his own wife, be she good, bad or indifferent.

THE mind steeped in the affection of woman and wealth is like the green betel nut. So long as the betel nut is green, it remains adhered to its shell, but when the moisture dries up, the shell and the nut become separated, and when shaken the nut moves within. So when the affection to woman and wealth dries up from within, the soul is perceived as quite different from the body.

A man under the influence of a very high fever and in excessive thirst is placed between a row of pitchers filled with cold water and a set of open-mouthed bottles filled with flavoury sauces. Is it possible for the thirsty and restless patient in such a case to refrain from either drinking the water or from tasting

the sauces placed so near him, although thereby his case may become worse? Even such is the case with the man who is under the maddening influence of his ever-active and misleading senses when he is placed between the attractions of woman's charm on the one side and those of wealth on the other. He is irresistably drawn towards them making his case worse than before.

WHEN is the tongue of a balance removed from the pointed needle attached to the top? When one side of the scale becomes heavier than the other. So the mind is removed from God and becomes unbalanced when the pressure of woman and wealth is placed on it.

INTENSE is the attraction of the world. As the mouth of the dyspeptic waters at the sight of tamarind and pickles for which he can have no need and which act as poison to him, in the same manner the mind of man though having no real need for them is attracted by woman and wealth. So he should try to cut off all relations with woman and wealth who wishes to attain God.

BE careful, householders! Don't put too much confidence in woman. They establish their mastery so very insidiously over you!

As the monkey sacrifices his life at the feet of the hunter, so does man at the feet of the beautiful woman.

A CHAPTER OF SOCIAL REFORM

II

EN her way the next morning she met with a number of men and women belonging to a distant part of the country bound for the *Kumbha Mela* at Hardwar. She joined them and soon charmed them by her superior individuality and uplifting sweetness, so that by the end of the day there was not a soul in the whole company who was not prepared to do anything at her bidding.

Our travellers walked the whole distance on foot, so that it took them some months to reach their destination. They reached the holy place however, in good time as it was not till the third day that the *Kumbha Snāna* was to come off.

The company had a good rest and started off in the afternoon to visit the assembled sadhus. When they had seen some, somebody said that he knew a place about half-a-mile from there where a very old *Siddha Sadhu* had his *Asana*. The company turned to Tārā to know her wish which she expressed in the affirmative with alacrity, and they started off. But as she approached the place, a curious sensation came over her. She felt that a new kind of motion had set itself up in all the molecules of her body—the whole mechanism of the body and the forces in it were acting in a manner different to the hour previous,—she could not resist the idea that she

was rapidly shifting into another body. It was not like the feeling of *Samadhi* that she used to have nearly every day—it was something quite new. She scrutinized the faces of the whole company to see if they told the same tale or if they marked anything strange in her, but they did not seem to have felt or noticed anything unusual. Hardly had she ceased watching with wonder the process of the “change of body” as she called it, they came upon a group of sannyasins of august appearance sitting round a fire, the faces and eyes of whom all showed at a glance that the animal nature had been controlled in those persons. But the central figure was a very old man with a huge load of matted hair, around whom a sort of soft radiance was playing. Before Tārā could have taken the group in fully with her eyes and mind, the old man had stood up and with him the rest of the party and said in voice the melody of which was sweeter than anything in this world—“Oh Mother! How long *have* you been in coming! Here I have been waiting day after day and hour after hour, till in these old bones a sort of feeling akin to impatience has made its appearance. Ask these boys, I have been almost complaining of your tardiness. But your ways are *yours*. Now that you have come—the old bones are content—they will have freedom now”

As she was hearing these words with rapt attention, Tārā felt the veil of the past drawn away from her mind. Her consciousness was raised to timelessness though the mind and body seemed to be with time and its twin-brother, space. "Yes Father", rejoined she, in the same sweet melody of voice, which startled the assembly of sadhus. "Yes Father, I have come at last". And she added with a knowing smile, in which all the sadhus joined, "You know, the strings of Karma are hard to break," and she prostrated herself at his feet.

The old man raised her up and installed her on the *Asana* to which he had succeeded his Guru, in the presence of the assembled sadhus with *mantras* accompanied by oblations in the fire. When the ceremony was finished he said: "For seven years from this day of your illumination and installation, you shall have to stop here and keep this *Asana* awake; you shall have next to go to the world and show it the example of your life. That is the work before you. When your work ends, come back here, appoint your successor to this *Asana* and set your body free." Next he asked leave of Tārā to set his "old bones" free, as he said, to which request Tārā smilingly consented. In a second he entered his last *Samadhi* and in a few more hours the "old bones" were reduced to ashes.

Of course to the people who picked Tara up in the way near her home, all this seemed pre-arranged. They wondered Tārā did not tell them anything about it. She seemed as if she knew nothing of the old saṭhu when the proposal to visit him was made. But she was so godlike and mysterious, it was impossible

to know anything about the *Siddhas*—they thought and said to each other, as they retraced their steps to their halting place of the morning, after receiving Tārā's blessings.

After two years from this transforming event in Tārā's life, a change occurred in those of our other two girls. The sunshine on Silā's life as well as on Mamatā's, as is usual in the world, was replaced by a dark cloud. Both lost their husbands by the same fell disease on the same day,—by a strange fatality, as Mamatā thought, when she heard of Silā's misfortune, as they were married the same day. Silā of course knew nothing about Mamatā, she having gone up in society and her mind too busy in her immediate concerns.

Mamatā after this misfortune, as is the practice with the Hindu widows, began to lead a life of strict *Brahmacharya*, and divided her time between worship, her adopted daughter and the supervision of the house. After all, one does not know that she did not feel more genuine peace within herself after a year's *Brahmacharya* than she ever did before.

Silā's sorrows on the other hand was of a very temporary nature. In civilised societies fashioned after the Western model, as is well known to all, social joys constitute the highest goal in life. Necessarily therefore, every provision is made to make their absence as short as possible. Witness: fashionable burial, fashionable mourning &c.

Among Silā's many admirers there was a medical doctor, also a great friend of her late husband. He was a widower without children and in a few days, he proposed to Silā to make him happy

with her hand. But the trouble was about Silā's grown-up boy. How would he feel like when he heard he was going to have a second father? As against that, urged the doctor, Silā should have a higher and nobler consideration. She should puncture another hole in the inane superstition of the Hindus that it was wrong for widows to remarry. She should walk in the footsteps of the handful of noble widows who have gone before her and married a second time; thus making martyrs of themselves in a worthy cause. Was not the consideration of this extremely necessary social reform higher and more pressing than that of the feelings of the boy? Besides he could be sent for study in the West, where it was no shame if one's mother married several times. He would get rid of the silly notion of shame there. Why should she make his and her own life miserable for a superstition?

Silā was convinced and they were married on the thirteenth month of the death of her first husband.

Rama was studying in a college class when his mother married. Of course his class-mates and other boys began to make remarks and he found it very uncomfortable to go to college. He used to start from home as if he was going to the college, but passed the day in public gardens, parks, museums &c. He could not make up his mind what to do. One thing was sure, he would go and hide himself completely from the people who knew him. He was sitting one noon, on a bench in a public park, revolving these thoughts in his mind, when he was addressed by a party of mendicant palm-ists and astrologers who offered to tell

his future if he would make up the few rupees that were short for their passage to Hardwar. A bright idea flashed across Rama's brain. Why not cast his lot with these men and go to Hardwar? He replied he was bound himself for that place and was just waiting for the train time. So they would all go together. They need not trouble to examine his hand, he would give them the money as they were sadhus. The party felt they have met their match and joyfully agreed to his proposal.

In the train Rama changed his clothes as best as he could with his companions and assumed as bold a front as he could. On reaching their destination they stopped there for a day and heard about a wonderful Mātāji who knew all the languages of the world, inasmuch as a few days before she talked in English fluently with a party of sahebs and mem-sahebs who went to visit her and who came back marvelling at her erudition and wisdom. Not only was she the mother—the perennial fountain of inspiration and guidance of the most respected and highly advanced brotherhood of sannyasins then extant, but she could work all miracles—in short she was the greatest *Siddha* living. People were flocking from all parts of India to pay their respects to her.

The reader will readily recognise in this picture of thousand-tongued and thousand-coloured Rumour, Tara, who was named Mātāji by the brotherhood, who appointed her as their head.

Rama went with his party the next day to pay a visit to Mātāji. She was indeed a wonderful woman, he thought; so young, so beautiful yet so learned and

so spiritual. But what was the look in her eyes? It was so weird, so piercing, so startling! To Rama's youthful imagination, she was certainly not human. Rama sat there gazing at her as one charmed.

She spoke a few words in Sanskrit to one of the party who addressed her in that language, and to others she talked in their vernacular which was different from Rama's. When they were leaving she spoke to Rama in his vernacular and told him to wait a little. This was another surprise for Rama, and he told his companions to go, he would follow in a few minutes.

When Rama was left alone with her, she told him all the circumstances that brought him there, and advised him not to live in the company of the men with whom he was. He might stay in a neighbouring *gupha* and learn yoga from her, if he liked, which proposal Rama accepted with the greatest joy.

Silā and her new husband, not having Rama back home that night of his departure became very anxious and in the morning sent for inquiry at all his friends' and kept up the search for a few days. Nobody had seen him at the railway station. They also inserted advertisements in the papers describing Rama and promising a reward to any one who would inform them of his whereabouts. But all was in vain. Silā lived disconsolate for a time, and then she had a son by her second husband and nearly got over her sorrow. She had another baby the following year and had nearly forgotten Rama when, as misfortune would have it, her second husband died suddenly. This was a cruel blow to her and it

was long before she appeared in society again, which event was hailed with delight by many society people, especially by a young man of twenty-eight, a briefless barrister, who suddenly evinced a great admiration for Silā, and became devoted to her, so that before another year was out it was quite on the cards that Silā was going to marry the barrister and that pretty soon.

But there happened another interesting event which made a great flutter in the immediate circle over which Silā ruled. One of the ministers of their Samaj, a great friend of Silā and of her two former husbands went for a trip to the hills and there met a wonderful *Yogini*, who held that most of the beliefs and claims of popular Hinduism were true as she proved some of the most absurd ones (to the rational and scientific understanding) in her own life. She also had a young man for her chela whom he had not seen, but who was said to be very highly advanced. And strangest of all, this minister had so far been convinced by the *Yogini* that he had accepted her as his Guru, and gone back to all the idolatrous and superstitious practices of the old faith. The newspapers were all bursting with the event, many old and trusted members of the Samaj had shown distinct signs of following their minister over to the other camp and the Samaj was tottering. It required the coolest and wisest counsels to keep things together. And what was most calamitous, the *Yogini* was coming over shortly to their city!

And that she did, on the eighth year of her departure from that city.

TWENTIETH CENTURY.

RELIGION OR FASHION.

I am about to broach upon a subject which is both theoretical and practical, which is as philosophical as it is poetical, and which is in no small degree an essential part of everyone's real training. I wish to draw a line between the so very little-understood thing, *viz.*, Religion and the so very well-practised thing, *viz.*, Fashion. Not being too eager to worry the dear reader by definitions and preliminaries, I at once jump on the platform which is the scene of both these dramas, the dramas of Religion and Fashion. The platform is Life. Whether or not the present is the outcome of the past, or the future will necessarily be governed by the conditions of the present, the fact remains that the present is present, and that we are thoroughly justified in dealing with it as it is. We live and operate. Life acts and is acted upon, and the best thing no doubt, would be to know, first the real meaning of Life, and then how it acts, and if possible also, how it can be made to act. From a purely rationalistic point of view there can be at least two main factors of Life.

1. The latent faculties.

2. The environments or opportunities.

The mission of life will then, most logically, be to develop the latent faculties and to utilize the opportunities to the best advantage. A man is born in the world with the faculty of love predominant over other faculties. His environments are, take for granted, well-

to-do and good parents, good teachers, real friends, ample means of gaining a respectable livelihood. The mission of life in the case of this particular individual would be (1) to develop to the highest possible degree his faculty of Love—to a degree which in the end would know no degree, and (2) to receive and dissolve into practical daily life, good bringing up, good education, healthy moral lessons, an honest living, earnest homely life and so on. The question will then naturally arise what is the best means of gaining this end. We say "Religion," world says "Fashion". Let us compare the merits and demerits of both. Religion claims to teach man the nobility of Life, to discern the very object of life and how it can be best spent. Fashion requires a surface-coating being given to man, be or be it not to his real benefit. Religion goes to man to serve him. Fashion calls him to serve it. Religion develops from within. Fashion envelops from without. Religion teaches that each man or woman should have a definite aim and work it out harmoniously, making whole life bear on the general usefulness and service of humanity. Fashion demands that selfishness should be the leading element and that all humanity should be made to serve the cause of the one who practises it. To help a fallen brother, to raise a degraded soul, to sacrifice the very life for the good of humanity is Religion, never mind if the one who may

do so has never said a word of prayer. To go after name, rank and wealth, heedless of the sufferings of humanity, to demand this, that and everything at the expense of others is Fashion, never mind if the one who may do so has learnt all the scriptures by heart and daily haunts the places of worship.

It is never too late to know the difference between Religion and Fashion,—to know it and practise it.

Whence is all this misery,—famine, plague and so on? Decrease of Religion and the increase of Fashion is the surest cause of all this. Unselfishness is Religion and Selfishness is Fashion. Suspend the numberless formalities

of life for a time, resign the never-ceasing sectarian idle gossips and practices, give up the thought of your own personal comforts for a while, dive deep into the mysteries of human suffering, try to realise the divinity and sacredness of life which comes through unselfishness, and you have gained the desired end.

The practical means of becoming really religious are the realization of Oneness, to regulate desires in harmony with the existing wants and sufferings of humanity, to act, to think and finally to Love—to dissolve into and be lost in Love—Shakti—Mother—God—Christ.

MOHAMEDANAND.

FALSEHOOD AND TRUTH

THE adage 'fact is stranger than fiction' is true in a sense not generally recognised. We all know it is true circumstantially but it is also based upon a great philosophical truth. There could be no fiction if there were no facts. Fictions are all built upon and made up of facts: what makes the difference is the inaccurate specification of the relation between parts and the points of time. In short, fiction is nothing but distorted or inaccurately fitted *facts*. What we should never forget is that fact is the essential element—the stuff that fictions are made of,—as water is the essential element in an ocean of waves, spray, foam, froth, drops, ice &c.

Inaccuracy of relation constitutes the ordinary run of falsehoods. When a boy is hurt for his own carelessness and attributes it to the causality of a play-mate, an untrue relation only is sought to be established in a

fact which is true. A somnambulist found sleeping in his room at the first part of the night but discovered after midnight upon a tree, accounting for his lodgment there to the agency of a fairy is another instance of the above class.

Imaginary stories which are built upon pure facts as the foregoing, comprise both discrepancies of relation and time. What has truly happened to different people in different times is fastened upon others in stories and fictions. But as the least careful consideration will show the *matter* of their make is true; it is the *manner* which is otherwise.

Thus when a Vedantin says that the world of name and form is false one should not understand that the substance underlying the representation of the world is false. *There must be some truth to make untruth possible.*

As in a falsehood true facts are made to appear in untrue relations of parts and points of time so that that appearance of the facts is alone untrue, not the facts themselves,—in the same manner, what the Vedanta means

to say by the above is that this appearance of names and forms called the world is false, not that the world has no substance underlying it. The underlying substance of the world is Brahman.

MEMOIRS OF MAX MULLER

AS a personal friend of Prof. Max Muller for thirty years, Dr. Moncure D. Conway contributes an interesting article under the above heading in the *North American Review*. "The day cannot judge the day," and the student fails to recognize Alcuin, Charlemagne, Roger Bacon, Erasmus reappearing in his own teachers as Agassiz, Jowett, Max Muller.

In the thirteenth century, when the renown of Roger Bacon was drawing studious men in Oxford from all parts of Europe those who came last found him in prison on account of the novelties he taught; in our time an Oxford professor, teaching novelties at which his great predecessor would have shuddered, was similarly sought and found weighted with honors. From fifty colleges and learned societies—European, American, Indian—Max Muller received honors, and ten governments invested him with orders. These honors were spontaneously conferred; he never sought anything but the Sanskrit professorship, and he even declined the coveted F. R. S.

The eminent educators in various branches of learning assembled at the memorial meeting at Columbia University seemed to have a grateful debt to pay to the great Professor; for he had opened for one his field of research; he had stimulated others to their tasks; he had enriched all by his literary and linguistic masterpieces. What are incidental *errata* of a pioneer in unexplored regions compared with this creation of a scholarly race able to correct the mistakes?

Continues the writer,—

Especially impressive were the simple words of the Hindu speaker at the meeting, the Swami Abhedananda, who spoke always of the

deceased scholar as "our friend." Max Muller was indeed the greatest friend India ever had . . . For the many Hindu students in England, Max Muller's house was a sort of shrine. His hospitality to them was pathetically noble. And it was beautiful to listen to his sympathetic talk with them on their studies and their religious ideas. Once there presented himself before him a fine-looking Hindu in threadbare dress, who began addressing him excitedly in Sanskrit. Few Hindus can speak Sanskrit, and Max Muller at once recognized an extraordinary man beneath the poor garb. When he answered in Sanskrit and asked the youth to take a seat, and cordially grasped his hand, the Hindu wept. He had a sad story to tell. A Brahman of high caste, Nilakantha Gorch by name, learned in Oriental literature, he had for years studied the various religions, and reached faith in that taught by Jesus. It involved martyrdom. At the nearest Mission he announced his conversion. He was deprived of his caste and cast out by his relatives. The stupid missionaries called him "Nehemiah," sent him to their book establishment in London, and there he was set to the lowest drudgery. "A negro slave could hardly be worse treated," said Max Muller. For a long time that was endured by this most learned convert to Christianity ever known in India. At last he fled, and knowing by repute just one man in England, found his way to Oxford and to that man. The penniless Hindu scholar was at once installed as a guest in Max Muller's home, and there wrote a useful little work on the Vedantic philosophy.

* * * *

He never showed the slightest heat when discussing a religious question, however fundamental, but he once wrote a rather stern note about the dismay into which some of us were thrown by certain fanatical proceedings of the leader of the Brahmo Samaj in India, Keshub Chunder Sen.

Keshub received grand welcome in England (1870) which gave his theistic movement a great sanction. But, according to the writer,

some years later, not only he but some of his nearest followers gave themselves up, to such superstitious extravagances that their London supporters were compromised. This was especially the case with Max Muller, for just at that time the *Indian Mirror* printed his extracts from private letters, praises of the Brahmo movement, that seemed to carry his support to the new fanaticism.

When Mr. Conway asked Max Muller whether some mild protest was not needed, he was inclined to think that there must be some misunderstanding or exaggeration in the stories coming from Calcutta. He wrote to Mr. Conway :

Nothing is so easily misrepresented as Oriental phraseology. You remember a beautiful prayer that Colenso quoted, and people laughed at it because it began, 'Oh Ram ! Oh Ram !' (*i.e.*, Rama). I enclose you some letters from Keshub Chunder Sen and Mozoomdar. They will show you whether these men were fools or knaves.

In another letter (21st Dec. 1881, to the writer) expressing pity for the "ingratitude" of the Brahmo leader, Max Muller wrote,—

That excellent man (Sen) has spent himself—some wheels in the machine with which he worked are out of order. . . . It is the old story of the squeezed-out orange—we do not want that any more, let us throw it out of the window.

We are indeed sorry for these unpleasant feelings, and we do not know whether the whole of Keshub's success in England was solely due to the interest in India awakened by the long labours of Max Muller, as Mr. Conway, in his zeal of admiration for the Professor and condemnation of Keshub, holds, though there is no doubt that,

it was this Oxford scholar who created audiences for such (Oriental) studies, enthusiasts for "The Light of Asia" and devout readers for the forty-nine Sacred Books of the East.

When the phonograph was invented, Max Muller was called on at one of its first performances in a meeting of some eminent men

of science and men of letters to utter something in the phonograph and forthwith was heard issuing from it these sounds : *Agnim îla purohitam Yagnasya devam ritvijam—hotâram ratnadhâtavam.*

There was a burst of merriment when these queer sounds came from the machine, but a deep silence when Max Muller explained that we had words from the oldest hymn in the world—the first (if I remember rightly) in the Vedas : "Agni I worship—the chief priest of the sacrifice—the divine priest—the invoker—conferring the greatest wealth." And then the young people gathered around the smiling scholar, to learn, no doubt, that the hymns had all passed through thousands of years, in a phonographic way, each generation uttering precisely what was poured into its ear by the preceeding generation,

until through the strenuous labours of the *Sanskrit Savant*,

the thin, metallic voices became real and cast their poetic spell not merely on the learned but on fashionable young ladies and gentlemen in drawing-rooms, throughout Europe and America, adding vast estates to their minds, delivering them from the mere pin-hole views of humanity and of the universe to which our ancestors were limited.

Apart from his literary merits, Max Muller was a grand character. Some have misread vaingloriousness in

his erect mien, his handsome, courtly look and a certain military air characteristic of most high-born Germans. He was a very peculiar man : his virility was expressed in his ruddy face and sparkling eyes, and some ancestral huntsman survived in him to such an extent that when on a walk with a friend he would at times unconsciously point his cane as if it were a spear, levelling it to his eye. The cane was pointed at nothing, unless at some point emphasized in discussion, wherein sweetness of speech was always his enforcement.

Max Muller was a man even of humility ; he listened to the humblest person addressing him with strict attentiveness ; he looked up to some who were really his inferiors. For his great contemporaries his love and reverence were boundless.

In acknowledging the receipt of the report of the American Philological Congress he wrote a very lengthy letter (1873) in appreciation of the work done in America in philo-

logical researches, the last part of which is worth quoting :

I hope Mr. Trumbull will soon give us the results of his Indian researches, and the more he can prove that I have erred the more grateful shall I feel. Though at present I have little leisure left for these studies, I like to see in what direction they are followed up by younger scholars, to what results they lead and what light they are likely to throw on the higher problems of our science.

And now I am almost ashamed when I see what a long epistle I have written. I promised my doctor to do nothing while enjoying the bracing air of Cromer, and like a horse that has been idle for weeks in his stable, my pen, on being trotted out for the first time, has fairly run away with me . . .

It appeared to the writer, nothing less than a calamity that there should be any discordant note in the relations between Max Muller

and his American *confrères*. Knowing well how eager he was to give credit to the humblest of us who were labouring in fields connected with his own, I felt that the personal attacks directed against him must be some curious survival of the old grammarian's curse—"May God confound thee for thy theory of irregular verbs !"

Though he was conscious of the personal ill-will felt by Professor Whitney and his German friends—notably by Weber the great Sanskritist of Berlin for his theory that language and thought are inseparable, Max Muller in his address to the International Congress of Orientalists in London, honoured the names of the German scholars present—Weber &c.

Of course, Weber, though he spoke English remained silent.

SOCIAL REFORM IN JAPAN

A series of important articles are appearing in *Mahratta* (Poona) on "Modern Japan" which should be carefully studied by our countrymen. Below we summarise the paper on "Social Reforms," which shows not only the adaptibility of the rising nation of the farthest East but of their wonderful self-sacrifice, especially of their Kshatriyas—the Daimios. Though we do not believe in the introduction of European customs among any Eastern people in the wholesale manner as the Japs are doing, yet we can profit much by following their example.

"The Japs are divided into four or five classes, somewhat like the castes of India, with this distinction that no religious sanction is claimed for these divisions. The Samurais (probably derived from Sanskrit चमुराज, Chamurâj, leader of an army) form the military class like our Kshatriyas and are looked upon as the highest class in the Japan communities. The Samurai had appointed to themselves almost

all the power and influence in the kingdom as a mark of distinction : they used to wear two swords the hilts of which projected from their body. They were exempted from all taxation and filled all the important posts in the kingdom. The heads of this warrior class were called the Daimios. These Daimios had numerous followers, lived in fortified castles and gradually became almost independent. They were somewhat like feudal chiefs. They always travelled in palanquins in a pompous style followed by a numerous retinue and any horseman that chanced to come across had to dismount and all the passers-by had to take off their headdress and to prostrate themselves on the ground. There were about four lakhs of families of these Samurais. Their duty was to serve as soldiers in times of war and keep guard over the castles of their lords in times of peace. A Samurai was never without his sword. Even a school-boy of that class used to buckle one, when going to school.

The second in rank to the Samurai are the cultivators. The larger landholders were also allowed to carry two swords like the Samurai.

The priests are also an important class, but their influence is not so powerful in Japan as it is in India.

The fourth class is composed of the artisans and includes black-smiths, gold-smiths weavers, etc.

The fifth class is the shop-keepers who are also regarded as a distinct community. They are generally despised especially by the Samurai.

The sixth class is composed of the outcasts or pariahs of Japan. The lowest classes are called the *Etas* (unclean) and *Hinans* (not men)

**** These two castes correspond to our Chamars, Mahars, Thugs and other lower classes.

Such is, in short, the description of the various classes, as they originally existed. It will be observed that although there is a sort of caste system in Japan, yet the society is composed of only about six main and broad divisions and not split up into thousand and one sub-divisions, which is the most peculiar characteristic of the present Indian caste system which distinguishes it from every other caste system in the world. Owing to this small number of divisions, the Emperor and the Japanese patriots had very little difficulty in introducing social reforms, the masses being prepared for them. In 1871 by a Government Resolution, the legal distinction between the *Etas*, the *Hinans* and other lower orders was abolished.

The five higher classes can now intermarry and the old restrictions in that respect were abolished by Government in the same year, 1871.

Buddhism is the national religion of Japan, but there is now full liberty of thought and nobody is persecuted for his religious opinions.

The Japs are at present bent upon reforming their Religious systems also.

The abolition of the Feudal System marks perhaps the most important phase in the evolution of Modern Japan, as it is almost unparalleled in the history of the world. The ancient Japs were like a fallen race without any status, character, strength of mind and above all without a spirit of self-sacrifice for national good—those noble qualities which are essential for all greatness. Hence we are thoroughly incapable of conceiving how in Japan reform followed reform in quick succession and was carried out over the length and breadth of the country without opposition.

The Japanese patriots, who studied the Western civilizations, felt convinced that their country could never rise in strength so long as it was parcelled out among the Daimios or Feudatory Chiefs, each of whom was nearly independent of the Sovereign. These patriots thought, of course correctly, that there was the paramount necessity of establishing a central Government and they succeeded in prevailing upon the Daimios, who in a spirit of patriotism and self-sacrifice without a precedent in the history of the human race, voluntarily surrendered their rights, lands and revenues to enable their country to take its place side by side with the enlightened nations. They exhorted their followers to give allegiance in future to the *Mikado* and the clans became thus absorbed in the nation. The nobles of Japan assembled in Tokio in 1871, bowed their heads in submission to the *Mikado* when his new minister read out the Imperial Decree abolishing feudalism.

These reforms speak volumes in favour of the inborn patriotism of the people of Japan where all classes have been found equally willing to forget and relinquish their long cherished rights and privileges purely for national purposes."

LEAVES FROM THE GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

*(According to M., a son of the Lord and servant)**(Concluded from page 31)*

WORSHIP OF THE SPIRITUAL PRECEPTOR

DOCTOR (to Girish):— Do everything else, but pray do not worship him as God. By so doing you are only bringing ruin upon such a holy man!

Girish:— Sir, there is, I fear, no help for it. He who has enabled me to get across this terrible sea of the world (*samsara*) and the no less terrible sea of scepticism,—O how else shall I serve such a person? There is nothing in him that I cannot worship.

Doctor:— I myself hold that all men are equal. A grocer's child was once brought in at our place for treatment. It passed a stool. Everybody put up the ends of their cloth to their nose. I did not. And I sat by the child for half an hour. It is again not for me to put up the cloth to my nose when the sweeper passes by with the night-soil tubs on the head. No, that is for me impossible. The sweeper is by no means less a human being than I am. Why shall I look down upon him? As to this holy man here, do you think I cannot salute the dust of his feet? Look here. (The Doctor salutes the dust of the Master's feet).

Girish:— O sir, the angels of heaven are saying, 'Blessed, blessed be this auspicious moment!'

Doctor:— You seem to think that saluting one's feet is something like a marvel! You don't see that I can do the same in the case of everybody. (To a gentleman seated near) Now sir, oblige me by allowing me to salute your feet. (To another) And you, sir. (To a third) And you, sir. (The Doctor salutes

many).

Vivekananda (to the Doctor):—Sir, we look upon the Master as a person who is *like* God. Let me make my idea clear to you. There is a point somewhere between the vegetable creation and the animal creation where it is difficult to say whether a particular thing is a vegetable or an animal. Much in the same way there is a point somewhere between the man-world and the God-world where you cannot say with certainty whether a person is a human being or God.

Doctor:— Well, my friend, matters relating to God cannot be explained by analogy.

Vivekananda:— I say, not *God*, but *God-like man*.

Doctor:— You should not give *vent* to feelings of reverence like that. Speaking for myself, no one has been able, I am sorry to say, to judge my inward feelings. My best friends often regard me as stern and cruel. Even you, my good friends, may beat me some day with shoes and send me away.

Sri Ramakrishna (to the Doctor):— Now, don't Doctor! These people love you so much! They watch and look for you like ladies come together in the bride-chamber looking for the coming bridegroom (Laughter).

Girish:— Sir, every one here has the greatest respect for you.

Doctor (sorrowfully):— My son,—even my wife—looks upon me as hard-hearted—and for the simple reason that I am by nature loath to give vent to my feelings.

Girish:— In that case, sir, don't you think it would be better to throw open the door of

your mind—at least out of pity for your friends. You well see that your friends do not understand you.

Doctor :— Shall I say it? Well, *my feelings are worked up even more than yours.*

(To Vivekananda) I shed tears in solitude.

THE TEACHER (GURU) AND THE ATONEMENT.

Doctor (to Sri Ramakrishna) :— Well, sir, may I say that it is not good that you allow people, during *Bhava* (God-consciousness), to touch your feet with their body?

Sri Ramakrishna :— You do not say that I am conscious of this.

Doctor :— You feel that that is not a right thing to do, don't you?

Sri Ramakrishna :— What shall I say as regards the state of my mind during *Bhava*? After the trance is over, I sometimes go so far as to ask myself, may this not be the cause of the disease that I have got? The thing is, the thought of God makes me mad. This is the result of madness. There is no help for it.

Doctor (to the disciples) :— He expresses regret for what he does. He feels that the act is sinful.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Vivekananda) :— Well, you have great penetration. Do explain it all to him, won't you?

Girish (to Doctor) :— Sir, you are quite mistaken. He is by no means sorry that his feet touch the persons of the *Bhaktas*. No, it is not that. His body is pure, sinless; purity itself. He is good enough, in his anxiety for their spiritual welfare, to allow his hallowed feet to touch the body of the *Bhaktas*. As a result of his taking their sins* upon himself, his own body, he sometimes thinks, may be suffering from disease. You may think of your own case, You were once

taken ill with colic, as you once told us, as the result of hard study. Well, did not you at that time express your regret that you had sat up reading till very late hours at night? Does that prove that reading till late hours at night is bad? The Master may be sorry from the point of view of a patient. He is by no means sorry from the point of view of a Teacher from God anxious for the welfare of humanity.

The Doctor was rather put out of countenance and hung down his head.

Doctor (to Girish) :— I confess I am beaten. Now let me have the dust of your feet.

(To Vivekananda) This matter apart, I must admit the acuteness of his (Girish's) intellectual powers.

Vivekananda (to Doctor) :— You may view the question another way. You sometimes devote your life to the task of making a scientific discovery—and then you do not look to your body, your health and so forth. Now the knowledge of God is the grandest of all sciences; is it not natural that the Master has risked his health for this purpose, and maybe, has ruined it?

* * * *

AVATARAS, INCARNATIONS OF GOD.

Doctor :— Religious reformers without a single exception, Jesus, Chaitanya, Buddha, Muhammad, all were at the end filled with egotism. They all declare, 'What I say—that alone—is absolutely correct; nothing else.' How shocking!

With this the Doctor stood up to depart.

Girish (to the Doctor) :— Sir, don't you think you are running into the same error? You point out they were egotists all, all of them without exception, egotists! You find fault with them and, don't you think, the same charge may be laid at your door?

The doctor was silent.

Vivekananda :— We offer to him worship bordering on divine worship.

*And Jesus said, somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.—*Luke*, 8, 45; also *Mark* 5, 32.