

Prabuddha Bharata

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BY THE WAY

IT is difficult to imagine that even in the present times human beings of average intelligence would cling to the notion that progress in any department of human activity has reached its ultimate goal. Yet how many instances of this do we meet in practical life!

HERE, even in this birth-land of breadth of thought and toleration of views, not a few powerful sects hold that the ideal of spiritual and social progress taught in their respective ancient scriptures constitutes the high-water mark of development in those departments; that nothing higher could possibly occur in the nature of things in all time.

TAKE for instance the notion of some of our sects about the Veda. The Veda holds within it, in the state of the highest possible perfection all knowledge, if one could but read between the lines and understand it in the right way! Naturally its teachings on all matters are final, there being no room for further evolution.

BUT it requires only to be mentioned to be seen that the large body of thought which meets us in the later scriptures,

chiefly in the Upanishads and the Darshanas, represents a higher evolution of the Vedic thought. We can almost trace the growth link by link. The Veda is all sacrifice and nothing but it. True, there are portions of it which have no direct bearing to the performance of sacrifice, and still others which teach a higher form of spirituality, but they are not Veda. They are of no authority. The only way to use and fulfill them is by connecting them with some part of a sacrifice. (*Mīmāṃsā*, I. ii. 1).

FROM this a distinct and unmistakable step higher is taken in the Upanishads. In one of the oldest of them, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, the opening mantras reveal the process of transformation. It is an apotheosis of the horse-sacrifice. "The Dawn is the head of the sacrificial horse, the Sun its eye, the Wind its breath, and so on. The bloody sacrifice is transformed into the meditation of the *Virtt*—the Logos. The consciousness of the One Self emerging in more or less undeveloped form in the Veda grows and expands, at first slowly, yet unable to shake itself free from many of the karmic rites, but surely, till it bursts forth into

the supreme grandeur of *Tat/Tvam Asi*.

THE famine-stricken Brahman who keeps body and soul together for two days by eating the remnants of a dish of impure cereals partaken of by a *chandāla* elephant-keeper, comes to the sacrifice of a king and frightens the performing priests with the threat that their heads shall fall off if they uttered the mantras without knowing the significance thereof. The sacrifice comes to a standstill, for the priests were learned only in the letter. The king appoints the Brahman who degraded himself into a *chandāla* by eating the remnants of the food of one, as the head-priest. The latter explains the full significance of the mantras to the other priests, and the sacrifice is successfully performed. (*Chândogya*, I. 10). The lesson is brought home that spirit is all in all, not form.

THEN comes the other great idea—*work without desire for reward*. Mark the Lord's severe deprecation of the Vedic *Karma-Kanda*, in the second chapter of the Gita. Are not all these the signs of a higher evolution?

THERE are many more evidences. One of the strongest of them is very curious too. There are some who regard the later scriptures—even the Upanishads—as inferior to the Veda in authority. Because they are later. All perfection having been reached in the Veda. But the queerest part of it is that they practically conform to the teachings of the later scriptures in certain matters which are in indirect opposition to those of the Veda.

IT is easy no doubt to ignore and defy the course of Nature theoretically; but it is another matter when it comes to practice. An interesting illustration of this fact is furnished by those, who, while not believing in the possibility of the evolution of Vedic standards, practically follow those of the later scriptures. The killing and eating of the bovine species, intercourse with the husband's younger brother for an issue, marrying girls of a different caste &c., had the sanction of Vedic society as institutions quite legitimate and moral. Even in the older Upanishads we find the practice of beef-eating. Does any sect following the Veda sanction these customs now? No, the tide of evolution is stronger than most of us imagine.

MUCH friction and retardation of progress consequent on bigotry and disharmony of sects would disappear if this were more generally understood. Humanly speaking there is no end to progress. We can never learn too much. How silly then is the assumption of superiority and the attempt to fit one coat to every body!

WE confess we are not a little surprised to see our contemporary of the *Mysore Herald* taking up the rôle of grandmother to Mr. Justice Ramachandra Iyer of Mysore, on his resolution to spend the remainder of his life as a Sannyasin. In inducing him to give up his laudable aim which, our contemporary is pleased to characterize as "selfishness" and "grievous error," he falls foul of the Sannyasin body as a whole and remarks:—

"We do not admire Mr. Ramachandra

Iyer's resolution to become a practical Sannyasin. We have enough and to spare such Sannyasins in India. Their life is a life of selfishness. They are for their own salvation." Indeed! How many 'practical'—by which we mean, real and true—Sannyasins are there now in India who had been Ramachandra Iyers before they renounced the world? Or why would India be what she is to-day—fallen from the high pedestal she once occupied and looking up to foreigners to come and revive her even in matters of religion, whose mother she is acknowledged on all hands to be?

INDIA was great when the Sakya Prince renounced, when kings and householders after fifty used to throw off their harness of worldly activity and take to the third and the fourth Ashramas. But how many Hindus now care or dare to do so? To hide their weakness instead, they resort to all sorts of sophistries, and denounce the higher life in the most absurd and shameful terms, unbecoming of a Hindu.

EVEN in our own days one 'practical' Sannyasin at least, has succeeded in partially Indianising (or spiritualising) the thoughts of the materialistic West by his life and teachings. But of what avail is the service of one or two or a few when there is so much to do? Of course when one does not care for a work one can spare as many from it as one pleases.

MONEY can procure a better judge' and the like—and we can spare as many of them as are wanted without the world coming to a standstill—but can true

Sannyasins be manufactured by the agencies of money, learning, intellect and superior knowledge even?

A prince only, and not a beggar, can renounce, who has drunk deep the cup of worldly enjoyments and is disgusted with its transient character. And that is given to the very few and the far between, as Rama Prasad sang: "One or two kites only in a million succeed to cut off their strings".*

Our contemporary, in his bewilderment advises the Mysore Government to immediately offer Mr. Justice Ramachandra Iyer the post of the chief judge which is going to be vacant and asks him if he would stay on under that condition. It reminds us of the advice always given by grandmothers to parents when a son seems inclined towards Sannyas,—to marry him without delay!

THE charge of selfishness laid at the door of Mr. Iyer rebounds on the head of our contemporary. Does he not display astounding selfishness in ignoring the higher good accruing from a true Sannyasin to mankind and the world in general, for the consideration of a "great loss" to his province? But one always sees a mote in another's eye when there is a beam in one's own.

SWAMI Vivekananda has gone over to Dacca (East Bengal) on invitation, where after visiting some holy places, he is expected to deliver some lectures.

*In this connexion we would respectfully invite the attention of our contemporary to page 28 of our February number to avoid repetition of what we have to point out about the *use* of the Sannyasins.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

KAMINI KANCHANA—III

NITYANANDA asked Sri Chaitanya:—

“Why do not all my teachings of Divine Love produce any tangible results on the minds of men?” Sri Chaitanya replied:—“Because of their association with women they cannot retain the higher teachings. Listen Brother Nityananda, there is no salvation for the worldly-minded.”

Is it *Mâyâ* (माया) or *Mâyâ* (मय) (woman) which has devoured everything?

WORLD-bound souls cannot resist the temptation of woman and wealth and direct their minds to God even if they suffer a thousand humiliations for their sake.

A ripe mango can be offered to the gods and used for all holy purposes, but if it is pecked by a crow it comes to no use at all,—it cannot be dedicated as an offering to the gods or to the Brahmans, nor should it be taken by one's own self. Boys and young men of pure minds should be sought early for leading them to the path of religion before worldliness enters much into them. It is difficult to lead them Godward if they have once been intoxicated with the wine of woman and worldliness.

SOMETIMES Sri Ramakrishna used to caricature with great brightness and effect the various little ways, coquetries,

flirtings and tricks of women by which they enchant men. Dressing himself like a woman he played her tactics of side-long looks and various other gestures of enticement, when she is in the act of feeding her husband. The husband cannot eat any more, but the wife will not listen. “Have that *sandesh*, my dear, try at least this *jilipi*, you would, I daresay, like the other thing prepared by me,” &c., pulling her *sâri* on now this way and again another. By and by she comes out with her wishes: “The wife of the eldest son of our neighbours, the Brahmans, has had such a nice necklace of gold presented to her only the other day. If I had such an one for myself,” and so on and so forth.

If once through intense *vairâgyam* (renunciation) one attains to God, then the inordinate attachment to lust and consequently to woman falls off, then also there is no danger from his own wife. If there are two magnets at an equal distance from a piece of iron, which will draw it with a stronger force? Certainly the larger one. Verily, God is the larger magnet, what can the smaller magnet, woman do against the other?

A holy man used to look at a chandelier prism and smile. The reason of his so doing was that he used to see various colours through the prism,—red, yellow, violet &c., and as all these colours are false, so he knew the world to be

A MEETING WITH A SADHU

IT was quite natural that everybody should be attracted towards him, I thought, when I saw the *Paramhansa Bibhā*, of whom I had heard so much the last two or three days. What struck me most at first sight was the boyish tenderness of look, the softness of complexion of a child, the delicate lotus-like hands and feet of this man of forty winters. His large eyes bathed one in a fountain of purity, the light from them was so penetrating and full, the embodiment of frankness and innocence. Possibly the effect was heightened by his broad forehead, an exceedingly well-shaped mouth and a strange expression in the nostrils. It was hard to fancy an improvement of the features, expression, or voice of the man—they were all so sweet and soothing. One wondered how flesh and blood could be so beautifully enfigured and expressed. But one needed not to wait long before this man to find the real reason out. It was the magic light of spirituality back of the man that transformed everything it touched into life, beauty, grace and gentleness.

I was too engrossed in these thoughts to listen to the earnest talk in whispers of a group of acquaintances and friends by my side who had evidently been spoken to by the *Sadhu*. Presently one of them a judicial officer of high rank, said, "We see now, how hard is *Moksha* to attain. Our next question is, what work is the best preparation for rising to that plane of non-action which precedes *Moksha*?"

"Work which involves a complete self-renunciation," was the reply in clear sweet accents, which carried conviction with them. "For the majority of *Mumukshus* this sort

of work is impossible in the life of a householder. The householder's self is multiple. Every relation and possession constitute a self to him. He may sacrifice his own self in a certain act, but there is the consideration for his other selves, wife, children, relatives, possessions and so on, which he can hardly brush aside and rise to the occasion".

"With the decline of spirituality in the land and the institution of *Vanaprastha* obsolescent, very few only can give up home and its ties and work with any degree of self-renunciation. How is this state of things to be remedied?"—was the next question.

Then the lightning flashed and the thunder roared. The calm, soft and sweet expression on the face of the *Sadhu* changed into one of intense fire and earnestness, almost that of agony. He said:—

"Do you know who is responsible for the decline of spirituality in this motherland of spirituality? It is you, who are proud of your high castes, your education, your felicitous circumstances. In the vanity of your birth, and the intoxication of your education and position, you have sapped the foundation of your society, you have sucked the marrow of the backbone nearly dry which supports you. How can your society have spirituality when the stream of its life is scarcely sufficient to flow? *Tamoguna* is death, *Rajas* life, and *Satva* spirituality. How can you expect the manifestation of *Satva* while the land is covered with *Tamas*? Transform this *Tamas* energy into *Rajas* and then only, and not till then, would there be conditions made for the prevalence of *Satva*. The beautiful lotus blooms in the blue ether on the surface of the water. Do

you not know it derives its life from the putrid mud underneath? In the same manner the roots of the divine flower of spirituality lie in the virile, energetic, bursting life of a nation. Is that tremendous will effecting complete self-control and transforming a man into a god, is that all-overcoming one-pointedness of the *Antahkarana*, merging in the bliss of the Absolute in realisation after successfully rending the veil of *Maya*, possible to evolve from a famished brain and inert heart? And what brain and what heart can you expect your nation to possess whose stomach is a helpless prey to chronic famine? It is a wonder of wonders and only shows the unspeakable and indefinable power of *Maya* that you cannot apply the moral of the story of the quarrel of the different members of the body to your own case and help yourself out of this difficulty. Agriculture and the other indigenous industries of the country which produce अन्न (*Anna*: food) are fast dying out, for the very sufficient reason that our own ante-deluvian methods of doing them cannot compete with and hold their own before the advanced and scientific methods of foreign countries. And what has been the result? अन्न (*Anna*) is being produced less and less, and even what is produced cannot be kept in the country, for our buying power has dwindled into almost nothing in comparison with that of other countries. This अन्न (*Anna*) question is telling upon the whole people, but its severest blow falls upon our agricultural and industrial population which forms the foundation of the national superstructure and the backbone of the social-organism. It is they who are first levelled down at the touch of scarcity; it is they who fall helpless victims to the ravages of diseases following in the wake of famine. How could there be an upliftment of brain and heart powers to their highest (which is another name for spirituality) with the stomach of the country empty and

backbone marrowless? स वा एष पुंसः अन्नरसमयः। अन्नं हि भूतानां ज्येष्ठम्। तस्मात् सर्वेषु सुखतः॥ [Verily man is formed of the essence of *Anna*. *Anna* surely, is of beings the eldest; thence it is called the medicament of all.—*Taitt. Upa. Anandavalli.*] Listen to the *Śruti*, *Anna* is the life of man. The *Anna*-producers therefore are the life of the nation. How could a nation be great in any way—and far less in spirituality—when its life—its *Anna*-producers—is in such a low ebb?

Indeed in famine relief camps and in the thick of severest privation you will find very few members of the higher castes. How is that? Because the higher castes having education and enlightenment have been able to move with the times and adapt themselves successfully to the changed conditions. The lower castes having no education have not been able to do this. Now if you analyse the situation, you will see the lower castes have all along been kept down and deprived of education by the higher castes. Many of you will perhaps say that only Vedic education has been refused to them, nothing else. But that is only in writing, not in practice. The tree is known by its fruits. Why are the lower castes uneducated as a rule if they had the same advantages of enlightenment as the higher ones? It is no argument to say that they did not care to take advantage of education—they did not care to learn. It was the duty of the higher castes to make them learn. No, the truth is the other way. They have been trampled down and kept jealously away from the taste of knowledge and power as all subject races are kept by their conquerors. It is your shortsighted tyranny, members of the higher castes, that has brought the country into its present pass. There is yet time. You can yet make amends for it. You can gain your individual *Moksha* as well as raise your motherland to her former position—yea, make her greater and nobler,—by the renunciation of your little

selves. Give up your homes, and comforts, some of you, higher caste people, sacrifice some of your best lives in fighting this demon that your past Karma towards the lower castes has brought into being. You sir, a great judicial officer and leader of your society, it behoves men of your standing and understanding to give up, and take the beggar's bowl and work selflessly, work without the object of gain, work unimpelled by any putrid idea of duty, for the salvation of your country and your own freedom. Educate the masses, restore them their lost industries, aye, and give them many more, help them stand on their feet once again and you will see new life come to the dried bones of your motherland. And with the advent of life, you will see the tree of spirituality sprout on

this soil once more, and grow and bloom and fill the whole world with its sweetness as it has never done before. But until some of you, men of true education and character, who have made their mark in the world, do not care to be Rishis, do not give up and become homeless beggars, do not in this wise come to the rescue of the spirituality of your land, there is no hope of *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha* in poor Bharatabhumi !"

The teacher stopped and before the assembly had recovered its bated breath, he took leave and retired. I shall not try to describe the effect which he produced upon us. And I do not know if I shall meet him again.

A SERVANT OF THE SADIUS

WHERE ALL RELIGIONS MEET

FROM the east as from the west, from the busy town as from the quieter country there comes the cry, "Wanted perfect happiness." How to attain that immortal stage which the sages of yore called *Paramānanda* is the craving of each and every soul. To supply that want different religions were evolved. Different methods were found out by people of different taste and culture. It is therefore that though the different religious systems differ in their respective methods, though the philosophy of one religion appears weaker than that of another, yet all have the same goal in view. They are like different radii from the same centre. The goal is Eternal Bliss. Every work in this world is done with the motive of attaining happiness.

Students pore over their books and men drudge at the desk, only to attain comfort in after-life. The workman toils all day long, the soldier fights his bloody battles, with one and one object alone, namely, to be happy. Imagine the exultation of the Duke of Wellington after the grand victory of Waterloo.

Happiness may be attained in various ways. A Napoleon would be happy after he has conquered the whole of the world. An Edison would be satisfied if he has worked miracles in the domain of science. A Rudyard Kipling would be glad if his verses are sung in the barracks of all nations. A Tantia will not rest until he has accomplished a great dacoity and frustrated all attempts of the police to arrest him. A poor workman

would be quite satisfied if he/ gets eight annas, instead of four annas, at the end of the day. But a Yogi, a seeker after Truth, will never rest until he sees the Most High, until he gets *Paramānanda*. No doubt there is always happiness after success, but the duration of that happiness is short. Napoleon might have been happy immediately after a victory, but certainly that did not last forever. Identical is the case with all worldly desires and the happiness attained by their fulfilment. None is ever-lasting. It is a fact, and no one can gainsay this. Wherever there is a desire, there is anxiety, and where there is anxiety, happiness cannot exist. Let all desires cease and happiness will come of itself. We vainly seek for *Ananda* in the outer world, for it is within us that true happiness can be found. The fountain of happiness always exists there, but these desires cover it over. Let us remove the shroud and *Paramānanda* will show itself in its glory. We should not bother our heads about the philosophies and theories of different religions. Let us begin to work at once in the right direction. We will come to know by and by what is most needed to satisfy our spiritual cravings. Let us act up to what we now know to be right and we shall know later on what more is to be done. A person, who at night in a dark jungle, wants the whole of it to be lighted up, to show him the right path, can never reach his goal. Let him first walk the short distance that he can clearly see before him with the light of his lantern, and the next little bit of the path will be illumined in due course. Following this method he can travel along the whole

path and reach his destination safe. We foolishly want the whole path to be lighted up at once, all the intricacies of religion made clear to us at a breath. We wish to know all that the sages have known after ages of research and experience, before we take a single step forward in practical religion. We want to have the theories of Taylor and Leibnitz explained to us before entering upon the study of Elementary Mathematics. But this cannot be done. We must begin a regular study of the subject before we can hope to grasp its more advanced theories. The best way to proceed is to bring into action those virtues upon which the verdict "Essential" is passed by each and every religion. All these virtues when combined together make up what we call Purity. Purity should be the watchword of every seeker after truth. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God," says Lord Christ. Our thoughts and deeds must be pure. But deeds being the outcome of thoughts, we should first watch our thoughts. When thoughts ripen they are turned into actions, and actions make the character. To possess pure thoughts we should have pure surroundings, and pure food and drinks. Surroundings have a great influence upon the human mind. Go to the top of a high mountain overlooking the beautiful scenery of the valleys around, and you will find your mind elevated. Look at the vast expanse of the sea and you will feel your mind expanded. Visit a tavern or attend a nautch and you will find your mind much lowered in morality. These are the experiences of nearly every person.

Company, which also falls under

surroundings, has a great influence. If your company is good and high in spirituality, you will be raised too. If your companions are degraded, they may bring you down to their own level. Always choose a companion who is better than yourself in morals, a man of stronger will, and you will feel his elevating influence. Great men have always a magnetising effect upon those who come into contact with them. Those who have come in contact with saints know this very well. The reason of this is not far to seek. Will power may be compared to electricity. Men coming near the saints are affected by their will power by induction. Great men are like great reservoirs of energy, go to them and you will get some. They are suns of morality and spirituality, be near them and you will receive some warmth. Come in close contact with them, and you will be more and more attracted by them, and finally become like them.

On the other hand, when you mix with morally low persons, you are sure to lose what you already possess of spirituality. It is for this reason that sages have spoken so highly of "*Satsanga*" or company of saints. By living in the midst of saints, a desire may spring in our minds to be like them, to get *Moksha*, liberty.

When one has a strong desire for *Moksha* one enquires about it from sages; and in the way advised, tries hard to attain it, and finally gets it. "Knock and it shall be opened." Try and you will get it; search and you will find Bliss within you. It is really a fatal error to suppose that it will come of itself without any exertion on our part. This is fatalism pure and

simple and is only a plea for idleness. We must work and work till we achieve the end. "Arise! Awake! and stop not till the goal is reached," says the Upanishad.

The influence of food and drink is not little upon the human mind. Take one kind of food and you will feel *Satvic*, take another kind and the *Tamoguna* will prevail in you. Of the large variety of food, it is very difficult to determine exactly the properties of each. But generally speaking it may be said that vegetable food tends to produce rest and peace of mind while meat has a opposite tendency. There may be some advantages of meat eating considered from the physical point of view but it does never help a man on to the path of spirituality. So much is certain that simple or plain food is the best. Where there is much luxury *Rajas* and *Tamas* predominate.

More marked is the influence of drinks. Let a man take a strong stimulating drink and you at once see the change. One who drinks alcoholic liquors loses self-possession completely and turns into something quite different from himself.

There is another agency which is potent for good or evil—the books we read. All civilized Governments prohibit the publication of obscene books, yet much rubbish is allowed to see the light of day. There are many books which contain nothing elevating. These and all works which deal with the dark side of humanity, should be despised by the young.

What religion is there which does not preach the above tenets? All religions agree that purity of life is the one thing needful. It is here that all of them meet.

BAWA BUDH SING.

A CHAPTER OF SOCIAL REFORM

III

TARA'S mother soon died of a broken heart after her departure. Her poor brother bore the popular opprobrium as well as he could, but the day of his reckoning was near. On the second year after his cowardly assault on Tārā, the Guru's nephew lay on his death-bed struck by palsy. He had written letter after letter to Tārā's brother to come and see him once, but the latter was obdurate. At last one day he made his people carry him on a hammock to Tārā's brother's house. He said he had a disclosure to make without doing which he could not die, and sent word to all the principal people around to come there that evening. Then in that assembly he recounted all that he felt and did towards Tara, how she was pure as the Spirit and how he got up and spread the false story about her, which cost her and her people so much. He was there to crave the mercy of Tārā's brother and of all his neighbours, whose minds he had poisoned.

Mamata did of course hear the story of Tara's shame and sudden disappearance from home, which people naturally attributed to the action of the consciousness of guilt brought home. But she was too little interested in her to make any enquiries. She also heard in due time the confession of Tara's traducer with probably the same indifference as she listened to the accounts of Silavati's ~~horors~~. In fact she knew more about

Silā than Tārā, because the former provided more food for criticism. Silāvati of course knew nothing about Tārā later to her widowhood and nothing at all about Mamatā.

Accompanied by many a devoted and earnest disciple, and invited to, and sought for by people of various parts of the country, Mātāji at last arrived in the city of her birth. Her disciples put her up in a palatial building in the central part of the city and all the well-to-do and educated people flocked to see her every day. Very few were there who did not learn to adore her and none who did not respect. Her power was irresistible, for she taught not words, but gave life and spirit. The matted hair hanging down like so many fat snakes from her head, her lotus complexion radiant with spiritual light, the small ash-besmeared forehead with the sweetest face and large deer-eyes pouring forth nectar, with an occasional weird look that penetrated one through and through, her vast mental culture and catholicity of heart, and above all the vivid feeling of loving support and protection which one seemed to unconsciously receive from her while in her presence—drew all hearts to her whether they were spiritually inclined or not. One mysterious thing about her was that her *chela* never came out to the public ever since he came there, and that was the subject about

which the popular curiosity was fast nearing its bursting point. 5

A fortnight passed but no one could suspect her identity; one great reason of this was that none of her near neighbours had come to see her. Silāvati and her immediate circle of friends, though burning to see her, did not come till the last, when the popular report had confirmed nothing but the ideal *Yagini* about her.

At last Silāvati did come one afternoon with a party of ladies and gentlemen. There was a long and interesting talk on several subjects—mostly pertaining to Social Reform and the unsatisfactory status of woman in the Hindu Society—Mātāji's opinions about which did not quite commend to the hearts of her reformer audience, but which they could not dislike owing to their being presented most rationally from quite a new and unique standpoint. At nightfall, as the party was about to leave, Silāvati said in Hindi—in which language Mātāji used to hold conversation generally—that a look in Mātāji's eyes reminded her strangely of a schoolfellow—but they were so unlike in other respects. It was merely a fancy. And she laughed.

A few seconds later as she stood up to go away Mātāji said to her in the local vernacular, "Silāvati, you stay here alone a little longer," startling all the people there.

Silāvati felt like one spell-bound—and with an effort asked her companions to leave her there alone, as Mātāji desired.

When they had all left Silā asked: "Mātāji, who are you?"

You will know that presently. But do you know what has become of your

first son Rama?"

Silāvati was perfectly confused. She cried in an agony: "No. But what is that to you. How do you know about him. Where is he?" Mātāji pulled out a piece of glass from underneath the cushion on which she sat and held it towards Silā. "Silā," said she, in a voice the soft melody of which vibrated in every nerve-fibre of Silāvati with electric force—"Silā, look at this glass and see what you were and what you are." Silā nervously caught hold of the glass and looked in while Mātāji went on, "Look and see how pure and *satvic* you were as a girl, and as the true wife of your first husband. But look at the picture of what you have become since. Look how the venom of inconstancy, of sensuality, voluptuousness, free love, and flirtation which you hide under the cloak of 'female liberty' and 'emancipation of women' have blackened you. Directly you proved untrue to the memory of your first husband and took a second, the wholesome control over your appetite was removed. Your life became one of sense enjoyment under cover of respectability. Look what a drag-back you have given yourself towards animality by letting your appetite prevail over the acutest and most righteous feeling of your own son. Think what responsibility you have incurred, to what degradation you have dragged yourself,—if—that boy has—committed suicide. Look at the mass of *Tamoguna* that clusters around your once pure mind" Silā looked on as one stupefied, for she saw everything vividly in the glass that Mātāji said. She saw herself as a girl and the loyal wife of her

first husband, as pure, bright and holy, a soft and refreshing light playing around her head and sweet odour emanating from her breath. The last picture was that of a libertine, with sensuousness stamped on the eyes and face. A kind of dark, unwholesome and repulsive emanation made its way from around her head and person and her breath was foul and nauseous. She also saw that the second picture stood on a rung of a long ladder far far below the first, and a strong iron chain was fastened to her neck which was pulling her still further down all the time towards the bottom which was lost in darkness. She could not resist hating the lower picture herself. As she was going to say something, Mātāji resumed: "Now see and look at Mamatā, how low she was as a girl and where she has risen by her constancy, self-denial and devotion. You can clearly see the fierce looking arrows that surrounded her as a girl—they are past *Karnas* which cost the lives of her children. See the dark and unwholesome emanation which surrounded her as a girl has cleared away and is replaced by the sweet *Satvic* auras. Look also at the silk thread which is drawing her up from the invisible above." Silā gazed with awe at the four pictures, while her higher nature scorched her heart with penitence. She did not speak till Mātāji took the glass away from her and put it back in its place. "Have mercy upon me" said Silā, and clasped Mātāji's feet.

"Go home now," said Mātāji to her, freeing her feet from her grasp, with kindness and love pouring out from her eyes, and come back to-morrow morn-

ing with Mamatā and her daughter"

"But I saw in the glass that all her children are dead," rejoined Silā.

"Yes", said Mātāji. "All her own children are dead.—I meant Kamalā, the daughter of her brother-in-law whom she has adopted."

Early next morning Silā's brougham could be seen waiting long at the road side by Mamatā's home. They could hardly know each other in the beginning, but when Silā amid sobs and tears, had in a private room told Mamatā everything about her experience with Mātāji, and her orders to her, they had a good cry together, after which both felt greatly relieved. Mamatā had already heard of Mātāji, but did not till then find an opportunity of paying her a visit. She made Silā eat something and then the three, accompanied by a brother of Kamalā, got on Silā's carriage and came straight to Mātāji's place.

When they came up to the entrance of the hall at one end of which was Mātāji's *Asana*, they found her *chela* sitting close by her on the ground. One second more and Silā made a frantic dart at him, while Mamatā approaching Mātāji cried out:—"Is it you, Tārā?" That made Silā turn back and look upon Mātāji though she did not relinquish her hold on her son, and made her cry out too, "What a surprise is this!"

Poor Kamalā and her brother were stupefied visitors of this strange spectacle.

Once more the sweet, calm and irresistible voice of Mātāji spread its melody:—

"Here Mamata, I have cut and polished this jewel with my own hands for you, as you have done the same with Kamalā for me and Silā. Now Rama,

it is my pleasure that you should be united with Kamala to set the example of the ideal *Grihastha* in the present times of transition and change—.”

“Blessed Mother! Am I to be condemned to the prison,”—interrupted Rama, with a voice quivering with emotion “which even *Jivan-Muktas* stand in dread of?”

“It will not be a prison for you, my worthy son,” said Mataji firmly, “you have crossed beyond the region of fear. So work out your Karma.”

“And now Mamata, don’t worry your mind about the niceties of *Kula* and *Achara* &c. Both of you are Brahmans, that is enough. Rama and Kamala are tied to each other by Karma from a long

past. So don’t you interfere with Karma’s laws and retard your own advancement.”

What followed is easily told. Rama and Kamala were married on the first auspicious day the next marriage season, and Mamata came to live with them, in the home of Rama’s father. Sila went away with her two little children in a small village home purchased by her second husband and lived there a life of strict *Brahmacharya* under the guidance of Mataji. Rama looked after the properties of his two fathers—which was considerable,—and spent his time in meditation, study, and doing the duty next to him as a *Grihastha*.

TWENTIETH CENTURY

REVIEW

TAITTIRIYA UPANISHAD, with the commentaries of Sankaracharya, Suresvaracharya and Sayana, (Vidyaranya). Translated into English by A. Mahadeva Sastri, B. A., Curator, Govt. Oriental Library, Mysore. Book II. crown 8vo. 1901.

The volume under notice forms the third part of Mr. Mahadeva Sastri’s translation of the Taittiriya Upanishad. Its particular title is “Brahmavidya expounded.” It contains the greater portion of the *Brahma* or *Anandavalli*, one of the most important contributions in the whole Upanishadic literature. There is hardly any important question of the Vedanta philosophy which is not discussed in this work (beautifully arranged under appro-

priate headings, by the translator) and explained in their characteristic perspicacity by three of the highest authorities of that philosophy. It is surprising even to a professed admirer of these intellectual giants to notice with what clearness and thoroughness they perceived and solved many of the problems centering round the system of the rigorous monistic thought—problems which modern thinkers are only just beginning to see, while only a few of them dare so much as handle them.

Mr. Mahadeva Sastri has already earned the distinction of being one of the most painstaking, veracious, capable and lucid translators of our difficult sacred books among contemporary Indian scholars. In the present work he has surpassed himself. We have been delighted with his performance.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT DACCA

THIS famous man is now in our midst. He went in for an immersion at the Langalband ghat on the occasion of the last *Budhastami*; and returning to Dacca, delivered an interesting speech at the Jagmuth College premises on the evening of Saturday last—the subject of his discourse being, “What I have learnt.” Beginning with an expression of his pleasure at the opportunity that his coming to East Bengal has afforded him, that intimate knowledge of this part of the country which he hitherto lacked in spite of his wanderings over many civilized countries in the West as well as his gratification at the sight of majestic rivers, wide fertile plains and picturesque villages in his own country of Bengal which he had not had the good fortune of witnessing for himself before, he referred to the fact that it is many years now that he has found **Hinduism** to be the only perfectly satisfying religion in the world. He therefore deplored the existence of widespread **indifferentism** in respect of religion among his own countrymen professing such a **untrue** cult, though he was very well aware, as he remarked, of the **unfavourable materialistic** conditions in which they **passed** their lives, owing to the **accession** of **European** modes of thought in their **grown** country. He also deplored the **existence** in the country of certain reformers who **wanted** to reform their religion or rather to turn it topsy-turvy with a view to **the** regeneration of the Hindu nation. **There** were, of course, he added, some

thoughtful people among them, but there were also people who followed others blindly or acted according to the Bengali saying, “The kite has flown away with your ear.” Then there were others who were mad after scientific explanation of Hindu customs, rites, etc., and who were always talking of electricity, magnetism, air vibrations and that sort of thing; and who would perhaps some day define God Himself as a mass of vibrations!

In fact, the Swami was nothing, if not smart. That he could talk away with the greatest fluency was an established fact; but that he was so great a humourist and so apt in repartee was a new experience to many of his hearers.

As to what he had learnt, being the subject of his lecture, he put forth in telling language the well-known essential conditions of progress in the path of spirituality which, he averred, was only to be found in Hinduism, including idolatry. This idolatry, he defended with all the wit he could command, ridiculing people who had anything to say against that phase of our national religion. To attain spirituality, he observed, one must be disgusted with the world, especially with woman and wealth; he must then be burning with a desire to see God—he was careful to say that his God was not nature nor any similar idea. But these were not all, that is, disgust with the world and burning desire for God were not sufficient; the devotee must seek and accept a **guru** or spiritual guide who was to be his counsel-

lor, philosopher, friend and guide. In short *Guru* was the *sine qua non* for spiritual progress according to the preacher under notice; and we are not surprised that crowds of people, mostly young men, are flocking to him for advice and illumina-

tion in regard to the one thing needful in our life. The Swami advocates, as he practises, celibacy and many of his disciples are fighting shy of matrimony, with results that we are at present unable to foresee. — *The Dacca Gazette*.

WOMAN IN ANCIENT INDIA

(Continued from page 32)

CHITRALEKHA: She was versed in yoga and was taught by Narada the intricacies of diplomacy and war. (Bhagavata X. 62, and Harivansa chaps. 167 and 176).

(10) **SITA:** A learned poetess in the royal court of Bhoja. She put a riddle to the king and so pleased was he with it that he made her the handsome present of a lac of rupees.

(11) **YASHOVATI:** She was efficient in the institutes of Dattatreya. It is stated in the Devi-Bhagavata (VI. 21 and 22 chaps.) that she initiated the king, by name, Ekabira, in certain mantras.

(12) **VISHAYA:** On the authority of the Jainini Bharata (Ashvamedhic, chap. 50th) we know that she was an efficient writer.

(13, 14) **KUNTI and VIDULA:** These ladies taught the ancient history and the duties of the Kshatriya to their sons. (See Mahabharata, Udyoga P. chaps. 131, 133 and 136)

(15) **CHUDALA:** Herself a knower of Brahman she taught the supreme knowledge to the king Shikhidivaja her husband, as is described in the Yogavashista (Nirvana Prakarana)

(16) **DEVAHUTI:** The mother of the Bhagavan Kapila, to whom the sage discoursed on the knowledge of the Atman in

the memorable chapter 33rd, 3rd skandha, of the Bhagvata.

(17) **DRAUPADI:** The heroine of the greatest epic of all times, the Mahabharata. In her forest abode she declared to Satyabhama, one of Sri Krishna's wives, with just pride: "I used to keep the records of all the wealth, the income and the expenditure of the empire of the Pandavas. When the Pandavas used to remain absorbed in contemplation, I superintended the treasury of the kingdom as vast and inexhaustible as the ocean of *Varuna* with its various gems. When Maharaja Yudhishthira had his residence in his capital, Indraprastha, there were one hundred thousand elephants and the same number of fiery horses. They belonged to the bodyguard of my lord; whenever he went out, I used to arrange their number and order according to the occasion." (Vana P. 233rd chap)

In the rest of the discourse she enlightened Satyabhama on the duties of the wife to her lord.

(18) **ANASUYA:** She explained to no less a personage than Sita (Rama's wife) the duties of the wife to her husband. She was a doer of good to all creatures, not only a knower but a practiser of virtue and religion, living a life of hard austerities and vows. The

name *Anasuya* (lit. one who is devoid of malice) she earned by her own deeds and sacrifices (Ramayana, Ayodhya K. 117 sarga).

(19) **MAYAVATI**: She was learned in the Mantra Shastras. It is described in the Brahmavaivarta Purana that she initiated her own husband in Mantra.

(20) **SITA**: The most cherished ideal of Hindu womanhood, too well-known to need any description. We quote the eloquent words of Swami Vivekananda on her from one of his Madras lectures, too tempting to be omitted here. "And what to speak of Sita? You may exhaust the literature of the world that is past, and I may assure you, will have to exhaust the literature of the world of the future, before finding another Sita. Sita is unique: that character was once depicted, and once for all. Ramas have been, perhaps several, but Sitas never. She is the very type of the Indian woman as she should be, for all the Indian ideals of a perfected woman have got around that one life of Sita, and here she stands, these thousands of years commanding the worship of every man, woman, or child, throughout the length and breadth of the land of Aryavarta. There she will always be, glorious Sita, purer than purity itself, all patience and all suffering. She who suffered that life of suffering without a murmur, she the ever chaste and ever pure wife, she the ideal of the people, the ideal of the gods, the great Sita, our national god she must always remain. And every one of us knows her too well to require much delineation. All our mythology may vanish, even our Vedas may depart and our Sanskrit language may vanish for ever, but as long as there will be five Hindu living here, speaking the most vulgar ~~patois~~, there will the story of Sita be present. Mark my word Sita has gone into the very vital ~~of our~~ race. She is in the blood of every ~~hindu~~ man and woman; we are all children ~~of~~ Sita. Any attempt to modernise

our women, if it tries to take our women away from that ideal of Sita, is a failure. The women of India must grow and develop in the footprints of Sita, and that is the only way."

(21) **TARA**: The intelligent wife of Bali; she was very keen in discerning the subtle meanings of things. She advised her husband to be on friendly terms with his brother and when he did not listen to her wise words, she foresaw the inevitable calamity that was going to take place and retired to her apartment with a broken heart.

(22) **SANDILI**: A Brahman lady who practised hard *Tapas*. From the Mahabharata we understand that she was versed in the Mantras, and attained *Siddhis*. When Sumana struck with the higher attainments of Sandili approached and asked her about the means and works through which she had attained the spheres of the Devas by getting rid of all impurities, she said, "I have reached this state neither by wearing the ochre robe of the Samyasin or the bark of trees, nor by shaving the head or wearing matted locks, but by serving my husband with whole heart and devotion. Then she described the duties of a woman. In the Anushāsana Parva occurs her story told by Bhishma.

(23) **MANDODARI**: The consort of Ravana. She was versed in the principles of ethics and politics and was devoted to her husband. Had the great Ravana listened to her wise counsel he would never have lost his vast empire and wealth,—the envy of the gods and men, and his wide circle of relations and sons numbering thousands and lastly his own life in his war with Rama. Her memorable words to Ravana before the outbreak of war, sorrowful, yet kind and wise based on the universal principles of Karma are worth perusal. (Vide the war section, chap 113. Valmiki Ramayana)

(To be continued)

VIRAJANANDA.