

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upp. 20.5

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

PREACHING AND PREACHERS

INDEED, there are three words which prick me to the core: (1) *Guru* (spiritual guide), (2) *Kartā* (doer of action) and (3) *Bābā* (father). God is the only *Guru*. My Divine Mother is the sole Doer of actions, I am only an instrument in Her hands. I feel myself always as Her child.

GURUS can be had by hundreds of thousands. Everybody is anxious to be a master. How many are there who would care to be disciples?

THE task of a *Guru* is very hard indeed. If he has seen the Lord and has been commissioned by Him to teach, as were *Narada*, *Sukadeva* and *Sankaracharya*, it is quite a different matter.

God's Word!—what wonderful weight must It carry! A mountain may be moved by It.

FOR the teaching of divine truths, *Adesha* (direct Commandment of God) is the one thing needful. Else, for a man to teach others—O, it would be ridiculous! Thou shalt thus do greater evil than good!

Collected and adapted from 'The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna' by M.

Without *Adesha*, thou wouldst be asserting thyself and think, 'I teach,' 'I am the master and these are my disciples.' Self-assertion is the offspring of Ignorance. One enjoys the real freedom when one realises that God is the sole Actor in the universe and we are only instruments in His hands. All trouble, all want of peace, cometh of the notion—'I am the Master', 'I am the free agent (*Kartā*).'

THE highest teachers are those who say that God is with Form as well as Formless and that He manifests Himself to His devotees as a Being with Forms.

Have you seen a water-passage running over with the water of the river with which it is joined? The passage has sometimes no trace left, being entirely one with the river-water. But very often there may be noticed a slight movement in its water which proves its separateness from the river-water.

Pretty much the same is the case with the teacher whose soul has become one with the Universal Soul, but in whom there is still this Ego of Knowledge kept on—a slight trace of individuality to mark his separate existence from the Deity.

OCCASIONAL NOTES

A Happy New Year to All!

"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most—feels the noblest—acts the best."

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

A VERY religion centres round some particular idea: Ancient Egypt round death; Persia round the mystery of Good and Evil; Christianity round the redeeming love of a divine Incarnation. Only Hinduism aims at the heights of Vairagyam and Mukti, and at nothing secular. This is indeed the weak point of Hinduism, as the Swami Vivekananda so often said. "Only renunciation and *mukti* in this shop! Nothing for the householder!" was his half-jocular way of referring to the want he felt so keenly.

The quality, by which Hinduism has it in her power to make up for this defect of her greatness, is her capacity for synthetising every religious idea with which she comes in contact. The absorptive power of Hinduism as a religion, coupled with its resistant power as a civilisation, furnishes one of the most startling paradoxes in the history of man. Derived originally from a veritable network of religions, in which the co-ordinating element was the philosophy now known as Vedanta, it has thrown out reforming sects in the Mahomedan period, and thrown out reforming sects in the Christian period, each of these being in fact the expression of its admiration for the new ideal of which it has caught a glimpse.

To-day, however, Hindus see that the greatest call upon the religious instincts of the country, lies in the need of assimilating whole new areas of life. We must make

possible the 'short views' of the Christians. There must be some religious teaching and encouragement for those who only want heaven, not *mukti*. There must be a recognition of *righteousness*, as well as of holiness. Righteousness lies in duty done: holiness requires renunciation. A thousand good citizens are necessary, as the background of one great *Sannyasin*. There must then be a philosophy of citizenship, as well as of *Sannyas*.

And in truth the exaltation of one thing does not demand the decrying of its fellow. The ideal is always infinite, always divine. A highly moralised society produces the greatest saints. The purity of fathers and mothers makes possible the birth of Avatars. Where marriage is faithfully kept, there sincere *Sannyas* is possible, not amongst profligates and riotous livers. Similarly, the presence of honourable citizens is necessary to the maintenance of a grand religious ideal, and the citizen is as necessary to its manifestation as the monk.

But if this is so, we have to search our ancient scriptures with a new aim. We must seek for all that can support and encourage us in doing manfully the work of this present world. Renunciation can be achieved through duty quite as well as by the abandonment of duty. We have thousands of texts to tell us so, but the prevailing preconception in favour of *Sannyas* has led to our ignoring all that favours *dharma*. The weak point of European society lies in the absence of the monastic ideal. True. But equally sure is it that the weak point of Hinduism is the want of emphasis on the ideal of the householder and the citizen.

The reason lies largely in the fact that when our texts were formulated our society

was as rich in virtue as in material resources. When the last of these deserts us, it is difficult to prevent the decay of the former; and what is wanted to-day is a deliberate recapture of both.

For this, we must exalt work. We must look upon the world as a school, in which it is worth while to strive for promotion from class to class. We must set our shoulder to the wheel and struggle unceasingly to attain the end we have set before ourselves. Our philosophy tells us that absolute progress is impossible, in the things of this life. But relative progress is fully possible; and while we move on this plane of relativity, we must work as if perfection would reward the very next step.

Let us set before ourselves the master-ideals, even in things relative. "I do not make good screws, sir, I make the best that can be made," said an indignant workman in reply to too casual an enquiry. This ought to be our attitude. We must make the best screws that can possibly be made. In every direction it must be the same. The best not too good, the highest not too difficult, for us to attain. Nothing less than the utmost. Nothing easy. Nothing cheap. The same energy that might have made an

ascetic will also make a workman, if that will better serve the Mother's purpose.

And let our ideals be higher for our friends also. Let no man consort with mean company. Monk or citizen, let a man be noble. Whether Brahmin or pariah, let him practise self-respect, and demand the like from others. We help no one by being so passive as to convert him into a brute!

In the school, the lessons are graduated, but all alike are EDUCATION. All are equally the concern of the school-authorities. Even so with our civilisation. The integrity of the man of business is to the full as acceptable an offering as the renunciation of the monk, for unless there be honest men of the world, the religious orders must come to an end.

Thus Hinduism, fully recognising the need of the practical and secular life, and drawing from within herself, the stores that are necessary for its development and growth, synthesises once more ideals that seemed opposite. The super-social life is seen in its true relation to society. The goal is preached as attainable, not only by the sadhu in the forest, but also by the butcher in the town, and the wife in the home.

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THE MASTER AS I SAW HIM

BEING PAGES FROM THE LIFE OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BY HIS DISCIPLE, NIVEDITA.

XXXI.

THE SWAMI'S TEACHING WITH REGARD
TO DEATH.

(Continued from page 230)

BY the time his first period of work in America was finished, on the eve of coming to England in 1896, he seems to

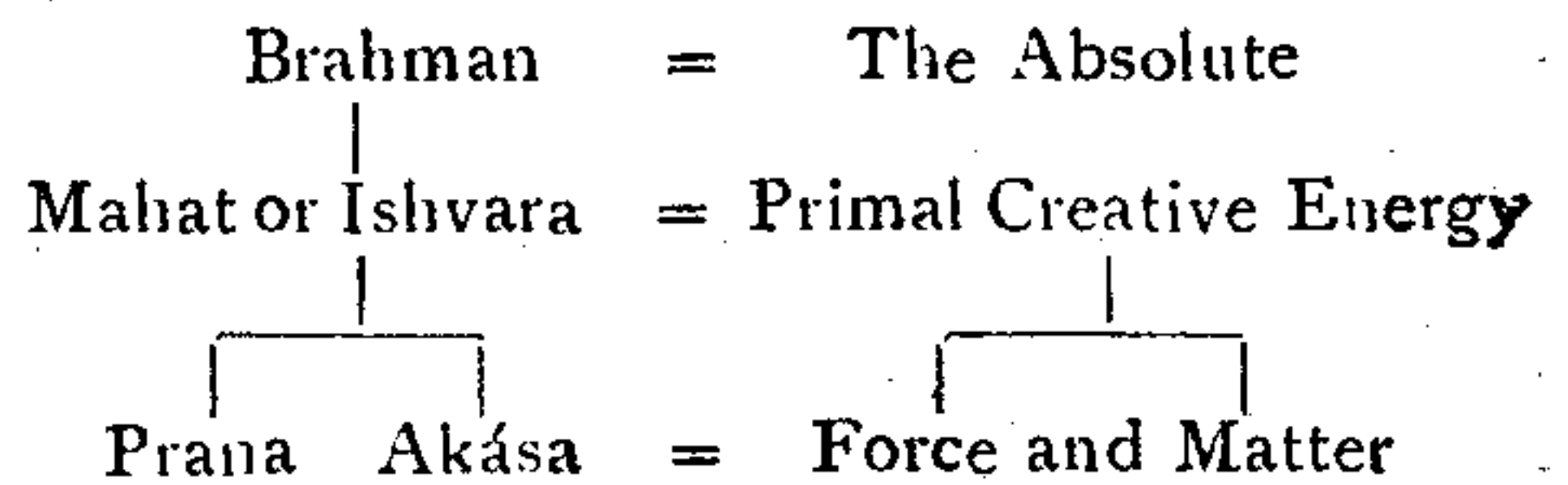
have felt the necessity of systematising his religious teaching. Having at first given forth his wealth of knowledge and thought without stint, we may suppose that he had now become aware of the vastness of his output, that he saw its distinctive features clearly, and that he felt the possibility of unifying and condensing it, round a few

leading ideas. Once started on this attempt, he would realise in all probability, that some statement regarding the fate of the soul was essential to a universal acceptance of the Vedanta. A letter written to an English friend, during his first visit to England, in October 1895, showed plainly enough that he was awake to the question of the definite area to be covered by a religious system. On this particular occasion, a visit from a couple of young men—who belonged to “a class philosophically religious, without the least mystery-mongering”—had called his attention to the need of ritual. “This,” he wrote, “has opened my eyes. The world in general must have some form. In fact religion itself, in the ordinary sense, is simply philosophy concretised, by means of symbols and ritual.....a mere loose system of philosophy takes no hold on mankind.”

The constructive imagination thus roused was seen in two or three subsequent letters to the same friend; and in one of these, while still under the mental stimulus of conversation with a distinguished electrician, he attacks the whole problem of the relation between Force and Matter, making at the same time a brief but pregnant epitome of what he regards as significant, in Hindu lore about death. It is easy, as one reads this letter, to see how he has been thrilled by the congruity of ancient Indian thought with modern science.

“Our friend,” he writes, “was charmed to hear about the Vedantic *prāna* and *akāsa* and the *kalpas*, which according to him are the only theories modern science can entertain. Now both *akāsha* and *prana* again, are produced from the cosmic *Mahat*, the universal mind, the *Brahmā*, or *Ishvara*. Mr. T. thinks he can demonstrate mathematically that Force and Matter are reducible to potential energy. I am to go and see him next week, to get this new mathematical demonstration,

“In that case, the Vedantic cosmology will be placed on the surest of foundations. I am working a good deal now, upon the cosmology and eschatology of the Vedanta. I clearly see their perfect unison with modern science, and the elucidation of the one will be followed by that of the other. I intend to write a book later on in the form of questions and answers. The first chapter will be on cosmology, showing the harmony between Vedantic theories and modern science.



The eschatology* will be explained from the Advaitic standpoint only. That is to say, the dualist claims that the soul after death passes on to the Solar sphere, thence to the Lunar sphere, thence to the Electric sphere. Thence he is accompanied by a *purusha* to Brahmaloka. (Thence, says the Advaitist, he goes to Nirvana).

“Now on the Advaitic side, it is held that the soul neither comes nor goes, and that all these spheres or layers of the universe are only so many varying products of *akāsa* and *prana*. That is to say, the lowest or most condensed is the *Solar sphere*, consisting of the visible universe, in which *prana* appears as physical force and *akasa* as sensible matter. The next is called the *Lunar sphere*, which surrounds the Solar sphere. This is not the moon at all, but the condition of the gods, that is to say, *prana* appears in it as psychic forces, and *akasa* as *Tanmatras* or fine particles. Beyond this is the *Electric sphere*, that is to say, a condition in which the *prana* is almost

* That is, doctrine of the last things—death, judgment and the fate of the soul.

inseparable from *akasa*, and you can hardly tell whether electricity is force or matter. Next is the *Brahmaloka*, where there is neither *prana* nor *akasa*, but both are merged into the *mind-stuff*, the primal energy. And here—there being neither *prana* nor *akasa*—the *jiva* contemplates the whole universe as *samashti*, or the sum-total of *Mahat*, or mind. This appears as a *purusha*, an abstract universal *soul*, yet not the absolute, for still there is multiplicity. From this, the *jiva* finds at last that unity which is the end. Advaitism says that these are the visions which rise in succession before the *jiva*, who himself neither goes nor comes, and that in the same way this present vision has been projected. The projection (*Srishti*) and dissolution must take place in the same order, only one means going backwards and the other coming forward.

“Now as each individual can only see *his own* universe, that universe is created with his bondage and goes away with his liberation, although it remains for others who are in bondage. It is name and form which constitute this universe. A wave in the ocean is a wave, only in so far as it is bound by name and form. If the wave subsides, it is the ocean, but that name and form have immediately vanished for ever. So that the name and form of a wave could never be, without the *water* that was fashioned into the wave by them, yet the name and form themselves were not the wave. They die as soon as ever it returns to water. But other names-and-forms live on, in relation to other waves. This name-and-form is called *Maya*, and the water is *Brahman*. The wave was nothing but water all the time, yet as a *wave* it had the name and form. Again this name and form cannot remain for one moment separated from the wave, although the wave as water can remain eternally separate from name and form. But be-

cause the name and form can never be *separated*, they can never be said to *exist*. Yet they are not *zero*. This is called *Maya*.

“I want to work all this out carefully, but you will see at a glance that I am on the right track. It will take more study of physiology, on the relations between the higher and lower centres, to fill out the psychology of mind, *chitta* and *buddhi*, and so on. But I have clear light now, free from all *hocus-pocus*.”

Once more in this Letter, as so often elsewhere, we see the reconciling and organising force of the Swami's genius. The standard of Sankaracharya shall not be moved. That “the soul neither comes nor goes” remains to all time the dominant eternal truth. But the labours of those who began their work at the opposite end shall not be wasted either. The Advaitin, with his philosophic insight, and the Dualist, with his scientific observation of successive phases of consciousness,—both are necessary, to each other and to the new formulation.*

Death, however, is pre-eminently a matter which is best envisaged from without. Not even under personal bereavement can we see so clearly into the great truths of eternal destiny, as when depth of friendship and affection leads us to dramatise our sympathy for the sorrow of another. The comfort that we dared not lean on for ourselves becomes conviction clear as the noonday sun, when we seek it for others. To this rule, the

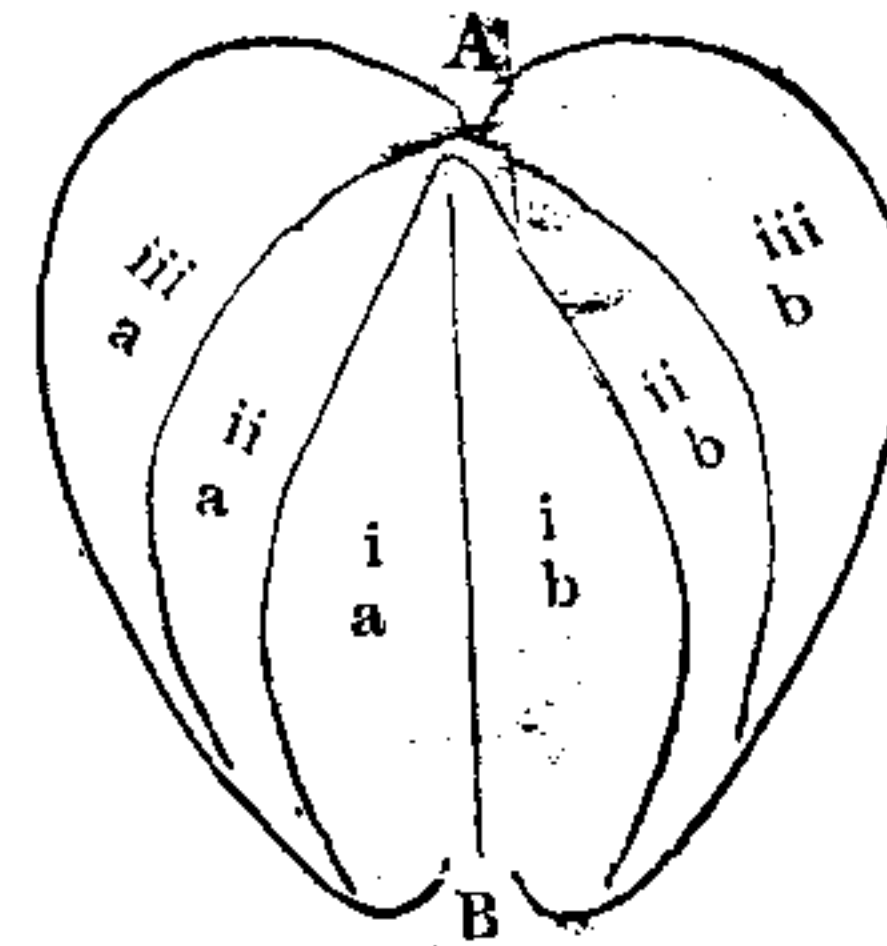
* The Swami's plan, of writing a book in the form of questions and answers, was never carried out. But in studying the lectures he delivered in London in the year 1896, it is easy to see that his mind was still working on the ideas here announced. See especially his lectures; “The Absolute and Manifestation”; “The Cosmos: The Macrocosm”; and his American lectures, “The Real and The Apparent Man” and “Cosmology.”

Swami was no exception, and many of us, it may be, will think the greatest of all his utterances on this subject, a certain Letter which he wrote to that American woman whom he called "Dhira Mata, the steady Mother," on the occasion of the loss of her father. In this we have the very heart of his belief, made warm and personal, and are made to apprehend its bearing, on the fate of our own beloved dead.

"I had a premonition," he writes from Brooklyn, in January 1895, "of your father's ~~going~~ ^{giving} up the old body, and it is not my custom to write to anyone when a wave of ~~would-be-inharmonious~~ ^{would-be-inharmonious} *Maya* strikes him. But these are the great turning-points in life, and I know that you are unmoved. The surface of the sea rises and sinks alternately, but to the observant soul—the child of light—each sinking reveals more and more of the depth, and of the beds of pearl and coral at the bottom. Coming and going is all pure delusion. The soul never comes nor goes. Where is the place to which it shall go, when all space is *in the soul*? When shall be the time for entering and departing, when all time is *in the soul*?"

"The earth moves, causing the illusion of the movement of the sun; but the sun does not move. So Prakriti or Maya or Nature, is moving, changing, unfolding veil after veil, turning over leaf after leaf of this grand book,—while the witnessing soul ~~drinks~~ ^{drinks} in knowledge, unmoved, unchanged. All souls that ever have been, are, or shall be, are all in the present tense, and—to use a material simile—are all standing at one geometrical point. Because the idea of space does not occur in the soul, therefore all that were ours, are ours, and will be ours; *are* always with us, *were* always with us, and *will be* always with us. We are in them. They

are in us. Take these cells. Though each



separate, they are all, nevertheless, inseparably joined at A B. There they are one. Each is an individual, yet all are one at the axis A B. None can escape from that axis, and however

divided at the circumference, yet by standing at the axis, we may enter any one of the chambers. This axis is the Lord. There, we are one with Him, all in all, and all in God.

"The cloud moves across the face of the moon, creating the illusion that the moon is moving. So nature, body, matter, moves on, creating the illusion that the soul is moving. Thus we find at last that that instinct (or inspiration?) which men of every race, whether high or low, have had, to feel the presence of the departed about them, is true intellectually also.

"Each soul is a star, and all stars are set in that infinite azure, that eternal sky, the Lord. There is the root, the reality, the real individuality of each and all. Religion began with the search after some of these stars that had passed beyond our horizon, and ended in finding them all in God, and ourselves in the same place. The whole secret is, then, that your father has given up the old garment he was wearing, and is standing where he was, through all eternity. Will he manifest another such garment, in this or any other world? I sincerely pray that he may not, until he does so in full consciousness. I pray that none may be dragged anywhere by the unseen power of his own past actions. I pray that all may be free, that is to say, may know that they are free. And if they are to dream again, let us pray that their dreams be all of peace and bliss."

HINDUISM

(The full text of the paper by Swami Saradananda, read before The Religious Convention in India, by Swami Nirmalananda on the 11th. April 1909).

THE conception of Religion or religious ideas in man has been found by many of the scholars of the West to have its origin in the simple feeling of terror. Others have traced it to the complex feeling of wonder or awe. The primitive man, first opening his eyes on this rich and mystic combination of colour, sound, smell, touch and taste,—that appears to us as the vast external world—must have spent many a æon in getting acquainted with its nature. And complex as was the object of his enquiry, no less complex was he himself, the knower, hence the primitive man, with powers of almost infinite possibilities lying dormant in him, must have been tossed by complex emotions and sensations from the very beginning, that made him look upon life's daily events through the hallowed haze of poetry, and withal enjoy life with all the gusto of an animal. Therefore the attempt to trace religious ideas to a simple sensation, as that of terror or wonder, seems to be an impossible one. Whatever might be put forward in favour of the origin of such ideas, it is evident that religion or any thing worthy the name can never be said to have begun in the human mind until the dawn of the idea of a second existence apart from that in which the primitive man used to sense and enjoy the external world. This must have originated in dreams, or in the curious, and to him inexplicable, experience that he used to get during sleep. Then in the dark, shady hours of the night when he witnessed scenes and persons that he had never seen before, and acted in and with them as he never remembered to have done before, during his waking hours, there began to arise in him the idea of a separate existence, to which he was transferred, at times, by some mystic power, during the mystical hours of sleep. The simple primitive man believed in those facts of his dream-experience as much as he did in the perceptions of his waking hours, and thus was originated the basic idea of Religion, which

played and is still playing such an important part in the history of human development.

We must not imagine, however, that the idea of the existence of an immortal soul originated in the human mind with this idea of a second or double existence by the help of dreams. The idea of immortality must have been a later growth, and must have established itself in the mind of man after he had seen the mystery of all mysteries, death, and brooded over the fact of its power over all,—nay, after he had actually seen the spirits of some of his departed ancestors. Strange as the assertion might seem to some of us, it is no less true that the traditions of every race and clime bear testimony to the fact, that animism, or spiritism, or ancestor-worship originated in man's getting acquainted with his departed ancestors. Even now, in this day of scepticism and scientific enlightenment, can be found persons who will not hesitate to assert that they too have made such acquaintances.

However that might be, it seems to us that as the primitive man was concerned from the very beginning with both the external and internal world (the universe outside and his own mind),—the facts of his experience in both these must have contributed to bring forth his full-formed religious ideas. The beautiful and at times terrible powers playing in the external universe, exciting corresponding emotions of wonder and terror in his mind, must have led him step by step from feticism through polytheism to monotheism; and the vast but no less mysterious powers of the internal world or mind, which helped the primitive man to form first the idea of a second existence of himself, must have guided him through the idea of an existence beyond the grave to animism, and thence to the belief in a subtle and indestructible part within himself,—the soul. One must not imagine however that these two sets of ideas grew in the mind of the primitive man one after the other,

They—I mean, the belief in an almighty external Power ruling over the universe and ever remaining distinct and separate from it, and also the belief in an immortal human soul, created by Him, after His own image—must have grown simultaneously like parallel streams, until ultimately blended into one in monotheism.

There is good evidence to support the theory that the branch of the Aryan race, which had established itself in India long before history was born, had already gone through the successive steps of feticism, animism and polytheism before it entered this country. The Vedas which are universally accepted to-day as the oldest scriptures extant in the world, bear testimony to it. The Samhita and the Brâhmana portions which comprise the hymns and narrate in detail the different rituals or sacrifices for which those hymns are to be used and which undoubtedly are the oldest portions, though addressed to different gods, uphold each of them as the God of the gods and the Ruler of the universe. Thus Indra, Maruts, Asvins, Rudras and all the rest have been extolled in the different hymns one after another, and attributed with such supreme qualities as to give the reader the idea, that each in turn was looked upon as the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. The only explanation of this apparent polytheism is that the worshippers had long formed the idea of the one only God and were then looking upon each of these gods, whom they used to worship as separate entities before, as different *manifestations* of that one Being and therefore one and the same with Him and with one another. If the Vedas are the oldest scriptures in the world—as has been proved by modern scholarship from a comparative study of the history of the nations of the world, from internal evidence, from astronomical data and from various other sources,—then the fact becomes established, that in the dim, dark ages where tradition sheds no light to dispel the gloom,—when Egypt, Greece, and Rome that played successively such important parts in the history of human development, were as yet in the womb of futurity, when the forefathers of the Hebrew, the Phœnician and the Greek were leading a tribal nomadic life and struggling to come to the idea of a God of gods through their various

tribal feuds—the Aryans, in India, had already grown introspective and had evolved a full-formed religion and philosophy of their own. Nay, the customs of the different nations of dealing with their dead, in much later times, tend to prove that the idea of the existence of the soul must have originated first in India,—and who knows how much India had helped other nations to form the same? Egypt, trying to preserve the dead bodies of her kings and queens, with the idea that with the destruction of the corpses would come the dissolution of the souls that lived in them; the Jews, the Christians, the Mahommedans and various other nations burying their dead with the idea that they will all rise at the trumpet-call on the Day of Judgment, with the *physical* bodies that they possessed while living;—undoubtedly point to the fact that the idea of the soul, as entirely separate and distinct from the body and unaffected by the preservation or destruction of it after death, had not been fully developed among them.

However that might be, in trying to delineate Hinduism we must come to the Vedas which comprise the Samhitas and Brâhmanas, and then to the Upanishads or the Vedanta, the latter portion of the Vedas. Of the former we have already given an idea. A few words more and we shall come to the latter.

No one here needs to be told, we suppose, that the Vedas are not one book, but a vast collection of religious records of the past, divided or classified into four different sections or groups known as the Rik, the Sama, the Yajus, and the Atharvan. Each of these four main groups is again subdivided into three different-sets, namely, the Samhitas the Brâhmanas, and the Upanishads. The Samhitas are collections of hymns or prayers addressed to various gods, the number of whom has been found to be thirty-three in all; the Brâhmanas narrate the time, place and manner in which the different hymns of the Samhitas are to be effectually used, or, in short, the different sacrifices performed in old times, during the performance of which the different hymns were chanted. The Upanishads record the religious experiences of truths at which the votaries of each of the four groups of the Rik, the Sama, the Yajus and the Atharvan, ultimately arrived after long practice.

through successive generations of particular sacrifices and the chanting of particular hymns during their performance. For we must remember here, that although the custom might have been at first for each Bráhmaṇ or a Bráhmaṇ family to become versed in all the four different groups of the Vedas above mentioned, it was soon found out to be impossible to do so, as the records grew in time, and thus each family confined itself particularly to the study and practice of only one of them.

We shall now come to see if there is reasonable ground for the peculiar belief of the Hindus all over India, that the Vedas are uncreate and eternal, that they existed in all times with the Great Lord of the Universe, that they are the purifying breath of the great Being (पुरुषनिःश्वसितम्), and are indeed the power through which He projects the universe at the beginning of the each cycle out of Himself, as the spider its web. The history of religion has not been able to find the existence of such a belief in any other nation. Strange as the belief seems at first sight, it will appear in a different light when we seriously consider the question of the rise of knowledge in human mind. Whence and how does knowledge arise in man,—where is the fountain-head of that life-giving stream that flows out of man, solves all his enquiries and makes more than a god of him? The discoverers of the secular sciences and arts, when closely questioned as to the part that their mental abilities played in making their respective discoveries, would invariably say that it was always a passive rather than an active one,—that they merely put themselves into the proper attitude of concentration on facts, and the knowledge or truth flowed of its own accord, flashed all of a sudden from some unknown source into their minds, they knew not how. The spiritual seers of truth or the Rishis of the Vedas, likewise, realised the same fact in going to discover the science and art of religion, the ethical and spiritual relation between the souls and the Over Soul, with all becoming humility that is rarely found in this sceptic materialistic age, held themselves to be merely the instruments through whom the Lord's truth and knowledge flowed out and shone to benefit humanity,—

येनैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैव आत्मा विवृणुते तन् स्वाम्—
 “He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be attained. To him this Atman reveals Its true nature.” They found the source and depository of all knowledge in the Lord of the universe and thus never took the proud name of discoverers or inventors of the spiritual laws,—but of *seers* of those truths through the Lord's grace. Indeed, whether man knows it or not, every knowledge that comes to him in life, existed in all times, for the very relation of the Lord with the universe and all individual souls, is immanent and eternal, and the method of His manifesting Himself as these, is what man is finding out in parts as results of his enquiry and investigation—and is it not true that that constitutes all our knowledge? The word Veda, therefore, from the Sanskrit root *Vid* to know, means the sum-total of the records of all spiritual laws that man has found out up to date and what he is likely to find out in all future times, the laws that existed and do exist eternally with and in the Lord. No wonder the Hindus believe those truths to be eternal and uncreate.

(To be continued).

A HINT OF LIFE.

Don't look for the flaws as you go through life,
 And, even when you find them,
 It is wise and kind to be somewhat blind,
 And look for the virtues behind them.
 For the cloudiest night has a hint of light
 Somewhere in the shadows hiding.
 It is better by far to hunt for a star
 Than the spot on the sun abiding.
 The world will never adjust itself
 To suit your whims to the letter.
 Some thing must go wrong your whole life long;
 And the sooner you know it, the better.
 It is folly to fight with the Infinite,
 And go under at last in the wrestle;
 The wiser man shapes into God's good plan,
 As the water shapes into a vessel.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX,

SELECTIONS FROM SANSKRIT

MEDITATION ON THE PARAMATMAN.

[The following is taken from the Taittiriya Aranyaka of Krishna Yajur Veda, being the eleventh and twelfth *Anuvak* of the 10th *Prapáthaka*. This forms a part of the *Upaná Kánda* of the Aranyaka, and as such, it tells a method for the practice of meditation on the Param Brahman. It will be good to note here that the word "Nârâyana" which occurs in these passages, does not stand for the Pouranik conception of a personal God of the same name; but it means "the Being existent within the causal universe," i. e., the Great Cosmic-Spirit. Also the designation of "flame" for the Lord is meant simply to supply a point in which the mind is to be held in concentration, and without which real meditation would be impossible.]

TRANSLATION

सहस्रशीर्षं देवं विश्वात्तं विश्वशंभुवम् ।

विश्वं नारायणं देवमक्षरं परमं प्रभुम् ॥

विश्वतः परमं नित्यं विश्वं नारायणं हरिम् ।

विश्वमेवेदं पुरुषस्तद्विश्वमुपजीवति ॥

पतिं विश्वस्याऽऽत्मेश्वरं शाश्वतं शिवमच्युतम् ।

नारायणं महाज्ञेयं विश्वात्मानं परायणम् ॥

नारायणः परं ब्रह्मतत्त्वं नारायणः परः ।

नारायणः परो ज्योतिरात्मा नारायणः परः ॥

यच्च किञ्चिज्जगत्सर्वं दृश्यते श्रूयतेऽपि वा ।

अन्तर्बहिश्च तत्सर्वं व्याप्य नारायणः स्थितः ॥

अनन्तमव्ययं कविं समुद्रेऽन्तं विश्वशंभुवम् ।

पद्मकोषप्रतीकाशं हृदयं चाप्यधोमुखम् ॥

अधो निहृया कितस्त्यान्ते नाभ्यमुपरि तिष्ठति

हृदयं तादृजानीयाद्विश्वस्वाऽऽयतनं महत् ॥

संततं शिलाभिस्तु लम्बत्याकोरासंनिभम् ।

तस्यान्ते सुषिरं सूक्ष्मं तस्मिन्सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

तस्य मध्ये महानग्निर्विश्वार्चिर्विश्वतोमुखः ।

सोऽप्रभुग्विभजस्तिष्ठन्नाहारमजरः कविः ॥

(Meditate upon that) effulgent One, of myriad heads and with eyes covering the whole of this universe, from Whom hath come forth all the good in the world, Who is this universe and the great Deity dwelling inside this creation, the changeless, the supreme Lord.

(Meditate upon Him who is) superior to the whole world, (and yet) the whole world (in being the soul of everything in it), the eternal, the main stay and support of all the individual souls, the (mighty) dispeller of ignorance; whatever is to be found in this world, all lives in that great Being. He brings the world out of Himself to work out His purpose.

(Meditate upon) the Lord of the world, the Ruler of the creatures, the ever-existent, the immutable, the great Good; the Nârâyana (who is) the great object to be known, the soul of the universe, the supreme refuge.

Nârâyana is the Supreme Brahman; Nârâyana is the Supreme Principle (beyond all relativity), the supreme enlightenment, and the supreme Self.

Whatever there is in this universe, everything that can be seen or heard, pervading all that, in and through them all, Nârâyana exists.

The infinite, the immutable, the omniscient, the Self, Who has projected all beings and Who is the End of them all; from Him hath proceeded all that is good and He shines in the heart, which is like a lotus with its face pointed downwards and the inner cavity of which resembles the calyx of a lotus.

Below (the joint of) the neck, and twelve *bitasti* (i. e., finger's breadth) above the navel is situated the heart, know that to be the great receptacle of the whole universe.

Wrapped with sinews, (the heart) hangs like a lotus bud; inside the same there is a fine hole and in that all is established.

In that (shines) the great Fire of myriad flow whose rays illumine all. He, the imperishable and

संतापयति स्वं देहमापादतलमस्तकम् ।
 तस्य मध्ये वह्निशिखा अणीयोर्ध्वी व्यवस्थिता ॥
 नीलतोयदमध्यस्था विद्रयुल्लेखेव भास्वरा ।
 नीवारशुकवत्तन्वी पीता भास्वत्यणूपमा ॥
 तस्याः शिखाया मध्ये परमात्मा व्यवस्थितः ।
 स ब्रह्मा स शिवः सेन्द्रः सोऽक्षरः परमः स्वराट् ॥
 ऋतं सत्यं परं ब्रह्म पुरुषं कृष्णपिङ्गलम् ।
 ऊर्ध्वरेतं विरूपाक्षं विश्वरूपाय वै नमः ॥

enlightener of all, eating everything first, divides (the food to all other parts of the body).*

The subtle flame rising upwards inside it (the heart) keeps the body warm, from head to foot.

That yellow flame, shines like a streak of lightning amidst a dark blue cloud, and is as fine as an ear of a corn. Its brightness is indeed beyond all comparison.

In that flame sits the Great Being; He is Brahmā (the creator) and Shiva (the destroyer) and Indra (the God of the gods). He is the Supreme, the imperishable; He shines by His own nature (without help of anything else).

Obeisance to Him, who has become the universe of varied forms, Who is the Supreme Brahman, the Truth un-conditioned, the Being of dark blue tawny hue and with terrible eyes, and Who is beyond all desire for creation.

* Cf. Bhagavad Gita XV. 14.

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

II.

THE LOSS OF SHRADDHĀ IN INDIA AND
 NEED OF ITS REVIVAL—*MEN* WE
 WANT—REAL SOCIAL REFORM.

[*Sri Surendra Nath Sen,—from private diary.*]

SATURDAY, the 22nd. January, 1898.

Early in the morning I came to Swamiji who was then staying in the house of Balaram Babu, at 57 Ramakanta Bose's Street, Calcutta. The room was fully packed with listeners. Swamiji was saying, "We want *Shraddhā*, we want faith in our own selves. Strength is life, weakness is death. 'We are the Atman, deathless and free; pure, pure by nature. Can we ever commit any sin? Impossible!'—such a faith is needed. Such a faith makes men of us, makes gods of us. It is by losing this idea of *Shraddhā*, that the country has gone to ruin."

Question:— How did we come to lose this *Shraddhā*?

Swamiji:— We have had a negative education all along from our boyhood. We have only learnt that we are nobodies. Seldom are we given to understand that great men were ever born in our

country. Nothing positive has been taught to us. We do not even know how to use our hands and feet! We master all the facts and figures concerning the ancestors of the English, but we are sadly unmindful about our own! We have learnt only weakness. Being a conquered race, we have brought ourselves to believe that we are weak, and have no independence in anything. So, how can it be but that the *Shraddhā* is lost? The idea of true *Shraddhā* must be brought back once more to us, the faith in our own selves must be re-awakened, and then only, all the problems which face our country will gradually be solved by ourselves.

Q.— How can that ever be? How will *Shraddhā* alone remedy the innumerable evils with which our society is beset? Besides, there are so many crying evils in the country, to remove which the Indian National Congress and other patriotic associations are carrying on a strenuous agitation and petitioning the British Government. How better can their wants be made known? What has *Shraddhā* to do in the matter?

Swamiji:— Tell me, whose wants are those,— yours or the Rulers'? If yours, will they supply them for you, or will you have to do that for yourselves?

Q.— But it is the Ruler's duty to see to the wants of the subject people. Whom should we look up to for everything, if not to the King?

Swamiji:— Never are the wants of a beggar fulfilled. Suppose the Government give you all you need, where are the men who are able to keep up the things demanded? So, *make men* first. *Men* we want, and how can men be made unless the *Shraddhá* is there?

Q.— But such is not the view of the majority, Sir.

Swamiji:— What you call majority, is mainly composed of fools and men of common intellect. Men who have brains to think for themselves are few everywhere. These few men with brains are the real leaders in everything and in every department of work; the majority are guided by them as with a string, and that is good, for everything goes all right when they follow in the footsteps of these leaders. Those are only fools who think themselves too high to bend their heads to anyone, and they bring on their own ruin by acting on their own judgment. You talk of social reform? But what do you do? All that you mean by your social reform is either widow-remarriage or female-emancipation, or something of that sort. Do you not? And these again are directed within the confines of a few of the castes only. Such a scheme of reform may do good to a few no doubt, but of what avail is that to the whole nation? Is that reform, or only a form of selfishness?—to somehow cleanse their own room and keep it tidy and let others go from bad to worse!

Q.— Then, you mean to say, that there is no need of social reform at all?

Swamiji:— Who says so? Of course, there is need of. Most of what you talk of as social reform not touch the poor masses; they have already those things—the widow-marriage, female-emancipation, etc.—which you cry for. For this reason they will not think of those things as reforms at all. What I mean to say is, that want of *Shraddhá* has brought in all the evils among us, and is bringing in more and more. My method of treatment is to take out by the roots the very causes of the disease and not to keep them merely suppressed. Reforms we should have in many ways; who will

be so foolish as to deny it? There is, for example, a good reason for intermarriage in India, in the absence of which the race is becoming physically weaker day by day.

It being the day of a solar eclipse, the gentleman who was asking the above questions, saluted Swamiji and left saying, "I must go now for a bath in the Ganges. I shall, however, come another day."

GLIMPSES

(Collected by Mr. P. V. Seshagiri Rao.)

Ill fortune never crushed that man whom good fortune deceived not.—Ben Jonson.

* * *

Memory, of all the powers of the mind, is the most delicate and frail! it is the first of our faculties that age invades.—Do.

* * *

The mind is like a bow, the stronger by being unbent.—Do.

* * *

I have considered, our whole life is like a play; wherein every man forgetful of himself is in travail with expression of another. Nay, we so insist in imitating others, as we cannot (when it is necessary) return to ourselves, like children that imitate the vices of stammerers so long, till at last they become such; and make the habit to another nature, as it is never forgotten.—Do.

* * *

Good men are the stars, the planets of the ages wherein they live, and illustrate the times—God did never let them be wanting to the world.—Do.

* * *

Money never made any man rich, but his mind. He that can order himself to the law of nature is not only without the sense, but the fear of poverty.—Do.

* * *

We serve our avarice; and not content with the good of the earth that is offered us, we search and dig for the evil that is hidden—We covet superfluous things, when it were more honour for us, if we would content necessary.—Do.

* * *

There are infirmities not only of body, but of soul and fortunes, which do require the merciful hand of our abilities. I cannot contemn a man for ignorance, but behold him with as much pity as I do Lazarus. It is no greater charity to clothe his body than apparel the nakedness of his soul.

—*Sir Thomas Browne.*

* * *

Riches without meekness and thankfulness do not make any man happy. And therefore my advice is, that you endeavour to be honestly rich or contentedly poor; but be sure that your riches be justly got, or you spoil all; for it is well said by Caussin: "He that loses his conscience has nothing left that is worth keeping." Therefore be sure you look to that. And in the next place, look to your health; and if you have it, praise God, and value it next to a good conscience; for health is the second blessing that we mortals are capable of—a blessing that money cannot buy—and therefore value it, and be thankful for it. As for money, which may be said to be third blessing, neglect it not; but note that there is no necessity of being rich; for I told you there be as many miseries beyond riches as on this side of them; and you have a competence, enjoy it with a meek, cheerful, thankful heart. I have heard a grave divine say that God has two dwellings, one in heaven, and the other in a meek and thankful heart.—*Isaac Walton.*

* * *

Tread softly and circumspectly in this funambulus track and narrow path of goodness; pursue virtue virtuously, be sober and temperate, not to preserve your body in a sufficiency for wanton ends, not to spare your purse, not to be free from the infamy of common transgressor that way, and thereby to balance or palliate obscure and closer vices, nor simply to enjoy health, by all of which you may leaven good actions, and render virtues disputable, but, in one word, that you may truly serve God, which every sickness will tell you cannot well do without health.

—*Sir Thomas Browne.*

* * *

He that is chaste and continent not to impair his strength, or terrified by contagion, will hardly be heroically virtuous! Adjourn not that virtue until those years when Cato could lend out his wife,

and impotent Satyrs write satires against lust, but be chaste in thy flaming days when Alexander dared not trust his eyes upon the fair sisters of Darius, and when so many think that there is no other way but Origen's.—Do.

* * *

Let the fruition of things bless the possession of them, and take no satisfaction in dying but living rich. For since thy good works, not thy goods, will follow thee; since riches are an appurtenances of life, and no dead man is rich, to famish in plenty, and live poorly to die rich, were a multiplying improvement in madness and use upon use in folly.—Do.

* * *

Persons lightly dipped, not grained, in generous honesty, are but pale in goodness and faint-hued in sincerity.—Do.

* * *

Demosthenes never made any oration on the sudden; yea, being called upon he never rose up to speak, except he had well studied the matter; and he was wont to say, *that he showed how he honoured and revered the people of Athens, because he was careful what he spake unto them.*

—*Thomas Fuller.*

* * *

Owe not thy humility unto humiliation by adversity, but look humbly down in that state when others look upward upon thee.—Do.

* * *

Let age, not envy, draw wrinkles on thy cheeks; be content to be envied, but envy not. Emulation may be plausible, and indignation allowable, but admit no treaty with that passion which no circumstance can make good.—Do.

MY TASK.

To love some one more dearly every day,
To help a wandering child to find his way,
To ponder o'er a noble thought and pray,
And smile when evening falls.

To follow truth as blind men long for light,
To do my best from dawn of day till night,
To keep my heart fit for His holy sight,
And answer when He calls.

MAUDE LOUISE RAE

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Extracts

LXI.

U. S. A.

31st. August, 1894

Dear A—

* * * *

I have received a letter from *Cat*, but it requires a book to answer all his queries. So, I send him my blessings through you and ask you to remind him, that we agree to differ,—and see the harmony of contrary points. So it does not matter what he believes in; he must act.

Give my love to B—, G. G., K—, Doctor, and to all our friends and all the great and patriotic souls, who were brave and noble enough to sink their differences for their country's cause.

* * Now organise a little society..... You will have to take charge of the whole movement, not as a *leader*, but as a *servant*. Do you know, the least show of leading destroys everything by rousing jealousy!..... Work slowly by disseminating the ideas broadcast.....Mysore will in time be a great stronghold of our Mission.....Try to collect funds from Mysore and elsewhere to build a temple in Madras, which should have a library and some rooms for the office and the preachers who should be Sannyasins, and for *Vairagis* who may chance to come. Thus we shall progress inch by inch.....So far you have done well indeed, my brave boy. All strength shall be given to you. * *

This is a great field for my work, and everything done here prepares the way for my coming work in England. * *

You know the greatest difficulty with me is to keep or even to touch money. It is disgusting and debasing. So you must organise a society to take charge of the

practical and pecuniary part of it. I have friends here who take care of all my monetary concerns. Do you see? It will be a wonderful relief to me to get rid of horrid money affairs. So, the sooner you organise yourselves and you be ready as secretary and treasurer to enter into direct communication with my friends and sympathisers here, the better for you and me. Do that quickly; and write to me. Give the society a non-sectarian name. * *

* * Great things are in store for you..... By and by I hope to make you independent of your college work, so that you may, without starving yourself and family, devote your whole soul to the work. So work, my boys, work! The rough part of the work has been smoothed and rounded; now it will roll on better and better every year. And if you can simply keep it going well until I come to India, the work will progress by leaps and bounds. Rejoice that you have done so much. When you feel gloomy, think what has been done within the last year. How, rising from nothing, we have the eyes of the world fixed upon us now. Not only India, but the world ~~outside~~ is expecting great things of us.

* * Nothing will be able to resist truth and love and sincerity. Are you sincere? unselfish even unto death? and loving? Then fear not, not even death. Onward, my lads! The whole world requires Light. It is expectant! India alone has that Light, not in magic, mummeries and charlatanism, but in the teaching of the glories of the spirit of real religion,—of the highest spiritual truth. That is why the Lord has preserved the race through all its vicissitudes unto the present day. Now the time has come. Have

faith that you are all, my brave lads, born to do great things! Let not the barks of puppies frighten you, no, not even the thunderbolts of heaven, but stand up and work!

Ever yours affectionately,
Vivekananda.

—
LXII.

U. S. A.

21st. September, 1894

Dear A—

* * I have been continuously travelling from place to place and working incessantly, giving lectures and holding classes &c.

I have not been able to write a line yet ~~for my proposed~~ book. Perhaps I may be able to take it in hand later on. I have made some nice friends here amongst the liberal people, and a few amongst the orthodox. I hope soon to return to India. I have had enough of this country, and especially as too much work is making me nervous. The giving of too many public lectures and constant hurry, have brought on this nervousness.....So you see, I will soon return. Of course, there is a growing section with whom I am very popular, and who will like to have me here all the time. But I think I have had enough of newspaper blazoning, and humbugging of a public life. I do not care the least for it.

* * No large number of men in any country do good out of mere sympathy. A few who give money in Christian lands often do so through policy or fear of hell. So it is as in our Bengali proverb, "Kill a cow and make a pair of shoes out of the leather and give them in charity to a Bráhmaṇ." So it is here, and so everywhere; and then, the Westerners are miserly in comparison to our race. I sincerely believe that the Asiatics are the most charitable race in the world, only they are very poor.

I am going to live for a few months in New York. That city is the head, hand and purse of the country. Of course, Boston is called the Bráhmaṇical city, and here in America there are hundreds of thousands that sympathise with me.....The New York people are very open. I will see what can be done there, as I have some very influential friends. After all, I am getting disgusted with this lecturing business. It will take a long time for the Westerners to understand the higher spirituality. Everything is £. s. d. to them. If a religion brings them money or health or beauty, or long life, they will all flock to it, otherwise not. * *

Give to B—, G. G., and all of our friends my best love.

Yours with everlasting love,
Vivekananda.

BEAUTY, SEEN AND UNSEEN

"TO live poetry" they say "is better than to be a poet." Poet, nature's darling, is fed by the silent flow of rapture which swells her breast, and is put to a calm repose under the lustrous beams of her tender eyes. At times, before his dreamy wondering gaze, she unfolds her raiment of varied hues modulated with tints of unspeakable softness and his eyes become luxuriously

bathed with the hidden glow of her sparkling beauty;—nay more, with every pulsation of his he counts the throbbings of her heart and wonders how they rise quite in unison with his own; his very life borrows the warmth from hers, his heart fills with feelings that are hers; his whole mind reverberates with the mute music that is hers through eternity! He feels blessed; and in his tattered

rag holds the pomp of Emperors to ridicule!

And lo! there sits the man with his contented face and serene air, raising a cloud of halo around of rare light and charm,—in that never-frequented avenue embosomed in some dark maze of a deep forest, haunted by beasts alone in their native pranks and filled with the sweet lives of little feathery beings aloft,—know you who he is? He belongs to that old type of Aryan Rishihood, a line of seers immortal! World never knows of him and may be, man never hears him speak; yet his silence utters a voice that tells. —World is naught to him with its pain and pleasure; but his meditative eyes are beaming with gladness that is not of this world, his whole frame seems to be a living symbolism of happiness of some other and better Existence! The aura of glory that shines around him is the external reflection of the light that is in him within—and Ah, what light! Who can sound the waves of bright thoughts in which his soul is merged? Yet, if one has ears to hear the hallowed words that his silence speaks, one would listen “oh world, stand aside for a while with all thy vanities and fears and let me alone to look to my Beautiful One!” Now, is it that Nature which the poet worships with such adoration? Is it that beauty, of which his fancy's pencil draws such a life-like portrait for those who have no eyes to see? Aye, is it that beauty that melts into melody so charming through his mystic lyre? Is it the same? Perhaps, not! For never have we seen a poet who is so mad for his ideal, as to unify his whole self with that which he worships and for which he gives up all that the world has to give of pleasures and enjoyments. But here is a man whose life proclaims—

“He thought it happier to be dead,
To die for beauty, than live for bread.”

His meditation of the Beautiful has dragged

him out from the trinket-show of the world; and he deems it a privilege now, to lay his life down as an oblation in Its grand altar-fire. His inner nature has been so touched with his ideal that his whole self has become fused with it! Poet lives for beauty, but the seer lives in beauty,—to the latter the price of worshipping the Beautiful is entire self-dissolution. Then can we say any more that the beauty which he worships, is that of the Nature whom the poet adores?

Beauty is the perception of harmony by the mind; and harmony is the unifying principle in variety. Hence the perception of beauty can justly be called to be the perception by the mind of Unity in variety. The poet sees this in flashes now and then in the skirt of Nature and calls it the “beautiful.” But this beauty of Nature which he sees and feels is the least part of what she hides. The glorious Ushá (dawn) and her virgin purity, the emerald-charm of noonday sky, the auric splendour of the setting sun, ~~on~~ his crimson robe of fleecy clouds, the mystic calm of sombre night, are all sought after by the poet with eagerness; but they help to show in mere flashes, the vision of this unity throughout nature, and at the same time mock us with their transiency and leave us to ask—are these glimpses real? The dash of glory that the morning sun pours upon yonder spangling snow is marvellous indeed to make one feel one's self to be in harmony with it but who ever can clutch it and keep the feeling for all times? It is like a mirage, “a meteor-happiness that shuns human grasp!” And where is the poet who knows whether or not, a perpetual gala is spread behind that veil, which can be perceived through the beatific vision of the Supreme Unity that rests under all these diverse appearances of harmony in nature? That indeed is the grand harmony in the concert that nature plays in all ages and climes! That

is the perennial fountain of beauty in which the seer drinks deep, days and nights! Unseen by the world, yet, it shines through all that is beautiful in nature! And, when one absorbs one's self fully in it one perceives the Supreme One, the essence of all beauty and bliss and attraction as standing at the back of the universe through all eternity! It happened so with our Vedic Rishis of old and can really happen again even now—for the universe is indeed the great *Pratika* of the Supreme One. This vision of the Beautiful elevates and takes one out of the little grooves of one's little self and makes one feel to be one with creation. And all things considered, is not our whole existence a search after That—that Object of beauty which is *really* a perpetual joy?

If passion for solitude has ever led your steps to the lonely shore of a sea-girt isle where the angry breaker lashes the rocks around filling the air with wild echoes, and made you linger there until the sun's broad disc seemed resting on the burnished wave;—or on some sleepless night, if ever you have been under the open sky and pondered over the millions of constellations tinged with infinite colours, swirling through the boundless space in the midst of that immense concave, those flashing incessant meteors, and the whole stellar world running in that endless race;—or grander still, if ever you have seen the beautiful expression of a beautiful face reflecting the purity of the inner heart and diving deep under the surface have lost yourself to consider the infinity within—your soul must have been held entranced to feel that all these are but links in a great harmony rising out of a grand Universal Mind and these various display of beauties are only imperfect expressions of the joy that constitutes Its self which is at once infinite and beyond all comprehension! You must have felt at the moment that your spirit had flown above matter's realm and been standing face to face

with the ocean of unconditional bliss! And before that fulness of beauty your overflowing heart must have come to your lips to cry with joy—

अहो निमग्नस्ता रूपसिन्धौ पश्यामि नान्तं न च
मध्यमादिम् ।

अवाक् च निस्पन्द तरे विमूढः कुत्रास्मि को-
स्मीति न वेद्मि देव ॥

“Oh, I am merged in the sea of that Beauty; I see neither its end nor its beginning, nor its middle. I am speechless and overpowered, I am losing all sensation of the body; I do not know, O Lord, where I am, or who I am.”

That indeed is a glimpse of the *Bhuma-chit*—the consciousness absolute, whom the ‘pure in heart’ sees in every atom in the universe. This is the unseen Beauty of all beauties! This perception of the beauty of the Universal Mind fills the cosmos with a glory, in which the dull glimmer of the vilest thing even dares not touch a note of discord!

Such is the cognition of the *Bhuma*, the beauty and grandeur of the Being, which becomes tarnished indefinitely by the finite nature of our senses and mind. Judge now, Oh man! whether this perverted gross forms of *Maya* can be so heart-ravishing—ponder, how infinitely maddening must be the untrammelled, untainted, transcendental beauty of the real Self of the Being!—

एतावानस्य महिमातो ज्यायांश्च पुरुषः ।

“Though to such extent is the manifestation of His glory, yet much greater is the Being Himself.”

It is indeed the endless ocean of nectar, an inexhaustible store of Beauty, tasted and seen by only a blessed few! “Drinking a few drops of it the God of all gods and the spiritual guide of all has lost His Self in the conscious calm of eternal *samadhi*; seeing the sparkle of the waves of this Universal Mind (*Bhuma*) at a distance, the *Devarshi* *Nârada* has become frantic with ecstasy and

roams ever through the universe singing Its glory; whilst the born-free Sukadeva, touching and sprinkling over himself a few drops of Which has attained to that innocence which can never be touched and roams all over the world respected by all, speaking and preaching of That alone!" "Incarnations, like Rama, Krishna, Buddha and others are hanging like seeds, in bunches, on the branches of that Sachchidananda tree!"

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FLOOD RELIEF FUND

	R.	A.	P.
Amount previously acknowledged ...	2342	7	6
Through Swami Achalananda of the Benares R. K. Home of Service, by small collections (2nd instalment) ...	1000	0	0
Flood Relief Committee, Ghatal ...	319	0	0
Choulpati Barwari, through Sj. Nageshwar Prasad Sinha, Kehkapur ...	99	0	0
Sj. Purna Ch. Sett, Barabazar, Calcutta ...	70	0	0
Collected by Sj. Prafullanath Rudra, Bagbazar ...	50	2	0
Sj. Lakshminarayan Pal, Ghatal ...	30	0	0
Sj. Surendranath Sarkar, Port Blair ...	25	0	0
Colld. by Sj. P. C. De, Chandernagore ...	22	8	0
Collected by Sj. D. C. Som, Giridih ...	20	0	0
Collected by Sj. Manindranath Roy (Irpala, Midnapore) ...	20	0	0
Sj. Kanailal Bose, Rangoon ...	15	0	0
„ Basanta Kumar Bose, Chinsura ...	15	0	0
Colld. by Sj. Jyotish Ch. Roy, Dacca ...	11	0	0
Satpathabalambi Sampradaya, Chandernagore ...	10	0	0
Sm. Mokshada Kumari, Barik, Kontai ...	10	0	0
Mr. D. K. Natu, Ratnagiri ...	10	0	0
Mr. T. S. Narasinghaswami, Malabar... ..	10	0	0
Collection of amount less than Rs. 10	147	13	9

Total Rs. ... 4226 15 3

Messrs. Butto Krishna Pal & Co., helped the Mission with 6 bottles of Edwards' Tonic and 72, 4 oz. empty phials with corks. The Bengal Government also placed in its hands 15 mds. of rice for distribution. Besides these several gentlemen and societies have helped the Mission with old cloths.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

(CULLED AND CONDENSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

EXCAVATIONS in the neighbourhood of the Mexican village of Ixtapalapa have brought to light the remains of a man who, in life, must have been nearly 15ft. high.

THE most costly tomb in existence is that which was erected to the memory of Mahammed. The diamonds and rubies used in the decorations are worth £2,000,000.

AT the meeting held at Surat, a poor woman contributed 1¼ farthings towards the Transvaal Tamils' Relief Fund. Immediately the token of sympathy was offered in the meeting to public auction and sold for £10.

CREMATION is making rapid headway in Europe. Year before last, according to the "British Medical Journal," 4,050 were carried out in Germany as against 2,977 in 1907. In the London crematoriums there was an increase of 20 per cent.

A Boston horticulturist has succeeded in producing a new and remarkable fruit by crossing cucumber and orange plants. The new fruit, which is yellow in colour and devoid of seed, is said to possess a most agreeable flavour.

THE Swami Ramakrishnananda delivered the following lectures in Madras during the Christmas holidays:—26th. Dec.—Science, Modern and Ancient. 27th. Dec.—Determination of Conscious Tendencies. 28th. Dec.—Regions, Higher and Lower. 29th.—Locus of the Soul.

ON the 28th. ultimo, the Swami Advaitananda of the Belur Math passed away peacefully in a ripe old age. His remains were cremated with proper religious rites within the Math compound. He was the oldest Sannyasin disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and was much respected by his fellow-brothers for his noble and genial spirit.

THE forty-eighth Birthday Anniversary of [the Swami Vivekananda will be celebrated by his disciples, friends and admirers at the Math, Belur, on

February 6th. 1910. As the Swami always insisted on the Seva of the poor as being essential to the development of our spiritual nature, it has been decided to make that, the especial feature of his day.

THE heat received by the earth under a high sun and a clear sky is equivalent to about 7,000 horse-power per acre. Though our engineers have not yet discovered how to utilise this enormous supply of power, they will, I have not the slightest doubt, ultimately succeed. When our coal is exhausted and our water power inadequate, it may be that this is the source from which we shall derive the energy necessary for the world's work.

—Sir. J. J. Thomson.

PROFESSOR David, who occupies the Chair of Geology in the University of Sydney and who accompanied Sir Ernest Shackleton to the Antarctic, has been making some interesting remarks on his discoveries there. The fossil woods he had found showed that pine forest had flourished in the vicinity of the South Pole at a remote geological epoch. The coal seams he had discovered suggested the same conclusion. At that time there was more or less continuous land from Australia to the South Pole. The climate all over the world was at that period probably much milder than at present.

THE tamarind tree of India is well-known for the acid pulp contained in the pods, which is so largely used in this country as a condiment; but it was not generally known that the seeds had any food value. The kernels are roasted over a fire and ground into flour which is made into chappattis either alone or mixed with cereal flour. Chemical analyses show that the kernels are comparatively nutritious and free from mechanically disagreeable ingredients. The powdered seeds boiled in water make a tenacious glue used by wool weavers, saddlers and book-binders. The seeds contain very little oil—about as much as pulses.

IN the Paris "Jardin d'Acclimatation" (the Paris Zoo, that is to say) there is at present, as we learn from *La Vie Heureuse*, a village inhabited solely by dwarfs of both sexes. The Liliput village is round

in form, its streets are unpaved and gravelled instead, and it is entered by a gateway which is Brobdignagian rather than Liliputian in proportion. One hundred and eighty dwarfs are at present gathered together here. The houses are suited in size to the inhabitants; and they are entered by doorways which resemble cat-holes rather than human entrances. Some are policemen; others are municipal guards; others are postmen, carrying diminutive letters; others, again, are firemen. There is among them a Hungarian prince, an Italian count, and a German baron. These distinctions may be considerable in the eyes of ordinary mortals, but are nothing in this community of dwarfs, who, it appears, glory in their dwarfdom.

THE Hindus regard Lord Buddha, as the last but one Avatar of Vishnu. Here are given only a few of the scriptural references. *Vide* :—

- (1) Bhavishya Purana, latter half, lesson 73.
- (2) Nirnaya Sindhu, lesson 11.
- (3) Linga Purana, Uttarardha, lesson 48, verses 31, 32.
- (4) Kurma Purana, chapter 6, verse 15.
- (5) Garuda Purana, sec. 202, verse 11.
- (6) Devi Bhagabat, Skandha 10, chap. 5, verse 14.
- (7) Pudma Purana, Kryakanda, chap. 6, verse 188.
- (8) Garga Samhita, Vishwajita Khanda, lesson 13, verses 49, 50.
- (9) Baraha Purana, lesson 21, verses 65, 66; also lesson 48, verse 22.
- (10) Matsya Purana, chap. 47, verse 247.
- (11) Brahmanda Purana.
- (12) Nrishingha Purana, chap. 36, verse 29.
- (13) Meru Tantra.
- (14) Tantrasara, Hymn to Vishnu.
- (15) Vayu Puran, chap. 18, verses 26, 27, 28.
- (16) Gitagobinda.

'The Christian Common wealth' reminds us of Swami Abhedananda's remarkable opening words in a famous New York address, in connection with his explanation of the cause of India's shrinking from conventional Christianity. He said :—

"A Hindu distinguishes the religion of the churches from the religion of Jesus the Christ..... The religion which the churches uphold and preach to-day, which has been built around the personality of Jesus the Christ, and which is popularly known as Christianity, should be called Churchianity, in

contradistinction to that pure religion of the heart which was taught by Jesus.....The religion of the Christ was a religion of the heart, without any ceremonial, without ritual, without priestcraft; it was not based upon any book, but upon the feelings of the heart, upon a direct communion of the individual soul with the Heavenly Father. On the contrary, the religion of the Church is based upon a book, believes in dogmas, professes a creed, performs rituals, practises ceremonials, and obeys the commands of a host of priests."

But it is not only the Hindu who makes this distinction.—*Light.*

Mr. Arthur E. P. Weigall, Chief Inspector in the Egyptian Department of Antiquities, thus describes his arrival into the tomb of Prince Yuua and his wife:—"Belonging to one of these (armchairs) was a pillow made of down and covered with linen. It was so perfectly preserved that one might have sat upon it or tossed it from this chair to that without doing it injury. Here were fine alabaster vases, and in one of these we were startled to find a liquid, like honey or syrup, still unsolidified by time. Now the eye was directed to a wicker trunk fitted with trays and partitions, and ventilated with little apertures, for the scents were doubtless strong. In all directions stood objects gleaming with gold undulled by a speck of dust, and one looked from one article to another with the feeling that the entire human conception of Time was wrong. These were the things of yesterday, of a year or so ago. Why, here were meats prepared for the feasts in the Under-world; here were Yuua's favourite joints, each neatly placed in a wooden box as though for a journey."

In the two gilded coffins the owners of this room of the dead lay as though peacefully sleeping:—"First above Yuua and then above his wife the electric lamps were held, and as one looked down into their quiet faces there was almost the feeling that they would presently open their eyes and blink at the light."

He describes the home of a rich Theban of 1200 to 1300 B. C. The gravel on the floor was neatly smoothed, not a speck of dust was to be observed. Cakes of bread were laid out, not cracked and shrivelled, but smooth and brown. A

profusion of flowers, withered but not decayed, lay near the tomb.

WE have received the following programme of Swami Bodhananda's work at Pittsburg, U. S. A., for the season, October, 1909—June, 1910:—

(1) Every Tuesday at 8 P. M.—A course of lectures on Bhagavad-Gita. (2) Every Thursday at 8 P. M.—Meditation with a short discourse on the Theory and Practice of Yoga. (3) Every Saturday at 10-30 A. M.—Meditation and a course of lectures on Paanjali's Yoga Philosophy.

Besides these, public lectures will be delivered on every Sunday, at 3 P. M. Subjects are:—

October—17th. The Necessity of Religion; 24th. Gita—"The Song Celestial"; 31st. Yoga or Science of Concentration.

November—7th. How to Practise the Presence of God; 14th. Freedom in Life; 21st. Spiritual Atonement; 28th. Before and After.

December—5th. Philosophies of India; 12th. What Am I? 19th. Soul-Culture; 26th. Saviour or Seer.

January—2nd. Buddhism, Its Rise and Progress; 9th. Science and Superscience; 16th. The Ideal of Universal Brotherhood and How to Realise It; 23rd. Work as Worship; 30th. Monasticism and Marriage.

February—6th. Divine Awakening; 13th. Nihilism and Pantheism; 20th. Sickness, Healing and Health; 27th. Man—His Own Ancestor.

March—6th. The Goal of Religions; 13th. The Place of Occultism in the Religions of the World; 20th. Matter, Mind and Soul; 27th. Trinity and Unity.

April—3rd. Religion and Religions; 10th. Conversion of the Soul; 17th. Sin and Salvation; 24th. God and Guru.

May—1st. Philosophy of Worship; 8th. Brahmacharyya or Ideal Chastity; 15th. Hindu Attitude Towards Womanhood; 22nd. "Ascension;" 29th. World-Peace.

June—5th. God is one—Secondless; 12th. Now and Forever; 19th. Turiya or the Fourth State of Realisation; 26th. Harmony.

Classes and lectures will be held at The Vedanta Society, Room 204 Whitfield Building, Baum and Whitfield St., Pittsburg, Pa., U. S. A.