

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

BOOK-LEARNING AND HIGHEST KNOWLEDGE.—II

BOOKS—Sacred Scriptures—all point the way to God. Once thou knowest the Way what is the use of books? Then the hour cometh for the culture of the Soul in solitary communion with God.

A person had received a letter from his village-home, in which he was asked to send certain things to his kinsmen. He was going to order the purchase of the things when, looking about for the letter, he found it was missing! He searched for a long time. His people also joined him in the search. At last the letter was found and he was delighted. He took it up eagerly and went through its contents, which ran as follow:—"Please to send five seers (ten pounds) of sweetmeats, 100 oranges and eight pieces of cloth." When he knew of the contents he threw the letter aside and set forth to get together the things wanted.

How long then doth one care for such a letter? So long as one knoweth not of its

contents. The next step is to put forth one's efforts to get the things desired.

Similarly the Sacred Books only tell us of the way leading to God, i. e., of the means for the realisation of God. The way being once known, the next step is to work one's way to the goal. Realisation is the goal.

WHAT is the use of mere book-learning? The Pandits (Sanskrit scholars) may be familiar with plenty of sacred texts and couplets. But what is the good of repeating them? One must realise in one's soul all that is spoken of in the Scriptures. Mere reading will not bring knowledge or salvation, so long as one is attached to the world, so long as one loves 'Woman and Gold' (i. e., carnality and worldliness).

PEOPLE talk of errors and superstitions and pride themselves upon book-learning. But the sincere devotee finds the Loving Lord ever ready to lend him a helping hand. It matters not that he had been for a time walking along a wrong path. The Lord knows what he wants and in the end fulfils the desire of his heart.

OCCASIONAL NOTES

THERE is a certain undertow to every human life wherein the keynote of that life is to be found. This keynote is expressed in conscious life as the prevailing quality or tendency. In some it may take the form of the ability not to take life seriously; in some it may manifest itself as the capacity to sound profundities of mind; in others, again, it may express itself as personal charm. Whatever it is, it surely represents great culture and momentous effort of the mind in the given direction of attainment. A man who has extreme personal charm must have cultivated those instincts, either physical or mental, that cause him to stand out among masses of his fellow-men as distinctively attractive.

Or if it takes on intellectual aspects one may be sure that the mind thus qualified has reached the full expression of its possibilities only after a tremendous period of close application. For even as the form of man has ascended an inconceivably long scale of evolution, so the mind of man has gone through even a vaster process of unfoldment.

Just as we have vastness of physical distance, so also and more especially do we have vastness of mental distance. As there are tremendous physical variations regarding size and power, so also there exist ponderous psychical variations by which the individuality of one person is separated by unthinkable differentiations from that of another.

For this reason, the undertow of human life, be it what it may, should be sounded by each. Each should study the prevailing faculty possessed by him, for by the extension of that faculty will true self-development and self-realisation come about. And in this personal examination a great guide is the opinion of others with reference to our possibilities. Their estimation and personal regard for us must be explained, for, knowing it, and the basis upon which it is founded, one can consciously direct the better and constantly better development of it.

If it is the ability on our part to survey and adjust, to their most proper results, situations that come under our observation and jurisdiction which is so admired, then, dissatisfied with any given development we may have reached along this line, it is well to further unfold those traits of mind that call forth and make judgment and discrimination. If it is personal charm that attracts, then we must attend to those qualities that make personal charm possible. With one it may be religious ideals, with another frankness of disposition; with one, again, it may be the precious quality of sympathy, with another, the developed tendency to sacrifice generously in great causes.

These mentioned qualities are only several of scores of traits that tend to lighten and make weightier the undertow of our being which, unbeknown to ourselves, makes for our greatness. For, the development of a faculty which at first requires conscious application, in time becomes, through numerous repetitions, an instinctive fact. The conscious process becomes in periods of repetition a habit whose processes are carried on with little attention of the conscious mind.

All greatness is really unconscious. All leading is really unconscious. The ways by which great men become great leaders is never understood, not even by themselves. This makes the romance and the poetry of life. It shrouds great souls in the mysteries of their own being, transforming them, as compared with the average man and woman, into veritable demi-gods. Aye—for all greatness, be it mental, emotional or spiritual or otherwise, comes as the direct result of having touched deeper profundities of that Self, which is the same, the one in all and which is, likewise, the source of all attraction and bliss. The charm of all great personality is the charm of the developed Self residing in it as its essence.

PAPERS ON EDUCATION.—III

BY THE SISTER NIVEDITA

OUR conception of education must have a soul. It must form a unity. It must take note of the child as a whole, as heart as well as mind, will as well as mind and heart. Unless we train the *feelings* and the *choice*, our man is not educated. He is only decked out in certain intellectual tricks that he has learnt, to perform. By these tricks he can earn his bread. He cannot appeal to the heart, or give life. He is not a man at all; he is a clever ape. Learning, in order to appear clever, or learning, in order to earn a livelihood,—not in order to become a man, to develop one's own manhood and inalienability,—means running into this danger. Therefore, in every piece of information that is imparted to a child, we must convey an appeal to the heart. At every step in the ascent of knowledge, the child's own will must act. We must never *carry* the little one upwards and onwards; he must himself struggle to climb. Our care must be to put just so much difficulty in his way as to stimulate his will, just so little as to avoid discouragement. When, within and behind the knowledge gained, there stands *a man*, there stands *a mind*, then the task of instruction can be changed into one of self-education. The taught is now safe: he will teach himself. Every boy sent abroad is sent, on the understanding that he is in this sense developed. He is thrown into the moral ocean to battle for himself with the waves of difficulty and of temptation. We *assume* that he is a swimmer. But what have we done to ensure it?

There is one way, and one way only. It is, throughout the early years of education, to remember that there is nothing so important as the training of the *feelings*. To feel nobly, and to choose loftily and honestly, is a thousandfold more important to the develop-

ment of faculty than any other single aspect of the educational process. The lad in whom this power is really present and really dominant, will always do the best thing possible under any given circumstances. The boy in whom it is not present is liable to confusion of the will, and confusion may mean only error, or it may mean demoralisation.

Very few parents and teachers amongst us at present have thought much of the pre-eminent necessity and importance of this training of the heart. What is it then that we trust to, for our children, in a fashion so blind? We trust, more or less unconsciously, to the general action of home, family, religion, and country, on the conscience and the emotions. It is the immense moral genius of the Indian people as a whole that has really formed so many fine men out of the students of the past two or three generations. And it is the crucial importance of this element in the environment that makes the foreign educator so undesirable. Our own countryman, however unversed in educational theory, is likely to be in harmony with our highest emotional life. His chance words will touch the keys of spiritual motive, where the best-intentioned foreigner with all his efforts, is liable to fail. The man who could not deliberately awaken the great formative influences, may do so by accident, if he and we are sufficiently of one world. The chance is very small that a stranger will even dream of the need for doing so. It is almost true that the worst of ourselves is a better schoolmaster for us, than the best of another people.

Having once recognised the law, however, we are no longer at the mercy of circumstances. The home can see to it that the school builds up the child. Even an ignorant mother, by teaching her boy to love, and to

act on his love, can be the finest of educators. It is this that makes so many of our great men of to-day, attribute so much to their mothers. The old education of the girl, by the *brata*, is full of this appeal to the heart, as the only sound basis of education. But modern education, in its first inception, ignored this factor altogether, and thus produced faculty out of relation to its environment. Henceforth, the Indian people will not repeat this error. Henceforth they will understand—indeed they have understood for several years past—that even schooling has to justify itself to the conscience, of the schooled, by the great law of sacrifice, and that this law here is, the development of the child for the good, not of himself, but of *jan-desh-dharma* (जन-देश-धर्म) or, as the Western would phrase it, the development of the individual for the benefit of the environment. ‘Why are you going to school?’ says the mother to her little one, at the moment of parting. And the child answers, in some form or other, growing clearer and more eager with growing age and knowledge, ‘That I may learn to be a man, AND HELP!’ There is no fear of weakness and selfishness for one whose whole training has been formed round this nucleus.

This, the desire to serve, the longing to better conditions, to advance our fellows, to lift the whole, is the real religion of the present day. Everything else is doctrine, opinion, theory. Here is the fire of faith and action. Each day should begin with some conscious act of reference to it. A moment of silence, a hymn, a prayer, a salutation, any of these is ritual sufficient. It is not to the thing worshipped, but to ourselves, that our worship is important! Any symbol will do, or none. It is for this that our fathers have bidden us worship the water of the seven sacred rivers, or the earth of holy places, the footsteps of the Guru, or the name of the Mother. All these are but suggestions to the mind, of the *jan-desh-dharma* (जन-देश-धर्म), to which we dedi-

cate ourselves, whose service is the motive spring of all our struggles. “No man liveth to himself alone.” In proportion as we realise this, can be the greatness of our living. In proportion as it is our motive, will be the reality of our education.

THOUGHTS ON FREEDOM.

CAN there be freedom when the slave loves bondage? Aye, and can there be aught of conquest when the down-trodden fail to rise in courage and in strength? Can the traveller reach the summit without moving upward, step after weary step? Thus know, that the soul cannot conquer the web of dreams in life unless within its depths profound there burns the desire to be free, to arise and awake from all dreams whether they please or displease.

There is no hope for him who cannot pass through pain. No hope is there for him who cannot face the darker side of things with valiant soul. The purpose of the soul must loom ever before the vision of the devotee, and that purpose must never be lost sight of, whether in pain or in joy. And of these two, joy sooner blinds the vision and sooner deepens bondage.

There is no freedom for the weak, and weakness, know, rises often in the failure to strive, in the failure to attempt to be strong, for strength is his who truly wishes strength. Before the earnest purpose of the awakened will nothing can stand. No obstacle is difficult enough to defeat the conscious will, for the awakened, selfless will is allied with that force in nature and in life that man perceives as omnipotence.

Does the dreamer dream,—then it is for him to be rudely awakened by the force of his dream, for the nightmare of the dream of life is pain. And as the relief of nightmare of earthly night is the rude awakening, so in spiritual life relief and freedom of the soul from dreams come with the shock of pain that brings man to his consciousness of Self.

Latent within the soul are all the powers that be. This we have been told through all the ideals of humanity, through all its attempts of interpreting the Self in each soul as innately and inseparately related to the Greatest Conceivable Thing which mankind has designated by the word, God, or the Supreme Being.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA, HIS TOLERATION AND BHAkti

[*A lecture delivered by Mr. S. Gapalaswami Aiyangar B. A., B. L., on the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna at Madras.*]

I.

WHEN I was requested to give an address on this occasion, I felt I should obey, however incompetent I was, the call of Swami Ramakrishnananda and demonstrate my sympathy towards the Ramakrishna Mission and its objects. I feel it an honour and a privilege to take part in to-day's proceedings held in memory of one of the greatest of modern saints.

Even a superficial student of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa will be struck with his spirit of universal toleration towards all religions. Everybody knows that the higher Hinduism is much more cosmopolitan than any other religion, and that this principle of religious toleration and the view that there may be several roads to the same goal of God-realisation is nothing new to the Hindu religion.

Let us first take the teaching of Hindu religion regarding Divine Incarnations. अजायमानो बहुधा विजायते।—“Being unborn (the supreme God) manifests Himself in Incarnations in manifold ways,” so runs the Vedic text. In the Bhagavad-Gita the Lord says, “I have had many incarnations hitherto.” And again,

“Even though birthless and of nature imperishable and Lord of all beings, yet do I establish Myself in my own Prakriti and incarnate Myself out of My own free will.”

“Whensoever and wheresoever, O Bhárata, virtue wanes and vice waxes, do I manifest Myself in incarnations. For protecting the virtuous and destroying and punishing the wicked and for firmly reinstalling Dharma, I manifest Myself in incarnations from age to age.”

From these texts it will be rather strange if we should hold that there can be no Avatars outside India. Though the texts themselves may not lead to any such narrow interpretation, yet as a matter of fact they have not been commonly understood to mean that other religions also may have a divine origin. Guru Nanak seems to have taught the brotherhood of Mahomedanism and Hindu-

ism. But it was left to Bhagavan Ramakrishna Paramahansa to teach the doctrine of toleration and harmony of all world-religions by his sayings, conduct and example. In one of his colloquial sermons, if I may call them so, he spoke as follows to Keshab Chandra Sen and others:—

“Thus God Personal and God Impersonal are one and the same Substance. I call that Being the Absolute or Unconditioned when I cannot think of It as Active or as Creating, Preserving or Destroying. I call that Being Personal and possessed of Attributes when I think of It as Active, as Creating, Preserving, or Destroying, and under all possible aspects.

“The Being is the same; only the names are different under different aspects like the same substance expressed in different languages, such as Jal, Water, Páni, Vári, and Aqua. A tank may have four ghats (landing-places with steps). The Hindus drink at one Ghat, they call it Jal. The Mahomedans drink at another and they call it Páui. The English who drink at the third call it Water.

“God is one only, the names are different. Some call Him Allah, some God, some Brahman, others Kali, others again Rama, Hari, Jesus, Buddha.”

“Every man should follow his own religion. A Christian should follow Christianity, a Mahomedan should follow Mahomedanism and so on. For the Hindus the Ancient Path, the path of the Aryan Rishis, is the best.”

“People partition off their lands by means of boundaries, but no one can partition off the all-embracing sky overhead. The indivisible sky surrounds all and includes all. So common man in ignorance says, “My religion is the only one, and my religion is the best.” But when his heart is illuminated by true knowledge, he knows that above all these wars of sects and sectarians, presides the one indivisible, eternal, all-knowing bliss.”

“As a mother, in nursing her sick children, gives rice and curry to one, and sago and arrowroot to another, and bread and butter to a third, so the

Lord has laid out different paths for different men suitable to their natures.

“A truly religious man should think that other religions also are paths leading to truth. We should always maintain an attitude of respect towards other religions.

“Remain always strong and steadfast in thy own faith, but eschew all bigotry and intolerance.

“Be not like the frog in the well. The frog in the well knows nothing bigger and grander than its own well. So are all bigots: they do not see anything better than their own creeds.”

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa not only taught the principle of toleration as above explained but he also realised the truth of his teaching and exemplified it by his own conduct. The following is an extract from Max Muller's *Life of the Saint* :—

“He practised in turn many other religions prevalent in India, even Mahomedanism, always arriving at an understanding of their highest purposes in an incredibly short time. Whenever he wished to learn and practise the doctrines of any faith, he always found a good and learned man of that faith coming to him and advising him how to do it. This is one out of the many wonderful things that happened in his life. They may be explained as happy coincidences which is much the same as to say they were wonderful and cannot be explained. At the time when he perceived the desire of practising and realising religion, he was sitting one day under a big banyan tree (called the Panchavati or the place of five banyans) to the north of the Temple. He found the place very secluded and fit for carrying out his religious practices without disturbance. He was thinking of building a little thatched hut in the place, when the tide came up the river and brought along with it all that was necessary to make a little hut—the bamboo, the sticks, the rope and all—and dropped them just a few yards off the place where he was sitting. He took the materials joyfully and with the help of the gardener built his little hut where he practised his Yoga.

“In the later days he was thinking of practising the tenets of Christianity. He had seen Jesus in a vision and for three days he could not think or speak of anything but Jesus and His Love. There was this peculiarity in all his visions—that he always saw them outside himself, but when they

vanished they seemed to have entered into him. This was true of Rama, of Siva, of Kali, of Krishnā, of Jesus and of every other God or goddess or prophet.

“After all these visions and his realisations of different religions he came to the conclusion that all religions are true though each of them takes account of one aspect only of the Akhanda Satchidānanda, i. e., the undivided eternal Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. Each of these different religions seemed to him a way to arrive at that One.”

We may treat this question of toleration in another aspect dealt with in the Hindu books. We know that the Karma Kānda of the Vedas teaches the worship of several Gods, such as the Sun, Indra, Varuna, and Agni, &c. Though the Upanishads proclaim the unity of the God-head and that He, the Supreme Brahman, alone is to be worshipped, meditated and realised, yet doubts seem to have arisen as to whether the words denoting Agni, Sun, Indra, in some places in the Upanishads, denote the specific deities or the Supreme Brahman. The author of the Vedānta Sūtras discusses these questions at length and establishes almost conclusively that the words such as Joytis (light), Indra, Agni, really denote the Supreme Being, whenever They are said to be the Supreme Cause of the Universe. This mode of reconciliation is fully explained and dealt with by the author of the Sūtras in Chapter I, Pāda 1, sections 7 to 11. Even the words such as Prāna (vital breath), Akāsha or ether are interpreted to mean Supreme Brahman whenever these words denote the First Cause of the universe. That is to say, if qualities belonging to the Paramatman,—such as freedom from any evil whatsoever, freedom from bonds of Karma, mastery over all the universe, capability of realising one's own wishes, being the inner Self of all, being the sole cause of the sentient and nonsentient existence, being the true cause of the attainment of Immortality,—are ascribed to any entity or Being denoted by some word, though the said word ordinarily in common experience may denote some specific deity or principle, yet that word really refers to the Supreme God. Thus when special terms as ether and the like are used in sections setting forth the Creation and the Government of the Universe, they denote not the thing, sentient or nonsentient, the Supreme Paramatman.

The view above indicated does not in any way conflict with the existence of several Gods of the Hindu scriptures. It is also taught that the worship of the specific Gods ordained in the Vedas, has got a much higher meaning, if the said worship is performed without attachment to worldly result, but as worship of the Supreme. Such worship of the Gods really constitutes, if understood properly, the worship of the Internal Ruler or Antaryâmin and not the specific deities. The teaching of the Gita on this subject is contained in verses 20—23 of the VIIth chapter, the substance of which may be explained freely as follows:— All worldly people indeed are impelled by natural inclinations, tendencies and desires on account of their past Karma. These desires rob them of their knowledge concerning Me, and in order to gain their desires they resort to lower deities. And observing such ritualistic rules and regulations as are laid down in the Shastras in order to propitiate such deities they place faith in them and worship them. Even those deities really constitute My body: though the worshippers are ignorant of this truth, yet whoso seeks to worship such deities who form My body or a portion of Myself, I grant him unwavering faith for that very worship. Knowing as I do that his faith is pinned to that which in fact constitutes a portion of My own body, I consider it as worship of Myself really, and it is Myself who grant the desires longed for by the worshippers. These deities being finite beings the fruit for such ignorant worshippers, will also be finite. But they who perform the very same acts of worship done by those ignorant men, with the knowledge that they are acts of My worship and do them *not for any mundane fruits but without attachment* and only for the sake of Me, the Internal Ruler of the whole Cosmos, will reach Me and will attain God-realisation and there will be no return for them to this Samsâra or rebirth.

On the analogy of the theory adopted in the Sutras with reference to the meaning of certain words in the Upanishads, and the theory adopted in the Gita as to the worship of the several inferior Gods in accordance with elaborate rituals and ceremonials prescribed in the Shastras and the theory of the Incarnations of the Supreme, already explained, it will not be difficult to understand the unity of all the various systems of the world-religions.

One system may be a quicker method than another and may be much more well-developed than another, but there is no reason whatever for any antagonism at all between the different religions. We should pay less attention to external symbols, unessential rituals and ceremonials, and attach greater importance to the teachings regarding the inner spiritual Life, meditation on God and His attributes, direct method of God-realisation and service to humanity as the mode of worshipping the Supreme. Bhagavan Ramakrishna Paramahansa teaches as follows:—

“Dispute not. As you rest firmly on your own faith and opinion, allow others also the equal liberty to stand by their own faiths and opinions. By mere disputation you will not succeed in convincing another of his error. When the Grace of God descends on him, each one will understand his own mistakes.

“People of this age care for the essence of everything. They will accept the essentials of every religion and not its non-essentials (that is, the rituals, ceremonials, dogmas and creeds).”

This truth as to the unity of all religions seems to have been perceived by St. Paul though no prominence is given to this portion of his teaching by the Christian Church. A sermon was delivered by Dr. Miller, more than 20 years ago, under the heading ‘A Neglected Apostolic Thought.’ The sermon is based on the verse in the Acts of the Apostles, which says, God “Made of one, Every Nation of Men for to dwell on all the face of the Earth, Having determined their appointed seasons, and the Bounds of their Habitation, That they should seek God if haply they might feel after Him and find Him.” Let me read to you the following extract from his sermon:—

“Those outside the pale of Christendom are as really under the care of the Almighty Father as those who are within that pale. He has made, of one, every Nation of men. From Him the source of Being each equally proceeds. Over each, whether it be Jew or Gentile, whether Christian or heathen, He equally rules. For each it is He that has appointed seasons and the bounds of its habitation. Each he has placed under the influences which have made it what it is. And the object with which each has been subjected to the influences which have moulded it, is in every case the same. It is

that they may seek after God—may grope for Him—if so be they may find Him. Grant that for wise and holy ends—ends mainly inscrutable to us in our present state—one has had more light to help that search than another, yet fundamentally there is no difference. God is equally near to all and is waiting to be found by all.

“Now this great truth, the nearness of God to all men, the truth that the place of birth of all men with all the consequences as to custom and belief and character entailed by it, is in some true and important sense the appointment of God in His all-watchful Love—this truth which determined the whole tone and form of Paul’s speech at Athens, is a truth which I can hardly suppose that any Christian will expressly deny.

“It is too emphatically the spirit of the Master as well as the express teaching of the apostle who laboured most abundantly of all, to be contradicted by one who has any reverence for either. But it is one thing for a truth to be passively accepted and quite another to have it so wrought into the texture of the mind that it moulds a man’s activity and shines through his habitual forms of speech. This great truth is not disavowed among us but it is neglected. It is forgotten. It has not that effect upon the inward life and feeling of the Church, or upon us through whom the church’s life is brought to bear on heathendom, which it had in the case of Paul.”

If the ordinary Christian Missionary have something of this spirit of St. Paul above referred to, it would promote very much the good feeling between the Christians and the Hindus, and the ordinary Christian missionaries would not be so anxious to make conversions and augment the number of nominal Christians.

Again if this spirit of toleration be understood and practised by the Hindus and Mahomedans, the Hindu-Mahomedan problem can be very easily solved. Again we know that we are divided into many religious sects among ourselves. The petty wranglings that are going on amongst them, and the silly discussions even among learned Pundits as to the unessential ceremonials and symbols, the sectarian quarrels that exist among the Vaishnavites of South India, the unnecessary and wasteful litigation respecting these quarrels which is supported sometimes even by respectable per-

sons who ought to know better, and the perjury and forgery with which each sect supports its claim, constitute a grave hindrance to our progress. These Vaishnavite disputes have made the more important Vishnu temples the hotbed of intrigue and corruption, and their administration is becoming more and more demoralised. The existence of these disputes is one of the chief causes for the temples not being very popular with the impartial, truly religious and sincerely devoted members of the community, even if they happen to be orthodox. It is absolutely necessary that our Hindu sects should realise that toleration is an all-important principle of Hinduism, and it is the duty of every educated man to show his toleration by his example and conduct and try to do his utmost in checking intolerance and bigotry.

A BURNING LAMP

Oh lustrous Lamp ! Th’ illuminer of dark !
 That nightly rules many a shining spark,
 Thou daub’st the house with modest light of thine,
 As he at day the Earth and tracts marine.
 Thou look’st a little homely sun of night,
 A part cut off that mighty orb of light.
 Surpassest thou the dazzling king of day,
 For blindest thou no gazer of thy ray.
 A disk of molten silver, the Queen of night,
 Though full in face, envies thy distinct light.
 The twinkling stars, specks in the gray blue deep,
 With thee to vie, in vain persist to peep.
 Thou conqueror of heavens ! Thou eye of night !
 Nor sun nor moon with thee could try their might.
 The one in grief drowns himself in the sea ;
 The other wanes till her no one can see.
 Thy hue excels the grayish dawn and eve,
 Renowned orbs, of fame dost thou bereave.
 The sun and moon from morn to night revolve,
 But ever dost thou higher problems solve.
 Alas ! deservest thou no more renown,
 A puff of wind hast all thy glory blown.
 So, is transient, life, a burning lamp,
 Illumining the temporary camp
 Of this body, the seat of ’ternal soul.
 Suffice, to shatter all, this mighty whole,
 A puff of wind, issues from Lips Supreme
 And makes our life a pleasant-painful dream.

—J. G. DUBAY.

IN MEMORIAM TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

[*A paper read by Mr. Henry F. Van Haagen at Swamiji's birthday celebration by the Vedanta Society of New York.*]

WHEN a man steps from darkness into a very bright light his eyes are dazed for a while and refuse to work properly for the moment. And when we are asked to speak and describe that great joy which lights our very soul, our answer would be as it were but a mere groping in the darkness for words. One may perceive and feel most perfect joy, yet not be able to describe it. It is with such feeling that my thoughts wander back to the great impressions of my life, which I can never forget. Although a number of years have passed, these events live in my memory as if they had occurred but yesterday.

I well remember my first meeting with the Swami Vivekananda, that great teacher whose nativity we are commemorating this evening. Though filled with prejudice by my friends, I went to one of the Swami's classes, not so much to hear his lecture as to see for the first time a native of India, the land which I had learned to love through reading the Bhagavad-Gita, the Song Celestial. I was seated in the class-room waiting for the Swami's appearance when soon a man came in,—one whose walk expressed dignity and whose general bearing showed majesty, like one who owns everything and desires nothing. After a short observation I also saw that he was a very superior man, and withal, one who quickly disclosed a most lovable character. Now I became anxious to hear the words he would speak, and after I had done so but a few minutes I firmly resolved to be a regular attendant at all his lectures and classes. That prejudice which was so strong within me when I entered, now seemed to be driven away by his profound knowledge and charming magnetism. It would be too long to describe the great treats that followed. As wholesome food satisfies the hungry and fresh water quenches the thirsty, so my longing for truth was satisfied through the teaching of this wonderful man. And to this very day I have found nothing that gives a better answer and a clearer explanation to the various vital questions which arise in a man's mind than the Vedanta philosophy so ably taught by the Swami Vivekananda.

Not only were his words in class-room and lecture-room those of instructive value, but also his conversations, while walking on the street or through Central Park, always conveyed the one message. Many of our interesting little talks I can readily call to mind; for instance, on one occasion I expressed my regret to the Swami that his sublime teachings had no larger following, and his wise and fitting answer was: "I could have thousands more at my lectures if I wanted them. It is the sincere student who will help to make this work a success and not merely the large audiences. If I succeed in my whole life to help one man to reach freedom I shall feel that my labours have not been in vain, but quite successful." This remark filled me with the desire to be one of his students.

The strong impression which this lovable teacher always gave to his students was that of causing them to feel that they alone, while with him, had his whole attention and sympathy. Always willing to devote his entire attention to heeding his students' most humble wants and queries, he by this most pleasing attitude, made them most enthusiastic and faithful disciples. This created that enduring bond of love between teacher and disciple which is so necessary for any teacher's real success. And how glorious was his success! To-day almost every intelligent person is more or less familiar with the literature which like a flower blossomed out of his work. And many are those,—the professor, clergyman and layman alike—who have been influenced to the better through acquaintance with these literary gems.

His teaching bore to us the peace of mind of the Aryan Rishis of which we are so much in need. It is but recently that an American scientist pointed out how our fashionable and business life is a continuous nerve storm,—a literal hurrying to the grave, speeding along every lifeway, exhausting energy, and inviting premature nervous and mental ruin. Through the strong desire for wealth and sense-gratification the nerve energy is exceedingly overtaxed and no remedy is sought to restore it. What better cure for this evil could be conceived

than the living of that life which the Vedanta philosophy teaches? Not the excessive nervous rushing hither and thither, nor inactive dullness, but "Satva"—equipoise and tranquillity—is what is offered by the Vedanta, and this only can bring back to us the calm which Western nations have long lost.

In his teachings the Swami has admonished us not to direct the war-spirit in us to win the greatest victories, to the slaying of our fellowman in anger and hatred when he differs from us, but to the transmuting of this energy into a strict practice of self-control. And what better teaching can a man spread than one which contains such original thoughts as:—"He conquers all who conquers self; know this and never yield," or "In books and temples vain thy search. Thine only is the hand that holds the rope that drags thee on. Then cease lament, let go thy hold."

And now, though he has gone into the great Peace beyond, because his work was finished, he still lives in our memory and in his work, as he also lives in the message which he brought to us. He has done his duty as a great, good and true teacher and gave us the means, *That we may know the Truth*; but that is only one part, the other, without which all is in vain, is our duty, *That we may live the Truth*, and increased knowledge brings this additional duty with it. For that purpose, to help and assist us to better live the truth, Vedanta Societies have been formed, classes and lectures are being held, and his Brother-Swamis and Sannyasin disciples have come to our shores. However mighty a nation we may be, he did not seek us for anything but for giving Truth and Wisdom, of which we are surely in need. Let us, by living the Truth of Vedanta, prove that this great Master has not brought his wonderful message in vain to us.

WHAT IS THE WORLD?

What is the World? tell, worldling, if thou know it.

If it be good, why do all ills o'erflow it?

If it be bad, why dost thou like it so?

If it be sweet, how comes it bitter then?

If it be bitter, what bewitcheth men?

If it be friend, why kills it, as a foe,

Vain-minded men that over-love and lust it?

If it be foe, fondling, how dar'st thou trust it?

JOSHUA SILVESTER.

MONASTICISM IN INDIA

[*From a letter written by a Western Disciple in the East to a Fellow-Disciple in the West.*]

IT is February,—but the weather is a revelation in this part of the world. Amethyst skies and glowing suns. The rising and the setting of the days are perfect and with it all,—it is India, Orient of the Orient.

I find myself entering into a new mood of life. All the old ways have changed so that my self doubts itself. I have entered a new world where everything is opposed to my previous experience and where life is lived in new ways.

This is the land of ancient religions and ancient civilisations. Here are the ruins historic of centuries lost in the mists and myths of an unthinkable past. Here the usages, prevailing in times lost to human memory, still continue and here the same ideals mould the life of man as they did immemorial periods ago.

Temples upon whose surface the sun has risen and set thousands upon thousands of times still stand in strength and beauty,—tokens, great and glorious of by-gone life and thought. Here the Ancient Soul of things lives on and on, remaining undisturbed amidst the rude shocks of time and conquest.

In my short stay I have seen much and experienced more. What most interests me, however, is not the relics of the past, not the ruined grandeurs of an ancient day, but the living Sentiency that has dwelt for countless generations in this land,—a changeless, vast, undying Sentiency that is the Deathless Life of Humanity Itself.

I belong to that class of observers who revel in the colour of the living expression. The exquisitely and classically draped bronzed figures that move silently along ancient lanes,—these are my feast. The expressionless face mirroring fathomless depths of The Soul Oriental interests me. Though expressionless, for the most, I have seen it tense with tremendous emotion. Everything is spontaneous here. It is that spontaneity with which I am concerned, and yet one also finds here an indifference to life based upon the greatest

ideals of the human soul. There is in this land a deep throbbing of a life, venerable with inestimable age.

The whole air thrills with a religious consciousness which is more than religion, for it is life. In the morning, there passes by my place, in the early hours, a beggar monk, tolling a bell and singing a song that gives the listener the keynote of his life. Among the words chanted, these stand out in ponderous significance: "I am one who renounces." This man is not a beggar. The fact that he begs is quite incidental, for what he receives in thirty days amounts to as many annas. The purport of his life is renunciation which means, in India, the silencing of all desire.

It must be understood, however, that such a beggar monk—and there are thousands like him here—resembles in no way the Western type of vagabond. Here the beggar is the educator. His song is full of the nation's ideals, full of the spirit and the history of the Indian race. The monk, here, is much like the mediæval minstrel, except that the theme of the Indian minstrel is always religion. And this religion is the religion of the Vedanta philosophy and of the manly teachings of the great Indian Incarnation, Krishna, who among the Indian peoples, is much more than what Jesus, the Christ, is with the peoples of the West. For as the former differed from the latter in character and in career, so does the teaching of the one differ from that of the other. The doctrine of the Christ was ethical; the doctrines of Krishna were not alone ethical, but national; they were not alone morality-inspiring but alive with that prodigious spiritual force that makes with regard to spiritual things a matter of knowledge that which with us is a matter of belief. Above all, it inculcates the spirit of strength and manliness. Those who have familiarized themselves with the Bhagavad-Gita and the Upanishads know this.

Thus the monk begs and educates at one and the same time and also preserves, through the fulness of his personality, the treasures of the race's spiritual lore. The monk is loved here and welcomed, and so when he passes through the streets, ringing his bell as in some instances, or calling "Narayana, Narayana"—which means "In the name of the Lord,—In the name of the Lord,"—in

others, the doors of the houses open, here and there, and men and women and children, with devotion in their hearts and with the name of the Lord on their lips, invite the monk to partake of their food and bless them with his presence and his teaching.

The monk does not only teach sacred lore in India, but is the veritable representation, the personal embodiment of it. The ideal of spiritual effort in India is the realisation and the consciousness of the ideal believed in. So, the monk, in the Indian mind, lives in a larger sphere, and represents, to the race, a spiritual life and knowledge far higher than that we demand of the monk in the world and thought of the West. In the Orient religion is not based on theology, but on life; not on belief, but realisation; not on a mere intellectual apprehension, but upon spiritual experience.

I have met several monks, distinctly regarded as embodying the spiritual ideal here. They were men of silence and weighty thought, men to whom the name of the Lord was more than their own name; men, striving to become unconscious of the burden of physical life with its numerous demands.

As in the West, the monk renounces personal associations and takes on a name other than that with which he was born. It is a name describing some attribute of deity, or attributes of those who have realised the divine life in this world. Such names are Vivekananda,—Ananda, meaning bliss, and Viveka signifying that discrimination by which one consciously understands the secondary and relative relation of worldly values as compared with the supreme importance of those ideals that, realised, draw man to God. Other names are Amritananda, or bliss in the consciousness of immortality; Paramananda, or bliss in the Supreme Lord; Bodhananda, or bliss in the realisations of a spiritual mind.

The monks are clothed quite differently according to their rank and according to their order, most of them wearing the yellow cloth called "gerua". There are those, however, who wear but a narrow loin cloth; this, because they have abandoned the idea of the body even to that point where they refuse to sleep in-doors in the coldest weather, accept food only when offered to them, or keep vows of silence taken for years at a time. Sometimes their foreheads are marked with the

symbols standing for their respective ideal of Godhead. Sometimes their entire body is covered with ashes. In most cases their heads are shaven as well as their faces. Others wear their hair long until it is matted. This condition apparently tending towards uncleanness is curbed by the daily ablutions the monk takes in the sacred rivers and by cleansing himself with oils and earths.

I have seen monks lying under the glaring sun in the streets, lost in thought or else overcome with fatigue brought on by long marches over Indian soil. Most of these monks have had experience after experience and have visited every province, city, place of pilgrimage and temple from the southernmost to the northernmost, from the most western to the most eastern point. Thus they acquire an enormous fund of education, both as respects the geography as well as the history, customs and ideals of their country. This education they impart to anyone who cares to heed and they impart it freely, believing that education should be given costless to the ambitious mind.

For the most the monk travels alone. It is freedom, social as well as religious, that he desires. He holds institutions in respect, but at the same time desires freedom from the binding conditions and the gallsome limitations that, in so many cases, hamper the individualism to which the monk aspires,—for the ideal of the monk is individualism, refined to the uttermost in character and in ideal, an individualism that while realising all the depths and possibilities of personality, yet bases itself on selflessness and touches in no way the happiness and freedom of another.

Of course there are many monasteries in India, particularly in the Himalayan regions, where the wandering monk loves to roam and which are sacred to the God of Monks, Shiva Mahadeva, about whose personality great myths, teaching massive spiritual facts, have been woven. He dwells on Himalayan heights above the din and clamour of the world, sitting in meditation, whose topic is the life of God. These monasteries are very old, many of them dating back to the eighth and ninth centuries of our era, and even to times previous to our era.

There is romance and purpose, greatness and true monastic spirit with the Eastern monk. Yes,

and if we trace the course of monastic spirit in Western religious life we find that in the beginning there was such similarity between the Christian monk of the Thebaid and the solitary Indian monk. At all events the same ideal stands in the background and the difference lies possibly in the more emphatic observance and in the more ascetic spirit of Indian monasticism.

Be these things as they may, India is romantic in form and in thought largely because of the Indian monk, and he exercises no mean influence upon the life and culture of the masses. He is their ideal and their idol, their hope and their consolation personified, their priest and their teacher, their mediator with God, not because of any priestly ordination, but by right of effort and realisation God-wards.

—F. J. ALEXANDER.

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

When lotus blossoms ope,
The bees unbidd'n appear;
When hearts do yearn for Light,
The Guru's voice we hear.

When clouds come thick and fast
And nothing does avail,
Must we lose heart, downcast,
And weep because we fail?

A spider taught King Bruce
That no attempt is vain:
To man success accrues
Who tries and tries again.

The purity of soul's
The first thing that we need
To steer across the world's
Temptation, lust and greed.

When winter's chill is gone
The charms of spring allure;
Darkest nights end in dawn,
Bringing our sorrows cure.

What wonders patience works!
Awake, your gloom forsake,
A prophet in you lurks,
Arise and courage take.

BRAHMACHARI N.

ATMOPANISHAT

(Continued from page 88)

चटंकणिका श्यामाकतण्डुलो बालाग्रशतसहस्रविकल्पनादिभिर्न लभ्यते नोपलभ्यते ।
न जायते म्रियते न शुष्यते न दह्यति न कम्पते न भिद्यते न च्छिद्यते निर्गुणः
साक्षी भूतः । शुद्धो निखयवात्मा केवलः सूक्ष्मो निष्कलो निरञ्जनो निरभिमानः
शब्दस्पर्शरसरूपगन्धवर्जितो निर्विकल्पो निराकाङ्क्षः सर्वव्यापी सोऽचिन्त्योऽवर्ग्यश्च
पुनात्यशुद्धान्यपूतानि निष्क्रियः संस्कारो नास्ति संस्कारो नास्त्येष परमात्मा
पुरुषो नाम ॥ ३ ॥

इत्यथर्ववेद आत्मोपनिषत्समाप्ता ॥

He is like the banyan seed (*i*), or like the *Shyâmâka* grain (*j*); conceived of being as subtle as a hundred-thousandth fraction of the point of a hair, and so forth, He cannot be grasped or perceived (*k*). He is not born, He does not die; He is neither dried up, nor burnt, nor shaken, nor pierced, nor severed (*l*); He is beyond all qualities (*m*), the Witness, eternal. Pure (*n*), of the essence of the indivisible (*o*), one-only, subtle, without components, without taint (*p*), without egoism (*q*), devoid of sound, touch, taste, sight and smell (*r*), devoid of doubt (*s*), without expectation (*t*); He is all-pervading (*u*), unthinkable, indescribable (*v*); He purifies the unclean and the defiled (*w*); He is without action; He has no *Samskâras*, He has no *Samskâras* (*x*),—He is the Purusha who is called the Paramatman.

Here ends the Atmopanishad contained in the Atharva Veda.

(*i*) *Like the banyan seed*: Just as this tiny seed brings forth the huge tree, so from the most subtle Atman emanates the whole universe.

(*j*) *Or like the Shyâmâka grain*: Which, though very small, shoots forth long stems. The analogy with the Atman is the same as the above.

(*k*) *Grasped or perceived*: Grasped by the external organs and perceived by the internal organs.

(*l*) *He is not born.....nor severed*: By all these negations, every possible action in Him or upon Him is denied,—hence He experiences no sorrow.

(*m*) *Beyond all qualities*: by this every limiting adjunct is denied of Him.

(*n*) *Pure*—by nature, hence devoid of inborn impurity.

(*o*) *Indivisible*—hence devoid of all diversity within Himself.

(*p*) *Without taint*: devoid of acquired impurity.

(*q*) *Without egoism*: devoid of all defects arising from Ahamkâra.

(*r*) *Devoid of sound.....smell*: Without defects arising from the functions of the external organs.

(*s*) *Doubt*: the defect of the *Manas*.

(*t*) *Without expectation*: Devoid of all defects of the *Buddhi*, such as hoping &c.

(*u*) *All-pervading*—Being subtler than the subtlest and greater than the greatest, He pervades everything by His own majesty, and cannot be measured by any means.

(*v*) *Unthinkable, indescribable*: All thought is a limitation. How can Atman, the one eternal Subject, be made the object of thought?

Indescribable—for the same reason.

(*w*) *The unclean*—by birth, such as the Chandâlas &c. *The defiled*—by sin.

(*x*) *He has no Samskâras*—Samskâras being the impressions of works done previously are impossible in the Absolute Atman. The repetition marks the close of the discourse.



AMRITABINDUPANISHAT

Of the five Bindu Upanishads embodied in the Atharva Veda the Amritabindu occupies a very important place, sufficiently justifying its title—which literally means 'a drop of nectar'—by its felicitous combination of a loftiness of sentiment with a directness of expression. Thus, though it is small in bulk, it is nevertheless a drop from the fountain of Eternal Life itself, potent to cure the manifold ills of Samsâra, or endless rotation of birth and death.

The five Bindu Upanishads spoken above are, the Nadabindu, Brahmabindu, Amritabindu, Dhyana-bindu, and the Tejabindu. The texts of the Brahmabindu and the Amritabindu Upanishads are virtually the same, with slight alterations in the wording here and there.

Taking into consideration the subjectivity of our experience of the outside world, the Amritabindu Upanishad inculcates, first, the control of the mind in the shape of desirelessness for sense-objects, as the most effective way to the attainment of liberation and the realisation of the One who is Knowledge and Bliss absolute. Then it sets forth in an easy and convincing way the real nature of the soul and the realisation of the highest truth which leads to unity. Thus the central theme of all the Upanishads, viz., that the Jiva and Brahman are eternally one, and that all duality is a mere superimposition due to ignorance—finds a clear and forceful emphasis in these terse, epigrammatic verses.

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः० । ॐ स्वस्ति न इ० ।

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

मनो हि द्विविधं प्रोक्तं शुद्धं चाशुद्धमेव च ॥

अशुद्धं कामसंकल्पं शुद्धं कामविवर्जितम् ॥१॥

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः ॥

बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्तं निर्विषयं स्मृतम् ॥२॥

यतो निर्विषयस्यास्य मनसो मुक्तिरिष्यते ॥

अतो निर्विषयं नित्यं मनः कार्यं मुमुक्षुणा ॥३॥

निरस्तविषयासङ्गं संनिरुद्धं मनो हृदि ॥

यदाऽयात्यात्मनो भावं तदा तत्परमं पदम् ॥४॥

Om! O Devas, may we hear with our ears what is auspicious;.....Om! Peace! Peace! Peace! (The same *Sântipâtha* as in page 14, Jan. P. B.).

1. The mind is chiefly spoken of as of two kinds (*a*)—pure (*b*) and impure. The impure mind is that which is possessed of desire (*c*), and the pure is that which is devoid of desire.

2. It is indeed the mind that is the cause

1. (*a*) *Two kinds*—Though the mind has various other states, such as, mixed, insane &c., two are especially pointed out here.

(*b*) *Pure*—Purified by countless good deeds in past incarnations as well as by practices of self-control in this.

(*c*) *Which.....desire*: which is entirely dominated by the resolve of gaining the full measure of enjoyment from all sense-objects.

of men's bondage and liberation (*a*). The mind that is attached to sense-objects leads to bondage, while dissociated from sense-objects it is held to be fit for liberation.

3. Since liberation is predicated of the mind devoid of desire for sense-objects (*a*), therefore the mind should always be made free of such desire by the seeker after liberation.

4. When the mind, with its attachment for sense-objects annihilated, is fully controlled within the heart (*a*) and thus realises its own essence (*b*), then that Supreme State (is gained).

2. (*a*) *Liberation*—The manifestation of the Self as Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, after the removal of Ignorance.

3. (*a*) *Devoid.....objects*: Hence, a mere witness of things seen and perceived.

4. (*a*) *Heart*—The seat of pure consciousness.
(*b*) *Its own essence*: The consciousness of the oneness of the individual soul with the Universal Soul, as "I am He."

(To be continued)

SRI EKNATH OF PAITHAN

OF those apostles who paved the way by their teachings of Bhakti for the religious upheaval which preceded the rise of the Mahratta power in India, the name of Eknath, the Saint-Poet of Paithan, (in the Nizam's territory), occupies a prominent place. The religious upheaval meant a reform in the ways of life of the people. It placed before the Hindus in a clear and yet simple form, the ideals of life which were cherished by them from time immemorial.

Eknath was descended from a family which was noted for its godliness. His great-grandfather, Bhanudas, was a devotee of the Sun-god and is said to have had a vision of the deity at the early age of ten years. Krishnarai was then a powerful Hindu ruler at Vijayanagar or Anagondi on the banks of the Tungabhadra. He visited Pandharpur and took away the images of Sri Vithoba to his own city. Bhanudas, who was a Varkari of Pandharpur, took it upon himself to bring back the images to their old place. In the dead of night he went to the temple at Anagondi, and lo! the locks and bolts gave way before him, and Sri Vithoba gave him His necklace as a symbol of His propitiation. Bhanudas rejoiced at it and went away. The next morning the royal priests found the necklace missing, and it was found in Bhanudas's possession. He was ordered to be punished at the stake, but as he was taken to it, the wooden stake blossomed into foliage, so the story goes, and the King Krishnarai, feeling that Bhanudas was a great devotee, felt remorse and himself sent the images to Pandharpur. The images of Sri Vithoba and Rakhmai which are to-day at Pandharpur worshipped by lakhs of devotees, are those very ones which were brought and installed by Bhanudas from Anagondi.

From such a lover and devotee of Vithoba, Eknath was descended. Eknath was born in 1528 (Saka 1450) at Paithan which was well-known as a seat of learning and was reckoned as the Southern Benares. The child was father of the man, especially in the case of Eknath. The child Eknath would in retirement set up a stone as an image of God, worship it with flowers and dance before it in ecstasy. His thread ceremony was performed

in the sixth year of his age. From that time Eknath studied the Puranas and other Sanskrit works. His intellect was extraordinary and he would often ask his teachers a thousand and one odd questions. As he heard the tales of Prahlad, Dhruva, and other child-Bhaktas, Eknath's soul fondly longed for the attainment of Divine Bliss. One night, when he was about twelve years old, and was musing on the Lord, mysterious words fell on his ears telling him that Janardanpant, a great religious devotee of Devgad, would satisfy the cravings of his soul.

At these words, Eknath straightway left his home and went to Devgad to be trained by Janardanpant. Eknath served his *guru* like a true pupil. His *guru*, who was a Bhakta of a very high order, was satisfied at the conduct of his pupil and gave him the spiritual insight necessary. Eknath worshipped with great devotion the God Dattatreya, the deity of his *guru*, and within a short time was blessed with a vision. Afterwards Janardanpant asked his pupil to meditate upon Sri Krishna. Eknath performed this Tapas (discipline) and after experiencing the Absolute State, returned to his *guru*. Eknath was then asked to go on a pilgrimage to various holy places. He spent nearly three years in pilgrimage and visited almost all the noted Tirthas in India. He returned to his native place, Paithan, after twelve years of spiritual study and pilgrimage. Eknath had lost his parents soon after his birth, and the only elder relations left to him were his aged grandfather and grandmother, who were grieved at the disappearance of their loving grandson and made inquiries at Devgad of Janardanpant, Eknath's *guru*, who gave them a letter asking Eknath to stay at Paithan with his aged grandparents, and to marry and live as a Grihastha.

One fine evening the aged grandparents and their grandson met at Paithan and greeted one another. Eknath was shown his *guru's* letter, and a true Shishya as he was, he obeyed his master's wishes without demur and resolved to build his residence on the very spot on which he got the letter and met his aged grandparents. A small hut was soon after built, and it grew into a large Wada (mansion); and even to-day may be seen at Paithan the relics of this edifice. Soon afterwards Eknath was married to a daughter of a respectable family from Bijapur, and lived the life of a true Grihastha. His wife,

Girijabai, was worthy of her husband, and ministered not only to his domestic but also spiritual comforts. Besides performing his religious observances, Eknath spent a great part of his daily duties in Puran-reading and Kirtan, the two old ways of imparting knowledge to the people. In his later life Eknath went to Benares where he completed his large work known as "Eknathi Bhagavat," being a commentary in Marathi verses on the eleventh Skandha of Srimad-Bhagavata. Its date of completion is given by the author himself as being the 15th day of the bright half of Kartika in the Saka year 1495 (about 1573 A. D.).

It is said that the Pandits of Benares, being angry with Eknath for unfolding the treasures of Sanskrit works like the Bhagavata to the ignorant masses by his Marathi commentaries, threw his work into the river Ganges, which instead of drowning it, held it up on the surface. At this the Pandits were dismayed, repented of their conduct, and then accepted Eknath's Bhagavat as a work of high order and divine inspiration. After winning laurels at Benares, Eknath returned to Paithan. A few years afterwards he went on a pilgrimage to Pandharpur with a large following. Soon afterwards he went to Alandi (a village near Poona) where Jnaneshvar, the author of "Jnaneshvari" the well-known work on the Bhagavad-Gita, had died. In the next year (about 1584) Eknath finished the work of collating the "Jnaneshvari" which he had taken up. The other works of Eknath are "Bhavartha-Ramayana," "Rukmini-Svayamvar" and "Chatusloki-Bhagavat," besides numerous Abhangas. The extent of his literary work may be gauged from the fact that the verses of his works amount to 65,000, and the Abhangas number about 5,000. Eknath had several children. His son Haripant was noted as a Pandit. And his grandson was Mukteshvar, the renowned Marathi poet. Eknath spent his life in elevating the lives of his fellow-beings till the year 1598 in which he died.

Eknath is one of the founders of the peculiar religious sect in the Maharashtra, known as the "Varkari Panth." The names of its originators as given in a popular Marathi couplet are Nivriti, Jnanadev, Sopan, Muktabai, Eknath, Namdev and Tukaram. Pandharpur, Alandi, Dehu, Paithan and Trimbak (near Nasik) are the places held most

sacred by the Varkaris. The Varkari Panth is a branch of the Bhagavat or Bhakti Sampradaya (sect). The two important works that form the basis of this sect are the Bhagavad-Gita and the Bhagavat. In the days of the religious upheaval in the Maharashtra, Jnaneshvar unlocked the treasures of the Bhagavad-Gita to the masses by means of his commentary in Mahratti, "Jnaneshwari," a work which must rank very high both for its spiritual value and its superb poetic excellence. The eleventh Skandha of Sri Bhagavat which contains the pith and marrow of the Bhakti Yoga, was presented in its Mahratti garb to the masses by Eknath. Tukaram's Abhangas form a rare work of popular religious teaching in themselves. These saint-poets of the Bhakti-school created a tremendous spiritual force in the Maharashtra which has taken possession of the people for the last four hundred years. Even to-day the Varkari Panth counts within its fold hundreds of thousands of followers, of various castes, high and low, Brâhman and Sudra. On the Ashadhi and Kartika Ekadashi days may be seen at Pandharpur, the Benares of the Varkaris, lakhs of people of this faith assembled in devotion to perform their annual pilgrimages.

Towards this tremendous spiritual force, Eknath contributed not a little. By living a perfect family life, he has shown that true Vairâgyam and Samsâra are not discordant, but that the essence lies only in living unattached. Eknath had no large family estate, but his house was always open to the poor and the needy, the sick and the maimed, the devotee as well as the sinner. Eknath always conquered evil by love, and there are many anecdotes about him which illustrate his tolerance, kindness, and love for all. He had an unflinching faith in God, and never cared for the how and wherefore of his family affairs. He used to say, take hold of God, the true treasure, and the pounds, pennies and farthings of this world will take care of themselves. Eknath was a Bhakta of a very high order, and a true teacher of men. The first half of his life was spent in spiritual study, in gaining the knowledge of the Absolute; and in the second half of his life Eknath made use of that knowledge to show how an unattached life could be lived and spent in a purely disinterested way, solely for the good of his fellow-beings.

—Adapted from the *Mahratta*, March 9, 1911.

REVIEWS

Sri Chaitanya Charitam (in Hindi). By Sri Madan Mohan Goswami. Distributed free by the author from the Bhakti Sadan, Brindavan. Size $8\frac{1}{2}'' \times 5\frac{1}{2}''$. Pp. 62.

The want of a life of Sri Chaitanya written in Hindi, was always acutely felt by His devoted followers of Northern India, who could not read the many excellent works published in Bengali on the subject. Hence we are very glad to see this short but interesting account of the life of the great Prophet of Nadia, brought out in Hindi by one of His devout followers belonging to the venerable Goswami family of Brindavan. The author made an extensive study of the Bengali works with the disinterested purpose of making the Lord Gouranga's life better known in his Provinces, and we heartily congratulate him on the success of his achievement. The free distribution of the booklet is a great boon to the public, and we hope that Sri Chaitanya's unique life of maddening Love for the Lord, briefly portrayed as it is in these pages, will bring joy and peace to a large number of Bhaktas. We should like to see the second edition of the book considerably enlarged and, as promised, better printed.

The Vaidic Mission and its Work. To be had of the Oriental Publishing Co. Ltd. Mylapore, Madras. Size $7'' \times 6''$. Pp. 160+16. Price, Cloth bound, 8 as. Paper bound, 4 as.

The Vaidic Mission started in Madras "is intended to popularise and propagate the scientific worth of the Vaidika Dharma and the practical side of the synthetic philosophy of the Vedantas." Connected with it and affiliated to the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, is the Vaidika Dharma Sabha, which is "intended to illuminate the theoretical and practical side of the orthodox Hindu religion."

The scope of the Mission is to preach "the principles of Sadharana Dharma in foreign lands," and to spread elementary education on ancient Hindu lines." It also aims at devoting itself to *medical*, and *literary*, as well as *industrial* work, as funds and facilities permit. In short, the Vaidic Mission claims to work independently on the same lines as the Ramakrishna Mission, and as such it deserves to have the heartiest sympathy of all true lovers of our religion and country. The present work gives the readers an idea of the aims and objects of this Mission as well as the programme and scope of its work. Among other things, Swami Vivekananda's views on Religion, Philosophy and Work, are quoted. We wish its promoters all success in carrying into practice its noble objects.

Sankhya-Yoga: The oldest Vaidika System of Practical Vedanta. A Thesis by Pandit G. Krishna Sastri. Published by the Oriental Publishing Co. Ltd. Mylapore, Madras. Size $7'' \times 5''$. Pp. 96. Cloth bound, Price Re. 1.

This is the original form of the thesis as submitted to the "First Convention of Religions in India" held in Calcutta in 1909, and read by the author in abstract on the third day of the Convention and since published in Vol. II of its Report. In it the author pleads the cause of the Anubhavadvaita or the 'Sankhya-Yoga-Samuchchaya' system of Appayadikshitcharya (born 1835, died 1901), based on a book called Tattvasarayana, said to be "the only work which deals with the entire range of the synthetic philosophy of the 108 Upanishads." We are sorry we are not able to concur with the learned author in many points of view taken by him. In his zeal for Anubhavadvaita Mr. Sastri makes statements against other systems of thought, hardly warrantable. Besides his belittling the path of Jnana-yoga as trodden by the followers of Advaita Vedanta, the cause of the *Saguna* worship is jeopardised by the verdict that

through it "liberation cannot be secured." It is futile as Sri Ramakrishna has conclusively shown, to wrangle over the *comparative* worth of the different systems of religion, which solely depends upon the quality of the lives of higher realisation that such may turn out. Those, however, who want to enquire into the Anubhavadvaita system will find in this able exposition a good deal to interest and benefit them. The get-up of the book is excellent.

GLEANINGS

(*Collected by Mr. Nanda Lal Ghosal*)

AN insight into the absolute unity of the human existence with the Divine is certainly the profoundest knowledge that man can attain.—Paracelsus.

I have a power in my soul which enables me to perceive God—I am as certain as that I live that nothing is so near to me as God. He is nearer to me than I am to myself. It is part of His very essence that He should be nigh and present to me.....And a man is more blessed or less in the same measure as he is aware of the presence of God.—John Tauler.

To realise that in essence, though not in degree, we are one with the life of God, and then to open ourselves, our minds and our hearts so that a continually increasing degree of the God-life can manifest itself to and through us, is to understand more and more and to come into a continually greater harmony with the laws under which we live and which permeate and rule in the universe with an unchangeable precision. It is through our non-recognition of the life that is in us and the laws by which all things are governed, in other words, living out of harmony with the laws under which it is decreed we must live, that inharmony and evil with their consequent pain and suffering and despair enter into our lives. There are those who have lived so fully in the realisation of their essential oneness with the Divine Life, that their lives here have been almost a continual song of peace and thanksgiving.—Ralph Waldo Trine.

All beings are the fruits of one tree, the leaves of one branch, the drops of one sea. Honour for him who loveth men, not for him who loveth his own.—Persian.

* * *
The sublime mystery of Providence goes on in silence and gives no explanation of itself—no answer to our impatient questionings.—Longfellow

* * *
Noble men are those who have withstood the severest temptations, who have practised the most arduous duties, who have confided in God under the heaviest trials, who have been most wronged and forgiven most.—Channing.

* * *
No man in the world ever attempted to wrong another without being injured in return,—some-way, somehow, sometime. The only weapon of offence that nature seems to recognise is the boomerang. Nature keeps her books admirably; she puts down every item, she closes all accounts finally, but she does not balance them at the end of the month.—W. G. Jordan.

* * *
There is but one key that will unlock the mysteries of God and that key is within yourself. Science cannot do it, for science deals with the surface of things. We must leave the surface and go into the depths of our own souls. It is useless to expect to find God elsewhere until you have found Him within yourself and once found Him there you will find Him everywhere.—Great Thoughts.

* * *
Man is a cup, his soul the wine therein;
Flesh is a pipe, spirit the voice within—
O Khayyam, have you fathomed what man is?
A magic lantern with a light therein.
—Omar Khayyam.

* * *
A learned man should always try for the good of his soul while (1) he is hale and healthy, (2) his body is quite free from the attack of various diseases, (3) he is in full, unimpaired possession of all his senses, (4) he is not set upon by old age and (5) there is no sign of decline of his life. Of what possible use is the effort of sinking down a well when the house is already on flames?—Bhartrihari.

* * *
Difficulty which nerves our will; disappointment which teaches patience; suffering which gives us

sympathy ; sorrow which transmutes itself to trust such as we never had before ; and all these hard experiences of strain and pain and loss and death working together in us to wake a sense of deathlessness, the sense of trust in an eternal righteousness ! Think ; think of it.—W. C. Gaunett.

* * *

Do you not see, O my brother and sister,
It is not chaos of death, it is all Form, Union, Plan,—
It is eternal life,—it is happiness.

—Walt Whitman.

* * *

Nothing can bring you peace but yourself ;
nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of
principles.—Emerson.

* * *

Passion is at the base of the structure of life ;
peace is its crown and summit.—Without passion
to begin with there would be no power to work
with and no achievement to end with. Passion
represents power but power misdirected, power
producing hurt instead of happiness. Its forces
while being instruments of destruction in the hands
of the foolish are instruments of preservation in the
hands of the wise. When curbed and concentrated
and beneficently directed they represent working
energy. Passion is the flaming sword which guards
the gates of Paradise. It shuts out and destroys the
foolish ; it admits and preserves the wise.

—James Allen.

* * *

If thou wouldst gather words that shall avail,
Learning a wisdom worthy to express
Leave for a while thy chat and empty tale
Study the golden speech of silentness.

—A. L. Salmon.

* * *

I Buddh, who wept with all my brothers' tears
Whose heart was broken by a whole worlds' woe,
Laugh and am glad, for there is Liberty.

—Light of Asia.

* * *

God made us for Himself and our hearts are
restless until they repose in Him.—St. Augustine.

* * *
“ If I stoop

Into a dark tremendous sea of cloud,
It is but for a time. I press God's Lamp
Close to my breast ; its splendour soon or late,
Will pierce the gloom ; I shall emerge one day.”

—Paracelsus.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

(CULLED AND CONDENSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

WE are glad to learn from the *Voice of Freedom* that eleven Vedanta Centres have been newly organised in the different parts of Los Angeles, California, by Swami Trigunatita in February last.

WE are glad to acknowledge with thanks the generous gift of medicines worth Rs. 15, made to the Mayavati Charitable Dispensary by Messrs. Butto Krishto Paul & Co., the well-known Chemists and Druggists of Calcutta.

MRS. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, after visiting some places in India for the first time, writes to a Calcutta paper : “ India has been to me, since my earliest recollection, a word of lure and charm. Its five letters spelled wisdom, mystery, and magic, as well as India. Its literature has ever held a potent power over my mind, and from India's greatest modern teacher, Swami Vivekananda, I received incalculable and lasting benefit.”

DURING the Easter holidays the anniversary of the Gurukul, Kangri, attracted over 15,000 Hindus. The Gurukul has ceased to charge any fees for the board and lodging of students. Lala Munshi Ram, the Governor of the Institution, made a stirring appeal and before resuming his seat, he himself handed over the sale deed of his extensive property worth about Rs. 40,000. In response to his appeal about Rs. 50,000 were collected.

BESIDES Talks on “ The Bible in the Light of Vedanta,” Swami Paramananda delivered a special course of lectures on the “ Great Teachers of the World ” at the Vedanta Centre, Washington. Subjects :—February 26th. Religion of the Hindus (Veda and Vedanta). March 5th. Krishna and His Teaching. March 12th. Zoroaster and His Teaching. March 19th. Buddha and His Teaching. March 26. Confucius and His Teaching. April 9th. Mohammed and His Teaching. April 16th. Harmony of Religions.

SWAMI Brahmananda, President of the Ramakrishna Mission, writes to the *Bengalee* :—A certain person of the name of Jnan Ghose, assuming the costume of a Sadhu, and variously known in dif-

ferent places as Swarupananda, Sachchidananda or Paramananda, is imposing upon the public of Bombay, according to information received, by declaring himself a member of the Ramakrishna Mission or Math. We hasten to warn the public against any dealing or transaction with this man in the capacity to which he pretends. No such person belongs to our Math.

IN 'The Daily News' report of its correspondent's interview with Dr. A. R. Wallace, there is the following question and its answer:—

You think, do you not, that the world is a better place to live in to-day than it was fifty years ago?

No, I should say, for the very poorest it is a worse place. The wonderful discoveries of science and their application to industry, with the corresponding increase in wealth, have not lessened the increase in poverty, which is absolutely, and I believe relatively, enormously greater than it was fifty years ago.

THE difficulties which scholars encounter in deciphering and translating ancient inscriptions are humorously touched upon by Mr. Andrew Lang in a recent article in the "Morning Post."

"We remember that a Roman inscription on a leaden tablet at Bath was read by one scholar much in this way: 'So and so cured my Fulvia. He drenched her with *quin tael*' (an unknown specific). 'His fee was five hundred pounds in copper.' Then another scholar read it more like this: 'May all the heavens and all the powers that be therein rise up and curse the man who stole my table napkins.' The second scholar, as far as I remember, was right."

AT the Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna celebrated in the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, there was a fifteen-hour continuous service, beginning at 6 a. m., with chants, hymns, sermons and readings from the "Life" and "Sayings" of Sri Ramakrishna. The service was conducted by Swami Trigunatita, who was in the same posture throughout the entire ceremony; he was assisted by Swami Prakashananda who spoke on "The Saviour of the Nineteenth Century," at 10-45 a. m., and on "Sri Ramakrishna's Message to the World," at

3 p. m. The service ended with the evening lecture on "The Keynote of Sri Ramakrishna's Life" by Swami Trigunatita. Many of the students fasted for 15 hours and attended the entire service from beginning to end without stirring from their seats.

IN the course of his presidential address on "The place of Science in Literature" before the Literary Conference at Mymensingh, Professor J. C. Bose pointed out that the present tendency of the West was to an undue specialization in almost all branches of learning—a tendency which was apt, he thought, to make us lose sight of the forest in the trees. This, he went on to say, had never been the method of Indian thought, which had always, on the contrary, aimed at the unification of knowledge. Both the poet and the scientific enquirer were seeking, in their different ways, to lift the veil from the mystery beyond. The poet, ignoring the need of rigid proof, had to use the language of imagery. The scientific enquirer, on the other hand, had to practise constant restraint in order to guard himself against self-deception. Even so, however, he, like the poet, came in his turn to the regions of light invisible. To him also the opaque became the transparent, and force and matter tended to lose their mutual distinctiveness, and were fused in one.

In illustration of this sense of wonder which links together poetry and science, the lecturer alluded briefly to a few matters that fell within the purview of his own corner in the great universe of knowledge, that of light invisible and of life unvoiced. In reality, the speaker continued, we stand in the midst of a luminous ocean, almost blind. The little that we can see is as nothing, compared with the vastness of that which we cannot see. But it may be said that out of this very imperfection of the senses man has been able to build for himself a raft of thought, by which to make daring adventures on the great seas of the unknown.

The learned lecturer then dwelt in detail on his great discoveries on the life of the plant world, its response to external stimulus, the resemblance between nervous impulses in the plant and in the animal, &c. &c., and he was happy, to say, that in the course of ten years' strenuous effort, he was able to successfully devise instruments which enabled the plant to write down its own statement with unimpugnable accuracy, night and day, and all that was left for the investigator to do was to read the long roll of the plant's own script. Even the dreams of poetry could hardly reach the wonder of the story thus told by the voiceless life of the plant world.