

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

Awakened India



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Ishta Upan. I. III. 6.

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इच्छित जाग्रत



प्राप्य वराशिबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

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[No. 215

UNPUBLISHED NOTES OF CLASS TALKS BY THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

SOUL AND GOD.

Anything that is in space has form. Space itself has form.

Either you are in space, or space is in you.

The soul is beyond all space. Space is in the soul, not the soul in space.

Form is confined to time and space and is bound by the law of causation.

All time is in us, we are not in time.

As the soul is not in time and space, all time and space is within the soul. The soul is therefore omnipresent.

Our idea of God is the reflection of our selves.

Old Persian and Sanskrit are about the same.

The primitive idea of God was identifying God with different forms of nature—nature worship. The next stage was the tribal God. The next stage, the worship of kings.

The idea of God in heaven is predominant in all nations except in India. The idea is very crude.

The idea of the continuity of life is foolish. We can never get rid of death until we get rid of life.

THE GOAL.

Dualism recognises God and nature to be eternally separate: the universe and nature eternally dependent upon God.

The extreme monists make no such distinction. In the last analysis, they claim, all is God; the universe becomes lost in God; God is the eternal life of the universe.

With them infinite and finite are mere terms. The universe, nature etc. exist by virtue of differentiation. Nature is itself differentiation.

Such questions as, Why did God create the universe? Why did the all-Perfect create the imperfect? etc., can never be answered because such questions are logical absurdities. Reason exists in nature, beyond nature it has no existence. God is omnipotent, hence to ask why he did so and so, is to limit Him; for it implies that there is a purpose in His creating the universe. If He has a purpose, it must be a means to an end and this would mean that He could not have the end without the means. The questions, why and wherefore, can only be asked of something which depends upon something else.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

SCIENCE is striving hard now-a-days to outstrip matter, and materialism in philosophy is almost finding the wind taken out of its sails. But materialism in religion is a fact that does not grow old with the world and presents to man the same problem for today as for to-morrow. The domination of matter over the religious life of man is a fact grounded upon the very fundamental fact of earthly existence, and conquest over this materialism in religion makes a man unearthly and divine in a real sense.

The identification of self with not-self is called *adhyasa* in Vedanta, and this wrong identification is at the root of that universal evil, which we have spoken of above as materialism in religion. It is out of himself that man finds the key to read the world outside. Out of what he thinks of himself he creates the whole universe of his facts and ideas. His God and his world constitute the reflex of his concept of self. If he conceives of his self as pure body or matter, his God and his world are bound to become material. The ox, if required to propound a theology, as the old Greek put it long ago, would think of God as bovine. There can be no such thing as absolute conception of God; it is always relative to somebody's conception of self. The highest theology of man therefore is founded on the truest conception of selfhood.

If we look at it psychologically, religion consists therefore in our efforts to attain to our real selfhood by means of such sentiments, thoughts and acts, as proclaim, more or less, our non-materiality. But constituted as our minds are with their ingrained materialistic tendencies of thought, willing and feeling, perfect non-materiality is to them quite a large order; and religion has therefore to be

content with a gradually spiritualising process with regard to our conception of self, God and the world. But this concession in favour of materialism in religion becomes an evil, when the attitude of combating or counteracting that materialism and its insidious encroachments fails us in our religious life. For we must remember that religion, in whatever form it may happen to belong to us, should always command means of stimulating that attitude in us to be maintained through all the practices that it enjoins. For example, in the Hindu cult of symbolic worship, the worshipper is required to harp constantly on such higher mysteries about God and the human soul throughout the ceremony, that all the material adjuncts of his worship can scarcely disturb his exalted mood while he gets out of them all the help that is possible. This attitude of counteracting materialism in religion is indispensable to health and vitality in spiritual life, be it consciously maintained or unconsciously.

Materialism in religion has to be distinguished from symbolism in religion, for the symbolising processes constitute in reality powerful factors of man's gradual conquest over matter. When religion concerns itself with matter to create symbols out of it, it is practically seeking to transform a necessity into a useful choice. When material objects or relations are adopted as symbols in religion, they tend to lose their materiality in proportion as the symbolisation is perfect; and in proportion as the symbolisation is perfect, our souls become more and more possessed by the reality sought to be symbolised, till we are enabled to attain to that spiritual elevation, where symbolisation ceases to be a necessity, and where the rule of matter does not extend. But before this elevation is

reached, every religious aspirant is fully under the necessity to symbolise either mentally or physically,—the comparative advantages and disadvantages in both these forms of symbolisation counterbalancing themselves. All this symbolism in religion *uses* matter to its own advantage, while materialism in religion implies the self-surrender of the human mind to matter in the name of religion.

It is therefore to us a matter of no small moment to exercise in our religious life all possible caution against allowing matter, which we have to put to our own spiritual uses, to get the better of our own mind. This caution mainly consists in constantly maintaining a frame of mind which recognises only utility in the relation in which our religious life stands to matter, and no necessity. We must remember that we allow matter to influence our mind, not because that influence is a necessity, but because it is at present useful to us in our religious life. How liable, on the contrary, are people to exaggerate the influence of matter on mind! To such exaggeration, for instance, are ascribable all those silly practices in India to which Swami Vivekananda gave the name of "Don't-touchism." The morbid dread of pollution of which all such practices are begotten is one of the worst forms of materialism in religion. These practices barter away the mind to matter in the name of religion, for even as we think, so we become; and thought which ought to be in our hands the most powerful instrument for transcending matter is prostituted by such practices to make man the bondslave of matter. This fanciful, excessive sensitiveness of thought to the influence of matter may cut of course both ways, for as there is the sinister touch from something evil to pollute it, there is equally the antidote of the sprinkling of sacred water, or the like, to purify it. But such foolish compromises of thought with matter have served to bury the real issue in our religious life under an overwhelm-

ing debris of puerile punctilios and confounding complexities. If religion in India is to rise rejuvenated from all these weaknesses and excesses of senility, let us constantly proclaim the sovereignty of mind over matter,—let us refuse to accept matter as an agent capable of modifying our mind's shape or colour in spite of ourselves. Let us assert in our religious life this freedom of the self.

Another instance of our mental self-surrender to matter is what Swami Vivekananda described as "taking religion into the kitchen." Religious materialism in this form holds the most profound and deep-rooted sway over the minds of people almost all over India. In the matter of food and its preparation, considerations of cleanliness, taste, health, convenience, personal liking or prejudice even, may properly have weight with us all. It may be a matter of speculation with us as to which particulars of food would produce, relatively to the constitution and temperament of particular persons, those desired effects, which the Gita enumerates as derivable from *sattwic* food. But to hold up some particulars of food as infallible agents for imparting spiritual excellence and discredit some others as *necessarily* degrading and corrupting to our spiritual nature, is to give away the whole case to materialism. And that is what we have been doing for centuries. Every healthy man should be strong enough to transform the food he takes into forces to be applied and manipulated according to his own requirements, physical, mental and spiritual. The natural and healthy standpoint therefore is that the food you take is to yield itself up to you for such transformation as you choose to give it. Instead of this, we have allowed ourselves by constant suggestion to be placed like material things under the influence of our food, which consequently dictates to us our religion from its pedestal of the kitchen.

If in this way we hold the searchlight of truth on the dingy mass of materialistic over-growth under which religious life in India labours, we shall find that by slow, deceptive encroachments, materialism in religion has usurped the place of the Vedantic conception of self; and those glorious Vedantic ideals of spiritual strength, of all-conquering thought-power, of the self-mastery of the mind in spite of material relations, have all disappeared into oblivion leaving the field in possession of an absurd materialism that seeks to reduce man and religion in India into puppets in its hand, made to display the most ridiculous antics! Spirituality that owned the Vedas as its fountain and source was pre-eminently of a strength-giving type. It might have picked up, in the long course of its history as it came in contact with new races and tribes of men, their countless customs and rites to be fused into the richest and the most elaborate symbolism, but that symbolism it could wield and control with perfect ease as a powerful instrument for developing the subtlest reli-

gious susceptibilities of the diversified human nature, and thereby grafting alien, inferior elements most effectively into the superior civilisation and culture which it evolved. This wonderful process the Vedic spirituality had followed for long ages and centuries, and the danger of materialism could not affect it with any lasting taint of impurity. Does it not behove us therefore now when it is not too late to assert in our religious life the Vedantic idea of the self, strong and inviolable through all its relations with matter, and possessing the divine right of determining what reaction it chooses matter to have on it? Should we not cease at once to allow materialism in religion to befool us with the grotesque and unpractical niceties and excesses it has introduced into our ways of life? For it is far better, we should remember, to work out, by deliberate, well-grounded efforts, the change into the new order from an old than to allow things to drift of their own accord,—ultimately, to be sure, into chaos.

THE WAVE OF MODERNISM.

QUROPÉAN science and European enterprise have given birth to a *modern* world. They created and applied those facilities of communication and intercourse which have concretised the old, abstract concept of mankind. Humanity is no longer a dream of the philosopher; it is now a moving, pulsating, progressing, self-knowing, self-determining reality, coming in full vigour to its inheritance of the world. It has "interlinked all geography, all lands," as Walt Whitman says, and the urge of its goings and ways is such that "no one knows what will happen next, such portents fill the days and nights."

This humanity is the supreme factor in the modernisation of the world, and all the credit of bringing this new agency into play belongs properly to European science and European

enterprise, (America being, of course, only a self-projection of Europe.) But the very fact of the West being the birth-place of this modernism has affected the nature and the trend of those modernising forces, which humanity has to manipulate, in a characteristic way. The rise of humanity is a settled fact; it is a new phase in the evolution of man, which we have to accept with advantage. But the scope and direction which humanity finds to be given to its life admit of being questioned. For Western science and enterprise might have nursed this humanity into being, but its full inheritance it may very properly have to receive elsewhere.

By modernism is implied that scheme of life, that culture and civilisation, which the modern humanity is called upon to accept

and realise. The call has been sounded by the West, for it is with the West that the initiative lay, as having conducted humanity into the world-stage. But should the East, specially India, fully respond to the call and accept modernism without qualification? Every educated man in India owes it to humanity to decide and answer this fundamental question, for the life of humanity is to be broad-based on the free intercourse of thought and ideal between all the countries that have been reborn into it.

The triumphant wave of modernism has flooded the whole known world, and from its corner to corner, the rush of victory is reverberated. In fact, we live in an age consecrated to modernism, and East or West, North or South, there is not a single country which does not feel proud to measure its progress and status by the new standards of modernism. The wave has rolled on all over India, for modernism found it all very easy to steal a march on the dormant, self-oblivious consciousness of the people here and to force its choice and acceptance. Western education has created a class of influential people all over the country who are steeped up to the ears in the creed of modernism, and the intoxication is so great that even the hardest blows and buffets of misfortune can scarcely bring them back to a proper appreciation of the enormous difficulties they are creating on all sides by their defection from the *national* ideals of progress in life, both individual and collective.

Modernism implies a scheme of life which is founded on the basis of the political rights of the individual and the nation. The relation between the political state and the individual is the keelson, the corner-stone, the fundamental prop of the whole structure. If it is all well with this relation, the whole fabric of life in a modern, or more properly in a Western country, is bound to thrive. But directly this relation becomes disorganised

and dissolved, the whole structure is demolished and swallowed up into chaos. In the Western scheme of life, therefore, political good is the foundation which supports all the other pursuits in the collective life of man. All the other ends of collective life have consequently to own the supremacy of politics and reconcile themselves as best as they can to what measure of authority is allotted to them from time to time. As the necessary outcome of this all-regulative authority of politics in the collective life of Western nations, the whole trend of their progress is political first and anything else afterwards. Politics is the art of organising all the interests and pursuits of man with a view to secure material greatness, and politics being the regulative principle in the Western or modern scheme of life, religion is left to carry on under this scheme only a struggling humiliated existence, while the spirit of worldliness reigns supreme. Religion is a contingent influence, not the constant inspiration that it should be even in the life of the nation. It may be authoritative in the particular sphere allotted to it, but it can scarcely influence, much less inspire and control, the activities in the other spheres of that life, while all these different spheres of the national life are placed under the ultimate controlling authority of politics.

In such a scheme of life, the outlook is necessarily political. The prospective good towards which the whole organisation of life is made to move is political. That which organises this life is political, that which utilises it is political, that which maintains it is political. This is modernism in its essential features, and the new-born humanity has been deluded by its imposing glamour, by its plausible success, into accepting it as its creed. But India in the name of the most ancient civilisation and culture of the world has raised her dissentient voice,—the hoary-headed wisdom of the Vedas has sent forth its warning against this false modernism. Sri Rama-

krishna Paramahansa used to pointedly express his disapprobation of this modernism by the word "adhunika," peculiarly ejaculated. The whole standpoint of modernism with its peculiar impulses and its peculiar valuation of facts and events came in for no small share of his disapprobation though expressed so laconically. Just imagine its intensity from the fact that he would not touch even a copy of newspaper that acts so much like a shuttle in the loom of modernism to produce the fabric of modern manhood!

To this protest against modernism it is time that we should try to give proper utterance. This protest derives no inconsiderable force from the fact that our culture, our civilisation, our history from the earliest Vedic ages seem clearly to be pledged to a spiritual scheme of life which is antagonistic in spirit and method to that scheme which modernism implies. The testimony of history is that the spiritual scheme of life has all along been seeking to establish itself in India through all the vicissitudes of fortune and the variations of environment and material, and that its defects and failures have been mainly due to two fundamental wants to which it had no other choice but to be exposed. The first is the want of adequate organisation within, effective enough to cope with the vastness of its field of operation. The second is the want of proper scope outside for adequate intercourse with humanity. In order to supply to the spiritual scheme of life the proper means to fulfil these wants, India has been brought by Providence into contact with the modern world. The problem that lies before us at present, therefore, is to rally round this scheme of life that it may work itself out with the help of those new secrets of organising thought and activity in which the West is giving us lessons today.

Now what does this spiritual scheme of life denote as distinguished from the political scheme of life we have described above?

Human life being an organic system of interests and pursuits, the spiritual scheme of life insists that the immanent end in this system should be spiritual, all other ends being organically connected to this immanent end in a relation of subserviency. Under such a scheme of collective life, we have to subordinate all the interests and pursuits of that life to the spiritual end, and then in the light of their subordination and subserviency, we have to appraise their value and importance or to determine their claims. Under this scheme, the highest deliberative authority naturally resides in those in whom the immanent spiritual end of the whole system of collective life reveals itself as realised. The Rishis of old therefore were the makers of ancient India. The spiritual end which governed the whole system of life they sought to establish consisted in the preservation, practice and diffusion of the synthetic spirituality of the Vedas. The social and religious institutions and practices that they promulgated from time to time were organic to this supreme end; the culture that they developed and diffused throughout the land comprised a system of arts and sciences that described like planets their regulated orbits round the solar centre of this one supreme end. The organisation of political states presented to them from the outset no small difficulty, for the excess of political power by natural accretion very often made the kings puffed-up with insolence and greed such as endangered the spiritual economy of the collective life. It is in connection with this problem, that the destruction of the Kshatriyas in several epochs of ancient history has been described in the Puranas and such expressions as mother earth being oppressed by the increase of Kshatriya power is found to be current among them. In later periods of history, we find that the tendency to make the life of the people as little dependent on state-functions as possible has become wonderfully developed throughout India and the growth of village

communities is the outcome of such a tendency in the mediæval civilisation of India. Political dramas and episodes were being enacted on large and small scales throughout the country no doubt,—conquering legions were now and then thundering past by,—but we find the common people throughout India mostly in the villages, pursuing the even tenour of their life, wonderfully unaffected by the political changes and upheavals. It is this capacity for self-reliance, this tendency of self-isolation from the capricious fortunes of a political life, that have enabled the Indian people to reach down to the present the spiritual heritage of the past. This marvellous conservation of the ancient spirituality and culture, of the essentials and outlines of the civilisation which they evolved, would have been impossible had the Aryan people in India been pledged from the beginning to a political scheme of life like most nations of the ancient world. Like that tiny receptacle in the fable which held secure in watery depths the soul of the monster made immune from all chances of death in the open field, the spiritual scheme of life has preserved through all the stormy centuries the very soul of the ancient Indian civilisation.

It is this spiritual scheme of life that we have got to rehabilitate in reorganising collective life in India today. The upbuilding of life under this scheme does not at all involve the political point of view, or direction, in our collective interests and pursuits. Political autonomy is no necessary condition in bringing this scheme to fulfilment. To whichever hands the political administration of the country be entrusted by Providence, this scheme involves no necessity for reliance on that administration except in so far as the safety of person and property and the proper scope for earning livelihood through the different trades and professions are concerned. In addition to these positive grounds for reliance on the state, it is of course necessary under the spiritual scheme of life that the

political administration should always pursue a policy of non-interference with regard to purely religious and social activities of our collective life.

That grouping together of human beings, which in modern times we call a nation, constitutes a sort of living organism in which the life consists in the fact of the men, or the bodies of men, being so organised. So long as this organisation endures and fulfils its peculiar end, the nation is said to be living, and in respect of this life, it is only disorganisation that is to be regarded as death. A nation cannot be said to be dying simply when the death-rate among the people is increasing, for if during that sad period, the organisation of the people towards their peculiar nationality be improving, we should rather conclude that the nation is gaining in vitality. If under all the depressing circumstances of poverty and insanitation in India at the present time, we rally round our own national ideals and begin working out the spiritual scheme of collective life with all the modern implements and methods of organising thought and activity, the impulse of a new life will be breathed into the people of this land, and all the evils engendered by ages of disorganisation on one side and by the modern political craze on the other will steadily disappear.

For the political craze has warped and perverted the whole outlook. Nationalism does not necessarily imply a political organisation of men and their activities. A nation is any such organisation of human beings, grouped together by history or by ethnic and geographical conditions or by all these conjointly, as possessing an immanent end to fulfil in and through its life, allows, (through proper centralisation and distribution of organising authority), all the human pursuits and institutions within itself to be developed and governed by that immanent end in such a way that the whole collective life is subsumed

under an articulated system of ends subservient to the supreme end. This organisation may be political or non-political according as its immanent end is political or non-political. It would be a fatal misstep for a country which has its preordained spiritual message and mission to fulfil in this world to bid and bargain for that political nationalism to which the West has harnessed most unwisely all the modernising forces. But it is not now too late to steer the barge of our collective life away from the shallow, but foamy and ruinous waters of that political nationalism into which it has been swept down in spite of itself by the rushing wave of modernism; and we propose to indicate briefly how this steering may be done, in a future issue of the Prabuddha Bharata.

EPISTLES OF
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

XV.

Boston,
The 26th Sept., 1894.

Dear—

I have received both of your kind notes. I cannot express my gratitude for your kindness. I will have to go back to Melrose on Saturday and remain there till Monday. On Tuesday I will come over to your place..... For that is exactly what I wanted, a quiet place to write. Of course much less space will suffice me than what you have kindly proposed to put at my disposal. I can bundle myself up anywhere and feel quite comfortable.

Yours very sincerely,
Vivekananda.

XVI.

Washington,
The 27th Oct., 1894.

Dear—

Many thanks for your kindness in sending me the introduction to Mr. Frederic Douglas.

You need not be sorry on account of the ill-treatment I received at the hands of a low-class hotel-keeper at Baltimore. It was the fault of the Nrooman Brothers. Why should they take me to a low hotel?

And then the American women as everywhere came to my rescue and I had very good time.

In Washington I am the guest of Mrs. E. Totten who is an influential lady here and a metaphysician..... Everything is going on all right. * *

With eternal love and gratitude for you.

I remain your etc.

Vivekananda.

XVII.

Brooklyn,
The 28th Dec., 1894.

Dear—

I arrived safely in New York and proceeded at once to Brooklyn where I arrived in time.

We had a nice evening. Several gentlemen belonging to the Ethical Culture Society came to see me.

Next Sunday we will have a lecture. Dr. Janes was as usual very kind and good and Mr. Higgins is as practical as ever. Here alone in New York I find more men interested in religion than in any other city, and do not know why here the interest is more amongst men than women. * *

Herewith I send a copy of that pamphlet Mr. Higgins has published about me. Hope to send more in the future.

With my love to Miss Farmer and all the holy family,

I am ever sincerely yours,

Vivekananda.

XVIII.

New York,
The 24th Jan., 1895.

Dear—

* * This year I am afraid I am getting overworked as I feel it. I want a rest badly.

So it is very good as you say that the Boston work be taken up in the end of March. By the end of April I will start for England.

Land can be had in large plots in the Catskills for very little money. There is a plot of 101 acres for \$200. The money I have ready, only I cannot buy the land in my name. You are the only friend in this country in whom I have perfect trust. If you consent I will buy the land in your name. The students will go there in summer and build cottages or camps as they like and practise meditation. Later on if they can collect funds they may build something up.

* * To-morrow will be the last Sunday lecture of this month. The first Sunday of next month there will be a lecture in Brooklyn; the rest three in New York with which I will close this year's New York lectures.

I have worked my best. If there is any seed of truth in it, it will come to life. So I have no anxiety about anything. I am also getting tired of lecturing and having classes. After a few month's work in England I will go to India and hide myself absolutely for some years or for ever. I am satisfied in my conscience that I did not remain an idle Swami. I have a note book which has travelled with me all over the world. I find these words written seven years ago,—“Now to seek a corner and lay myself to die!” Yet all this Karma remained. I hope I have worked them out. I hope the Lord will give me freedom from this preaching and adding good bondages.

“If you have known the Atman as the one existence and that nothing else exists, for whom, for what desire do you trouble yourself?” Through Maya all this doing good, etc., came into my brain,—now they are leaving me. I get more and more convinced that there is no other object in work except the purification of the soul, to make it fit for knowledge. This world with its good and evil will go on in various forms. Only the evil and good

will take new names and new seats. My soul is hankering after peace and rest eternal, undisturbed.

“Live alone, live alone. He who is alone never comes into conflict with others—never disturbs others, is never disturbed by others.” I long, oh! I long for my rags, my shaven head, my sleep under the trees and my food from begging! That India is the only place where with all its faults, the soul finds its freedom, its God. All this Western pomp is only vanity, only bondage of the soul. Never more in my life I realised more forcibly the vanity of the world. May the Lord break the bondage of all—may all come out of Maya—

is the constant prayer of

Vivekananda.

IN THE HOLY LAND.

(Continued from page 93.)

THE JAFFA GATE.

Following along Christian Street we draw near to the Jaffa Gate and find ourselves in the Market-place of Jerusalem. It is full of Oriental life with all its phases of light, shade and colour, and in the varied costumes are seen the most arresting contrasts. From sunrise to sunset an unending stream of people threads its way through the Jaffa Gateway. Peasants of the country in picturesque garb: the men with gaily-coloured kerchiefs wound round their red *tarbooshes* and loose homespun cloaks hanging from their shoulders, their brown legs stepping out from the folds of their robe, and a pair of much worn leather shoes completing their becoming get-up. The women, in dark blue dresses, with loads of vegetables cleverly balanced on their heads, file past, many a mother carrying her baby in a bag slung on her back. Bedouins deeply bronzed, far from their desert tent-homes,

with striped woolen *haicks* wrapping the left shoulder and the body and *kafiyehs* on their heads, gaze wonderingly about. Scores of Russian pilgrims tramp their way, staff in hand: Europeans, in sober attire, black and white habited monks, veiled women, and Jews with downcast eyes contribute their share to the curious variety. Yelling donkey-boys driving their animals, perhaps meet a similar lot and an exciting contest ensues: these informal encounters at an end, peace is restored and each party hurries off in his own direction, urging his charges through the throng with scant ceremony. Yellow-skinned Mongols, dervishes, consular *kawwases*, Sudanese and Algerians push through the motley crush. With a tinkle, tinkle, the bells on the head and neck of a camel herald the approach of a long string of "the ships of the desert"; head-to-tail and heavily laden they move slowly along; a passage is cleared for them to pass through and the crowd again closes up. A troop of mounted Circassians clad in astrakan caps and great riding-cloaks, with rifles and long knives speed to the barracks in David's Tower. And so this steady current flows on till noon, and oftentimes until the sinking sun proclaims the close of another day.

Surely, it is the strangest of transformations to come from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to this unpremeditated pageant, which brings one a sensation of living in the Middle Ages!

THE DOME OF THE ROCK.

One of the principal features of the City that the visitor naturally wishes to see, is the site of the ancient Temple Area.

As regards the actual Temple itself every vestige has entirely disappeared. Not only the original Temple of Solomon, but also that of Herod the Great, has been so completely demolished that even the foundation-stones are not left. The case is very different with the

"Temple Area." Some portions of the massive walls erected by Solomon's and Herod's masons still remain intact. There seems little doubt that the present *Harâm* (sacred enclosure) is almost identical with that of Herod's Area. Immediately on entering the Area which is surrounded on all sides by a lofty wall with thirteen gates, we notice on our right a very beautiful fountain of Arabesque design, which was erected by the celebrated Egyptian Sultan Kayat Bey in the year A. D. 1445. In the centre of the Area rises majestically before us the far-famed Dome of the Rock. Whatever differences have arisen about the other hills of Jerusalem, there is no question that the mount on which the so-called Mosque of Omar stands, overhanging the Valley of the Kedron, has, from Solomon's time, if not from David, been regarded as the most sacred ground in Jerusalem. This building is generally known to travellers as the Mosque of Omar, from the name of the second Khalif, or successor of the Prophet, under whom Jerusalem was captured by the Mohammedans, and who was one of the most illustrious generals in the army of Mohammed. Strictly speaking, the *Kabbet es-Sakhrah*, as "The Dome of the Rock" signifies in Arabic, is not a mosque at all, but is rather a sacred shrine, not intended primarily for purposes of worship, but built over the Sacred Rock, which is the summit of Mount Moriah, and upon which, according to Jewish and Mohammedan tradition, Abraham offered up Isaac.

The Mosque stands on a marble platform rising on the highest ridge of a green slope, planted with olive, cypress, and other trees. It is reached by a broad flight of steps round the edge of which are dotted little circular praying-places. This splendid edifice of an octagonal form is approached by four porticoes facing the cardinal points; one of them with an elegant marble colonade lighted by forty-eight windows of stained glass, leads into the interior of the building. The walls narrow

above into a circle, also pierced with windows, and is surmounted by a graceful dome, bearing aloft the gilt crescent of Islam, a conspicuous object from whatever direction it can be seen. The whole exterior is covered with ornamental caustic tiles of different colours, so intermingled that it is impossible to say whether the building is blue or green. An Arabic inscription, in large and prettily interlaced characters encircles it.

Until a few years ago it was death for any Christian to enter the Mosque. Black dervishes, with daggers, used to stand at the gates, threatening to slay the infidel who ventured within its walls. Now anyone can be admitted with the escort of properly qualified attendants. My dragoman had made all the necessary arrangements for me, which consisted of obtaining through the Consul a permission from the Pasha, and procuring the Consular *Kawwas*, who brings with him a Turkish soldier, as the official representative of the Ottoman authorities. Before entering the Mosque, the feet of the visitor are encased in large soft shoes, supplied by a Mohammedan who stands at the entrance for that purpose.

Within the Mosque, the "dim, religious light" makes it difficult to see anything at first, but gradually one becomes accustomed to it and the eye delights to lose itself in the beauties of its form and the elaborate ornamentations covering almost the entire walls. It will be seen that the interior is divided into three concentric sections by means of beautiful arches, pillars and piers, principally composed of marble. It is supposed that some of the columns belonged to Herod's Temple and were found in the heaps of debris lying in the Temple Area. The upper portions of the eight walls are filled with lovely mosaic designs, above which run texts from the Koran in gold Kufic characters on a blue ground.

The dome is supported by four piers and twelve columns, all arranged in the form of a

circle. Above the columns are black and white marble arches, which, with the piers, bear the enormous weight of the dome and the drum beneath it. The drum is decorated with rich mosaic work, while the dome is painted and gilded. The colouring of the windows is exquisite and striking in the extreme, the subdued light which penetrates through them being caused by a coating of procelain which covers them on the exterior to protect them from the ravages of weather. The handsome wrought-iron screen upon a stone balustrade, which encloses the circle formed by the piers and columns mentioned above, is said to have been placed there by the crusaders during the short period when this Mosque was used as a Christian church. There are four gateways in this screen, and passing through one of them we find ourselves in a narrow aisle, bounded on the inner side by a perforated wooden screen which protects the Holy Rock from being contaminated by the hands or feet of strangers. In the centre, immediately under the dome, is this remarkable mass of irregular rock, said to be the top of Mount Moriah. It stands about six feet above the level of the floor of the Mosque. Mohammedans believe that when their Prophet went to heaven, he ascended from the summit of this rock, and they point to a mark in its side, somewhat like the shape of a man's foot which they say is the impression left by the foot of the Prophet. At its south-east corner is an excavated chamber, to which there is a descent by stone steps and an aperture through the adamantine roof. In the centre are several small altars where Abraham, David, Solomon and Elijah are said each to have offered worship. However that may be, the rock remains, the most curious monument of Ancient Jerusalem, and not the least so from the unrivalled variety of associations which it has gathered to itself in the transitions of the past.

After remounting the steps, we make our way round to the Western side, in order to

get a clear idea of the original position of the Temple. Here, as nearly as possible, was the entrance into the "Holy Place", and on leaving the building by this door and walking westward we come to the spot where formerly stood the Veil of the Temple, separating the "Holy Place" from the "Holy of Holies." The Temple consisted of three parts, viz., the portico, the "Holy Place" and the "Holy of Holies": and the original design of Solomon's Temple was probably largely influenced by Egyptian tradition. The plans of Egyptian temples always consisted of three similar parts, viz. the Hall of Columns, the Sanctuary, and the Holy of Holies. The esoteric symbolism of these parts was understood—both by the initiated Egyptian priests and the Hebrew Rabbis to represent the Church of God on Earth, in Paradise, and in Heaven respectively.

Leaving the Mosque of Omar and proceeding to the extremity of the marble platform on which it stands, we reach the head of another broad flight of steps leading to the Court of the Gentiles, after pausing for a moment to note with interest a beautiful open-air pulpit, where a sermon is preached by an Imân every Friday during the Ramadan fast. We now come to the Mosque El-Aksa, which was originally a Christian church, dedicated to the Virgin Mary and erected by the Emperor Justinian in the middle of the 6th century. On the conquest of Jerusalem, the Khalif Omar converted it into a mosque, proclaiming it second only to the Mosque of Mecca in sanctity and importance. Perhaps the most beautiful work of art in this fine building is "Saladin's Pulpit." It is said that Saladin presented this marvellous specimen of Oriental workmanship to the Mosque, though it had originally been intended for the great Mosque of Damascus. The woodwork of the frame and staircase, inlaid with ivory and mother-of-pearl, and the enamelled canopy above are of unrivalled beauty and excellence. Attached to the Mosque is another

portion called the "Mosque of the Forty," which refers to the forty followers of the Prophet, whose memory is immortalised in several places in Palestine.

We turn our steps to another section of the Harâm enclosure, and passing through a low and narrow doorway, we descend a dark stone staircase to the so-called Solomon's Stables below. During the siege of Jerusalem, it is alleged, many thousands of Jewish men, women and children took refuge in these subterranean vaults. When making our way northward we arrive at the Golden Gate, and at a short distance from it is to be seen a sacred shrine of the Moslems, known as "Solomon's Throne," from a strange tradition which connects the spot with the death of the Jewish King. We now leave the Temple Area by the "Gate of the Tribes."

C. E. S.

(To be continued).

THE PARABLES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

III.

THE PARABLE OF THE MILK-MAID.

From day to day a milk-maid crossed the stream
By ferry on her way,
A learned Brahmin priest's supply of milk
To carry every day.

One day, when by her customer rebuked
For coming late, she said:
"The ferry has no timings fixed, so, sir,
I can't help being delayed"—

The priest in joke and pondrous tones
declared:
"They cross life's ocean vast,
Who say God's name, and, woman! small a
stream
With that name cross thou canst!"

To her of simple faith and heart it was
A revelation made,
And o'er the stream the name of God each day
Her steps undoubting led!

Till wondering one day how every morn
Appeared she just when due,
The priest enquired of her what made her form
This useful habit new.

"Why, did you not yourself divulge," she said,
"The sacred mystery, sir?
To cross the stream I take the name of God
And just in time reach here."

The priest was wonder-struck: a miracle!
Or rather it's a lie;

"Well, let me see you cross the stream," said he,
And thought he might once try.

The river reached, the milk-maid went across
Repeating slow the name;
The priest exultant saw his clue fulfilled,—
Well, he must do the same.

The name of God repeating stepped he forth,
Off went his feet from land,
But deeper waded he as higher up
His clothes he clutched in hand!

"Ah, what is this, oh! milk-maid?" shouted he;
Athwart her voice arose,
"But how would it do if you take the name
And pull up too your clothes?"

The practice of religion does not bear
The wondrous fruits it should,
Because to it with all our heart and soul
We do not trust our good.

—P. S. I.

THE VAIRAGYA-SATAKAM

OR THE HUNDRED VERSES ON RENUNCIATION BY VARTRIHARI.

वैराग्यशतकम् ।

चूडोत्तंसितचन्द्रचारुकलिकाचञ्चिह्वाभासरो
लीलादग्धविलोककामशलभः श्रेयोदशाग्रे स्फुरन् ।
अन्तःस्फूर्जदपारमोहतिमिरप्राग्भारमुच्चाटयं-
श्चेतःसन्ननि योगिनां विजयते ज्ञानप्रदीपो हरः ॥१॥

1. चूडोत्तंसित made an ornament for the head चारु-
कलिकाचञ्चिह्वा lambent beams like beautiful half-
blooming buds लीलादग्ध burnt up at ease or in
sport श्रेयोदशाग्रे in front of all circumstances of
prosperity स्फुरन् appearing अन्तःस्फूर्जेन् spreading
forth in the heart प्राग्भारं heavy mass at the front.

* 1. All glory to Shiva, the Light of
knowledge residing in the temple of the Yogis'
heart,—who smites away (like the rising
sun) the massive front of the endless night
of ignorance overcasting human minds,—in
whose wake follow all auspiciousness and
prosperity,—who easily burnt up gay Lust as
a moth, as if in sport,—and who appears
beaming with the lambent rays of the crescent
adorning his forehead,—rays that look pleas-
ing like soft half-blooming buds.

* As is customary with Sanskrit poets, this open-
ing verse is dedicatory, (to Shiva in this instance,) as forming an auspicious introduction.

भ्रान्तं देशमनेकदुर्गविषमं प्राप्तं न किञ्चित्फलं
त्यक्त्वा जातिकुलाभिमानमुचितं सेवा कृता
निष्फला ।

भुक्तं मानविवर्जितं परगृहेष्वाराङ्क्या काकव-
चृष्णो जृम्भसि पापकर्मपिशुने नाद्यापि संतुष्यसि ॥

2. अनेकदुर्गविषमं rendered difficult of access by vari-
ous obstacles फलं result, (but here) wealth, आराङ्क्या
hankering (after gain) पापकर्मपिशुने indicative of
evil deeds.

2. Many are the inaccessible and perilous places I have travelled and yet obtained no riches; sacrificing proper dignity of birth and social position, in vain have I served the rich; like the crows, have I fed myself,—devoid of self-respect,—at the house of others in the expectation of gain; and yet, oh! Desire, you prompter of evil deeds, you are waxing lustier and are not still satisfied.

उत्खातं निधिशङ्क्या क्षितितलं ध्माता गिरेर्धातवो
निस्तीर्णः सरितां पतिर्नृपतयो यत्नेन संतोषिताः।
मन्त्राराधनतत्परेण मनसा नीताः श्मशाने निशाः
प्राप्तः काण्वराटकोऽपि न मया तृष्णे सकामा भव॥

3. The earth have I digged into in quest of precious minerals, and metals from rocks have I blown; the ocean have I crossed, and the favour of kings have I diligently sought; nights have I spent on burning grounds with my mind occupied with *mantras* and worship; * and not even a broken cowrie have I obtained; be satisfied therefore, oh! Desire.

* This forms a part of the mysterious rites to be gone through by those who invoke supernatural agencies for obtaining riches.

खलालापाः सोढाः कथमपि तदाराधनपरै-
र्निगृह्यान्तर्बाष्पं हसितमपि शुन्येन मनसा ।
कृतो वित्तस्तम्भप्रतिहतधियामञ्जलिरपि
त्वमाशे मोघाशे किमपरमतो नर्तयसि माम् ॥४॥

4. वित्तस्तम्भप्रतिहतधियां those rendered dull in intellect by inactivity due to too much wealth, मोघाशे with hopes thwarted.

4. In our servile attendance on the (wealthy) wicked, their shabby manners and talk we have somehow put up with; suppressing tears that welled up from our hearts, we have smiled out of vacant minds; obeisance we have made to dullards stultified by too much wealth; in what more fooleries would you have me dance, oh! Desire, thou of ungratified yearning.

(To be continued)

ON THE CONNING TOWER.

WE bid a hearty welcome to the "Vedanta Kesari," our new collaborator in the field of Indian journalism. From the Madras centre of the Ramkrishna Mission, its first number has come forth before the Indian public last month, with a nice get-up and a nice befitting motto and with the promise of a useful, brilliant career to be pursued amidst all the advantages and facilities which a modern town offers to the publishers of modern monthlies. The lion, according to our religion, is the symbol of spiritual strength, and it figures in Indian symbology as the *Vahan* or carrier of our Divine Mother, the dispenser of the Vedic salvation. It is therefore our constant prayer that the 'Vedanta Kesari,' or the Lion of Vedanta may prove itself to be the worthy instrument in the hands of the Mother in dispensing spirituality and salvation to all men. We invite the attention of our readers to the announcement of its objects and features published in our advertisement columns.

We take this opportunity to congratulate the conductors of the Brahmavadin on the success with which they could bring out the Vivekananda special number this year, and hope they will be able to follow it up with similar brilliant issues of the journal. The ardent blessings of Swami Vivekananda which brought the Brahmavadin into being, the devoted labours of its first editor,—a worthy disciple of the Swami, in whom the gift of expression combined with a thorough appreciation of the Swami's ideals and teachings,—ought to remain with it as a perennial inspiration. The success of a modern journal should depend more on the fact of its having its *own* distinct message to deliver to the public in its own characteristic tone and vigour than on the fact of its being a mere mouthpiece for outside contributors to speak through to the public in discordant tones and with varying emphasis. While allowing all possible scope for contributions from outside, it should therefore be the duty of every journal to constantly put before its readers a well-systematised view and a definite programme in respect of all such problems as it undertakes to tackle and discuss in its columns. We hope to find this important point of journalistic excellence

achieved and manifested in future by our contemporary of the Brahnavadin as a more conspicuous feature.

The problem of education has been in recent years exercising very much the minds of our educated countrymen. But when Swami Vivekananda was pointing out to us the past glories and the future possibilities of our ancient culture, when in his Indian lectures he was indicating the proper process and basis for reorganising this culture, the present problem of education had not assumed any definite shape in the minds of the educated people in India. The Swami had a clear vision of the Indian collective life,—its past evolution and history, its future progress towards perfection. And naturally he had in his mind a definite conception of the culture that has to mould the future of that collective life. But those that find the problem of education set before them today and address themselves to its solution, are evidently lacking both in the clear vision of that collective life we have got to build up and in that conception of culture which can be formed only as the outcome of that vision. For every system of education consists of the processes by which a particular culture is imparted and nationalised; and before we determine what such processes ought to be, we have to clearly comprehend the culture in all its organic relations. And further to comprehend a culture in all its relations, we have to clearly understand that theory of life, both individual and collective, which that culture seeks to explain and establish.

The system of education that prevails in our country now was originally a sort of provision made by the Government for the supply of qualified men to assist in all the departments of its activity. It is no doubt an important function of the educational system in every country to provide for this supply. But our Western rulers have to transact their affairs according to Western methods and in the light of their Western culture, and naturally the system of education that they established in the country had practically very little reference to the claims and possibilities of the Indian culture, which, already lying dismantled and disorganised, was therefore easily relegated to the domain of antiquities. But in time a strong reaction has set in

almost everywhere in India against a purely Western system of education, and the problem of making education in India *national* has taken deep root into the minds of thoughtful people all over the country. But still the very first thing necessary with regard to a thorough tackling of the problem is to clearly define the real problem, for the term 'national' applied to any branch of public activity in India at present is bound to be vague and ambiguous.

Should we mean by national education in India that scheme of education in which the controlling authority is fully vested in the hands of Indians? If this be the primary sense in which the word national education is to be understood, then the scheme can be made theoretically perfect and well-defined, but practically it is bound to be a failure. For where is the certainty that those who are born as Indians but are themselves denationalised by Western education will be able to impart a culture that it is impossible for such students to acquire as choose to be educated in the state-controlled universities. For if it is found to be possible for the students of these universities to acquire by the way all that the so-called national education claims to impart, over and above preserving for themselves all those chances of service qualification which that national education would require them to forfeit, then it is perfectly evident that the so-called national institutions would starve out of existence for want of students. This has practically been the case with the many institutions started under the auspices and control of the National Council of Education in Bengal. They failed to prove that the advantages that they assured to the students in the shape of an education imparted *on national lines* out-balanced the disadvantages to which they exposed the same students; and the public in every country, we should remember, possess greater practical sagacity than we generally care to credit them with.

It is high time therefore for the national educationists in Bengal to re-adjust their programme and re-state their objects. In the first place, they must make it clear to all as to what they mean by education *on national lines*; for the Indian culture to which they appeal when using that expression must be a sort of organic existence which refuses in consequence to be fitted into or foisted on another

culture by any purely mechanical processes. Just as in the case of its prototype of an organic scheme of collective life which we may call the Indian nationalism, the Indian culture has to be treated as an organic system of knowledge, of which the shining torch he alone is qualified to hold up for others who has been endowed by it with its peculiar type of wisdom and realisation. Culture is not merely a mental compilation of facts and principles embraced under different branches of knowledge; it implies a positive transformation of the whole man, which places him on such an eminence of wisdom as gives a systematizing grasp and harmonising view over the whole realm of knowledge. The Indian culture claims to lift a man to a higher altitude of wisdom than the Western culture can even scale, simply because its supreme view-point and principle of systematization are such as comprehend within themselves all the view-points and methods which Western culture uses in investigating knowledge. This comprehensiveness of the Indian culture and its moulding influence on character must have to be embodied in the life of the teacher and the taught, if a system of education on national lines have to be established in the country. So long as this supreme condition is fulfilled, the question of control becomes a question of only secondary importance.

But the *national* institutions for education recently started in Bengal did not evince a clear conception of the Indian culture as an organic system. Those who were even at the helm of the whole machinery of teaching did not embody the spiritual culture of ancient India; they had perhaps only intellectual glimpses of it in their lives, and it is not from intellect to intellect, but from life to life, that culture has to be transmitted in the real sense. This is why the spiritual culture of ancient India had really no scope or opportunity to reassert itself in that system of education which the Bengal National Council proposed to establish under the style of education "on national lines." The highest spirituality of the Vedas constitutes the systematizing principle in the ancient Indian culture, and unless this principle is manifested in the life of those who deal with that culture, no amount of antiquarian discovery of facts regarding that culture will go to restore it to its proper

position of authority in the life of our people. Failing to make this systematizing principle operative in the scheme of education that was sought to be established, the national university in Bengal had to content itself with very little *real* nationalism in the education that it imparted; and so vague and insignificant in fact was this nationalism, that the whole system, heavily handicapped as it was by the circumstance of its diplomas being not recognised in the professional markets, could hardly justify its existence as a separate institution to be maintained on such an expensive scale.

Secondly, it is necessary for the national educationists to readjust the relation in which national education stands to the state-controlled university education. It is unfortunate that when the national scheme of education was set on foot, considerations of a political nature influenced to some extent the minds of those who propounded the scheme. To this fact is due much of that exaggerated emphasis, which instead of being wrongly put on the desirability of national control should have been profitably put on the necessity of the education being on national lines, for it is evident that the question of control is but secondary and subordinate to the question of the education being really national. But however, it was finally settled by the Council that they should try to supplement the state-controlled education that prevails in the country instead of seeking to replace it. This was no doubt a wise policy, but unfortunately no definite scope was given to this policy in the arrangement of the courses and curriculums of study, for example, which when examined will be found to suit only such students as having to *choose* between the national and the state-controlled universities had fully committed themselves to the protection of the former. Thus the wise policy of supplementing the existing universities failed to embody itself in suitable courses of study and instruction, and the whole movement was practically allowed to stand on a footing of fruitless competition with state-controlled education.

But this footing of competition is quite unnecessary, for it is just possible, as we have hinted above, to make the Western education imparted by state-controlled universities conduce to the interests of

the Indian culture we seek to re-instate. There is no antagonism between Indian culture and Western education so far as the latter consists only in mastering, from a material point of view, facts and truths about the material sphere of our life and thought; but it is only when these facts and truths have to be manipulated in reference to higher principles of thought and conduct, that we have got to assert the systematizing authority of the Indian spiritual culture. It is precisely this collateral but determinative self-assertion of the Indian culture that constitutes the supplementary function of national education in its relation to the state-controlled education that prevails in our country, and it is incumbent on us to organise this function properly through a system of instruction in the spiritual culture of ancient India to be conducted and supervised by those who represent and embody the Indian synthetic spirituality. We hope it is not too late now for the National Council of Education in Bengal to readjust its scheme on the lines suggested above.

SWAMI NIRMALANANDAJI'S TOUR IN TRAVANCORE.

A correspondent writes from Travancore :

An observer remarked the other day after a brilliant conversation with Swamiji, "of a truth the Swamis are the salt of the earth." Yes, we beg to endorse every word of the statement. May it be the Lord's grace to send many more of His elect to people the earth with love, strength and wisdom.

Sri Swami Nirmalanandaji arrived at Haripad on the 6th of April morning. The Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama presented a scene of life and activity. Morning, noon, evening and night, crowds of listeners packed the hall and listened to the discourse of the Swamiji with eager and expectant faces. The quickening impulse was seen everywhere, and felt everywhere, and every one seemed to live in an atmosphere, blessed by the aroma of an all-pervading love.

On the 10th of April, early morning, loud reports of the booming Kadhinas announced the anniversary celebration of Sri Guru Maharaj. Guests, visitors and Sankirtan parties poured in. The

procession started from Sri Subramanya's temple at 8-30 a. m. Portraits of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Swami Vivekananda headed the procession, decked in silk and flowers, riding on two tuskers well-caparisoned, and attended by musicians and Sankirtan parties, with a long and winding train of retinue composed of officers, professionals, and landlords, of the young and old, male and female. The march was slow, solemn and majestic. In about two and half hours the party reached the Ashrama premises where no stone was left unturned to make the general festivities of the day a success. The manager Mr. Subbaraya Iyer was all love and devotion. The premises were tastefully decorated and huge pandals were put up in front of and on the sides of the Ashrama. Large gatherings of the people, from the Panchama to the caste Brahmin, occupied the compound. There was Puja and Aratrika, and "jai Sri Guru Maharaj ki jay" resounded all along. At about 12 all sat to a sumptuous dinner served out with the most palatable dishes. In the afternoon Mr. Dharma Raja Iyer, Head master of the Sanatan Dharma Vidya-shala, entertained the audience by a Katha on the boy Prahlad. It was elevating and it appealed to the audience forcibly. There was sweet Bhakti poured out in the joyous strains of sweet music. Towards the evening the pandal was full, and an expectant audience was swaying to and fro in the fullness of enthusiasm. Swamiji took the chair. Mr. Thumpy, the 1st. class Magistrate at Theruvalla, Mr. Narayana Pillai, District Munsiff at Allepy, and Mr. Krishna Pillai, Magistrate at Changanachery, spoke in succession. All of them dwelt ably on the utility of and the necessity for the Mission and the Ashrama. The address of His Highness the Yuvaraja of Mysore at the last Bangalore Anniversary was then read to the audience and explained in Malayalam by Mr. Krishna Varier, B. A., L. T. of the Manalikai High School. The Swamiji concluded with a few words of passionate eloquence. He ended by saying, "Ramakrishna is not the special property of the Hindus, the Christians or the Mahomedans, or of the Bengalees, Bombayites or Madrasites. But, He is as "the uncle moon" of all. Him the Vadakalais can claim, Him the Thenkalais can claim, Him the Zoroastrians can claim, Him the Buddhists can claim as their own. He is the life-giver, vitaliser

and renovator of all." The conversations continued from next morning as usual. Every moment we saw utilised to its full. We could now see how a life could be consumed on the altar of service. The next day the Panchamas flocked to the Swamiji in large numbers and were soothed, elevated and encouraged by his sympathetic and edifying utterances. A Panchama boy was dedicated to the cause of Sri Guru Maharaj. "Well," the Swami said half-smilingly "the sanke that bit must suck out its own poison."

The Swamiji left for Trivandrum on a flying visit. Transacting some business there he returned to the Haripad Ashrama within three days.

AT MAVALEKKARAI.

Next Swamiji visited Kandiyoor and Maltom in Mavalekkarai. At the weaving institute, there was a fairly large gathering, representative in scope and interest. After Bhajana and Aratrika, Swamiji invited the people for a talk. "In the presence of a host of Avatars, wherein lies the necessity of a new Avatara Ramakrishna," was asked by a few enquiring souls. Beginning with evolution and the economic law of supply and demand, and analysing the different ages and tracing clearly the underlying necessity of each age, the Swamiji in a glow of enthusiasm drew a brilliant picture of Sri Ramakrishna as the Avatara for the age, epitomising in fifty-four years what has been recorded in 5000 years of spiritual growth and development. A few other questions were put and ready answers were made on the spot. The company as a whole felt the thrill of a spiritual renovation.

AT MANNAR.

Mannar was visited next. Short conversations were held on diverse subjects such as Baby Jesus, Girish Chundra Ghose, Suresh Babu, fanaticism &c. In the night there was Bhajana and Aratrika.

AT THIRUVALLA.

Reaching Thiruvalla at the Ramakrishna Mandiram next day, the Swamiji addressed himself to his task most vigorously. Conversations and discussions enlivened the whole atmosphere. In many a heart, doubts and obscurities were cleared up. Devotees swarmed the Mandiram in large numbers. With the 28th of April came the anniversary celebration of Sri Guru Maharaj. The procession in the morning was splendid. Jai

Guru Maharaj ki jai rent the air. People of all castes and creeds united to pay homage to the Lord. Inside the Mandiram it was all stir and joy. Brahmachari Bakhta Nilakanta moved about loving all, serving all, nay, worshipping all. After prayer and Aratrika, the grand feast was served and every one present partook of it to his fill. After a while groups of people crowded on the common in front of the caste-girls school and on the side of the orthodox Sri Vallaba temple. The elite of the town turned up strong. Among non-Hindus the Syrian Christians were well-represented. A little before 5 p. m. the place was full and every inch of space was occupied. Precisely at the appointed hour, the Swamiji graced the platform and called upon the Brahmacharin to proceed on with the report and the other speakers with their speeches. Mr. Narayana Pillai, the life and centre of the movement at Thiruvalla opened with an introduction emphasising the necessity of practice along with profession. Copious illustrations from ancient and modern history were cited to explain the ideal. Mr. Thumpy next spoke on "Sri Ramakrishna's Guru-Bhava,"—lucidly explaining the nature of a real Guru and dwelling on the prominent aspect of the Lord's life as a real Guru. Next came up Mr. Velu Pillai speaking about the objects of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission. Succinctly laying before the audience in spirited Malayalam the an objects of the Mission as indicated in the world-wide work it has undertaken, the speaker with much earnestness argued that the Mission stands for all that makes for regeneration, harmony and peace. In conclusion the Swamiji wound up with a spirited appeal to the different religionists to stand shoulder to shoulder in their onward march for peace and spiritual prosperity and see in one another their own God as if disguised under name and form.

The Swamiji started the next day for Haripad. Spending there another day he with a few Bhaktas left for Cherthala en route to Bangalore.

May it be the privilege and fortune of the people here in Travancore to be blessed with the spiritual guidance of a Swamiji permanently residing in any of the Ashramas here "tending his flock as a good shepherd does."

May Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna bless us, is ever our prayer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF NEW PUBLICATIONS

Rabindranath Tagore: A Sketch of his Life and an Appreciation of his Works. Published by G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Price annas Four.

Toru Dutt: A Sketch of her Life and an Appreciation of her Works. Published by the same. Price annas Four.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu: A Sketch of Her Life and an Appreciation of her Works. Published by the same. Price annas Four.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati: His Life and Teachings. By Sivananda Prasad Kulyar with a foreward by Prof. Ramadeva B. A., M. R. A. S., Editor, The Vedic Magazine. Published by Ganesh & Co. Madras. Price Re. 1 only.

The Sanhita: A Dialogue between Rishi Astavakra and Raja Janaka, being an introduction to the philosophy of the Vedanta; translated from the original Sanskrit with an introduction by Sri Ananda Acharya. Published by Francis Griffiths, London. Price 2s. 6d. net, by post, 2s. 8d.

The Pal-Rajas of East Bengal, A Bengalee book of the Dacca Sahitya Parishat Series. By Sri Birendra Nath Basu Thakur. Published by Sri Narendranath Bhadra, Nayabazar, Dacca. Price annas Twelve.

The Album of the Atank Nigraha Pharmacy from the General Manager of that distinguished firm, containing nice portraits of all the departments and their working in the Head Office and Factory at Jamnagar and of its branch offices in several towns of India, Burma and Ceylon.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES.

(CULLED AND CONDENSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

It is reported that the Ramakrishna Sevashrama started under the patronage of the Nawab Bahadur at Dacca will be shortly affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission. Swami Suddhananda has been selected from the Mission as well as the Math at Belur to take charge of the Mission and Math work at Dacca as the supervisor.

Srijuts Satis Chandra Agarwala and Umesh Chandra Basak write from Katra Bazar, Maldah, to

announce that Sri Ramakrishna celebrations have been arranged by the local people to take place on three consecutive days beginning from the 30th May with music, *sankirtans*, feasts, and feeding of the poor. They have also arranged for bringing from the Belur Math His Holiness Swami Premananda to grace the occasion by his presence and inspire them with spiritual fervour.

THE Annual General Meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission was held at the Belur Math (Dist. Howrah), its headquarters, on the 18th of May last. In the absence of the President, H. H. Swami Brahmananda who had been sojourning at Benares and owing to the illness of the Secretary, Swami Saradananda, Swami Premananda was voted to the chair. After the reading of the Annual Report and the election of new members and the auditors for the year, a discourse on "Jiva-seva" was given by Swami Premananda. The meeting dispersed after serving of refreshments and *Prasadam*.

THE seventeenth anniversary of the death of the late Nafar Chandra Kundu was publicly celebrated last month near the site of his memorial in Chakerberia Road South, Calcutta, by the members of the Ramakrishna Archanalaya, Entally, with the help and co-operation of the residents of the locality and other philanthropic gentlemen of Calcutta. Nafar Chandra Kundu, it may be remembered, had laid down his life in attempting to rescue two Mahomedan sewer coolies from a manhole, and a memorial had been erected by his admirers, European and Indian, to mark their appreciation of the gallant self-sacrifice.

According to the "Times of India" of the 19th January, 1914, the following animals were killed to supply the markets at Bombay, Calcutta and Madras during the year 1912:

Sheep and Goats	...	1,215,438
Cattle	121,872
Calves	11,024
Pigs	2,860

THE proportion of females to males in India is 954 to 1,000. The disparity is not much greater than in other countries except Western Europe, where the females exceed the males. In India the mortality from plague and malaria is greater among women but men die more readily from famine.

Female infanticide is less common than formerly, but it still has an effect on the statistics, it is said.

THE largest of the standing rewards for medical research is the Breant prize of £4,000, offered by the Medical Section of the French Academy of Sciences for the discovery of a means to cure Asiatic cholera. The entire sum will be given to the discoverer of a genuine cure, but the interest may be awarded from time to time in smaller prizes for work advancing the scientific knowledge of this disease.

The work of extracting venom from snakes for the purpose of making antidote for poison is being carried on at Parel Laboratory, Bombay. Poison is sent up to Kasauli where it is injected in small quantities into horses and in course of time a certain amount of blood is drawn off. Blood corpuscles are separated from serum and the latter is antidote or antivenine as it is carried. Several lives have been saved in Bombay by means of the antidote.

THE President of the Ramkrishna Mission has issued the following appeal to the public in connection with the Building Fund of the Brindaban Ramkrishna Mission Sevashrama :

In our previous reports we drew public attention to the peculiar social needs of Sri Brindaban. It is one of those places of pilgrimage where large number of pilgrims come all the year round and yet where not a single institution existed before the establishment of the Ramkrishna Sevashrama to take care of the poor helpless pilgrims when they fell a prey to disease. The special sanctity of Sri Brindaban moreover draws many men and women from different parts of India to pass the evening of their lives in the holy city in religious practices and to wait here patiently to enter into salvation when their final call would come. A large majority of such people are poor and old and have in many cases no earthly relations to take care of them when they are attacked with disease. The helplessness and suffering of the poor pilgrims and this class of people during illness can better be imagined than described. It is not an uncommon sight therefore to find here diseased people cast away on the banks of the Jumna or left by

chance in Dharmasala or in corners or by-lanes of the city to die a worse death than the vilest of criminals. It was to serve such people without distinction of creed or caste, to bring to them food and medicine, to nurse them and minister to their needs in the spirit of worshipping God in the poor, the miserable and the diseased, that the Sevashrama was called into being 7 years ago. Through the generous help of Sriji Ramkrishna Bose who placed in the hands of the Mission the outhouses of his temple building known as Kala Babu's Kunja to be used as a temporary hospital the Sevashrama began its work of service. It will be seen from the comparative table given in the Report that the relief work of the Sevashrama have rapidly increased from 26 indoor patients and 275 outdoor patients during the first year of its existence to 260 indoor and 30903 outdoor patients during year under review. This extraordinary increase in the number of patients who come to the Sevashrama for relief unmistakably indicates what an amount of silent suffering was lying hidden under the pleasant exterior of Sri Brindaban and that the Sevashrama has been able however inadequately to supply an urgent need which implied a calamity that was undermining the very vitals of the society. But to cope with this ever-increasing misery and suffering the Sevashrama finds itself extremely handicapped : The rooms in which we are now treating our patients are quite inadequate to accommodate them and are absolutely unsuited to serve as a Hospital. The want of a proper Hospital building in a suitable plot of land is sorely felt and unless an early provision be made to secure the same, the work of relief will greatly suffer. We appeal to all pious and kindhearted gentleman of all nationalities to help us in this endeavour. And will not the only Institution in the place which is struggling its best with the slender means at its disposal to ameliorate the suffering of the diseased, the old and the infirm, meet with enough sympathy and co-operation from the generous public to raise a suitable habitation of its own as well as to supply it with funds sufficient to carry out and maintain its useful work on a permanent footing? Will the good work which has stood the trial and test of the past seven years, be allowed to collapse just for want of funds in this land of Dharma?