

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

Awakened India



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. ६.

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प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XIX]

JULY 1914

[No. 216

UNPUBLISHED NOTES OF CLASS TALKS BY THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

ON PROOF OF RELIGION.

The great question about religion, is what makes it so unscientific. If religion is a science, why is it not as certain as other sciences? All beliefs in God, heaven etc. are mere conjectures, mere beliefs. There seems to be nothing certain about it. Our ideas concerning religion are changing all the time. The mind is in a constant state of flux.

Is man a Soul, an unchanging substance, or is he a constantly changing quantity? All religions, except primitive Buddhism, believe that man is a soul, an identity, a unit that never dies but is immortal.

The primitive Buddhists believe that man is a constantly changing quantity, and that his consciousness consists in an almost infinite succession of incalculably rapid changes, each change, as it were,—being unconnected to the others,—standing alone, thus precluding the theory of the law of sequence, or causation.

If there is a unit, there is a substance. A unit is always simple. A simple is not a compound of anything. It does not depend on anything else. It stands alone and is immortal.

Primitive Buddhists contend that everything is unconnected; nothing is a unit; and that the theory of man being a unit is a mere belief and cannot be proved.

Now the great question is,—is man a unit or is he a constantly changing mass?

There is but one way to prove this, to answer this question. Stop the gyrations of the mind, and the theory that a man is a unit, a simple, will be demonstrated. All changes are in me, in the Chitta, the mind-substance. I am not the changes. If I were, I could not stop them.

Everyone is trying to make himself and everybody else believe that this world is all very fine, that he is perfectly happy. But when man stops to question his motives in life, he will see that the reason he is struggling after this and that, is because he cannot help himself. He must move on. He cannot stop, so he tries to make himself believe that he really wants this and that. The one who actually succeeds in making himself believe that he is having a good time is the man of splendid physical health. This man responds to his desires instantly, without question. He

acts in response to that power within him, urging him on without a thought, as though he acted because he wanted to. But when he has been knocked about a good deal by nature, when he has received a good many wounds and bruises, he begins to question the meaning of all this ; and as he gets hurt more and thinks more, he sees that he is urged on by a power beyond his control, and that he acts simply because he must. Then he begins to rebel and the battle begins.

Now if there is a way out of all this trouble, it is within ourselves. We are always trying to realise the reality. Instinctively we are always trying to do that. It is creation in the human soul that covers up God ; that is why there is so much difference in God-ideals. Only when creation stops can we find the Absolute. The Absolute is in the soul, not in creation. So by stopping creation we come to know the Absolute. When we think of ourselves we think of the body, and when we think of God, we think of Him as body. To stop the gyrations of the mind that the soul may become

manifested is the work. Training begins with the body. Breathing trains the body, gets it into a harmonious condition. The object of the breathing exercises is to attain meditation and concentration. If you can get absolutely still for just one moment you have reached the goal. The mind may go on working after that,—but it will never be the same mind again. You will know yourself as you are,—your true self. Still the mind but for one moment, and the truth of your real nature will flash upon you and freedom is at hand : no more bondage after that. This follows from the theory that if you can know an instant of time, you know all time, as the whole is the rapid succession of one. Master the one,—know thoroughly one instant,—and freedom is reached.

All religions believe in God and the soul except the primitive Buddhists. The modern Buddhists believe in God and the soul. Among the primitive Buddhists are the Burmese, Siamese, Chinese etc.

Arnold's book, "The Light of Asia," represents more of Vedantism than Buddhism.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

IN the whole range of animate nature, from the creeping insect to the idealising man, life finds itself founded on the reality of matter. But in man only, nature raised the standard of revolt against this material foundation, and though the struggle continues for ever, constituting human life and evolution, success is as far from achievement on any collective scale as ever. How would then man justify this endless struggle against the claims of matter to supply the foundation of his life ?

His only real justification is his faith ; and this faith is a peculiar human achievement. It is a wonder how this faith in a higher foundation for life than matter claims to be stronger than the testimony of our senses, the testi-

mony of direct experience. Theologians have sought to trace the sources of this faith to the innate constitution of man. But evolutionists in reply have proved that the very constitution of man is a product of evolution, and therefore of experience. Those experiences, however, of the primitive man to which they claim to trace the humble beginnings of the religious belief will be found by examination to be too inadequate to justify that universal protest against a material foundation for life which human nature implied from the earliest stages of its evolution. How would we therefore explain this universal faith in a Beyond to which man has ever sought to entrust the foundation of his life ?

It must be admitted that direct experience can only be opposed and contradicted by nothing short of direct experience. So at the bottom of that universal faith in a Beyond which claims to set aside the testimony of the senses there must be involved in some way or other a direct experience of the Beyond. This faith indeed is so self-assertive that even the agnostic waxes enthusiastic over his postulate of a Beyond, however unknown and unknowable. Such experiences as brought the primitive man face to face with the mystery of death or suggested to him by means of dreams the continuity of life after death were even interpreted by him in the light of this inherent, though half-conscious, faith in a Beyond. The very inveteracy of such faith, we say, strongly argues the involved existence of direct experience within the very nature of man. The individual consciousness in man, we know, is but a reproduction, a reflection, of the race-consciousness; and it is to this race-consciousness that we must seek to trace those impressions of a direct experience of the Beyond which assert themselves in an irrevocable faith in that Beyond.

The Vedanta, of course, cuts the Gordian knot of this problem in its own way. It declares that the only Reality into which both the unit and the sum-total of consciousness ultimately dissolve themselves, persists in Maya as the inevitable background of all those appearances which make up the macrocosm and the microcosm; and the faith in a Beyond is only a self-expression of this persistence. The Puranas, on the other hand, seek to describe the web of self-manifestation as the Time-spirit, of that Absolute Reality. This web has no beginning, no end. The *Kalpas* or time-cycles follow and precede one another *ad infinitum*, and each Kalpa manifests through evolution what became involved with the close of the preceding Kalpa. If only you understand the principle thoroughly,

you are welcome to conceive of bigger cyclic periods to include within themselves uniform numbers of these Kalpas, and still bigger ones if you like. Similarly, you may apply the principle to divide the Kalpas and their subdivisions into more and more minute subdivisions, if you like. So long as we are in Maya, the chain of experiences, appearing to our intellect in endless varieties and uniformities, will never seem to end or begin in time or space. It is like a big bubble of unreality that exercises the intellect to the utmost, but vanishes with that intellect as fold after fold the veil of Maya is removed.

While according to the Vedanta, therefore, the human faith in a Beyond is but a glimpse of the Reality persisting through appearances, according to the Puranas, that faith emerging on the human consciousness in every cycle of creation is but the self-announcement of a forgotten acquisition seeking to be evolved anew by the process of time. It is vain to attempt to fix a point of time when the direct experience of a Beyond was first acquired by man, for if we go to trace the types of human experience through period after period of evolution and involution, we would never reach a beginning, just as in the case of the creative cosmic forces we can only follow them up from their kinetic state to their potential state and again from their potential state to a preceding kinetic state and so on, but we can never reach a point where they issue from absolute non-existence to existence. According to the Vedantic or the Pauranic view of creation and evolution, therefore, the human faith in a Beyond is traceable to a direct experience of Beyond, whether you take that experience to be a phenomenon in time and therefore recurring in every cycle of creation, or you take it to be a timeless fact identified with the self-realisation of the Absolute. The important point, we should remember, is that our faith in a Beyond could never have been strong enough to contradict and set

aside the direct testimony of the senses, had there been no direct experience at the bottom of it to strengthen, however unconsciously, its superior claims.

Besides this basis of direct experience supplied by the cosmic evolution, there is another source of direct experience to vitalise and vivify this human faith in a Beyond,—we mean the God-realisation of the Divine Seers among men. Usually we admit their realisation to be a source of only indirect evidence for our belief in a Beyond, and thereby fail to appreciate the full value and significance of their lives. We do not generally consider how their direct experience, over and above holding up before us an example and an inspiration for our efforts, works itself into the race-consciousness and imparts therefrom an abiding strength and vitality to our faith in a Beyond. This actual accretion of strength to our spiritual faith from age to age is a highly necessary condition of its life or persistence; for the forces of materialism developing new forms and channels of operation with the process of time seek constantly to engulf our spiritual faith, and unless there is in the economy of human evolution some sure provision for revivifying this faith from age to age, its power of resistance and self-assertion is sure to collapse one day. This is the real secret of that principle of Divine Incarnation, which forms the corner-stone of the Hindu social polity,—**धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ।**

For revivals of ancient learning and tradition, of enthusiasm for ancient prophets and *avatars*, go merely to illumine and uphold our spiritual faith, but can never revitalise it. They can restore it from obscurity, but can never replenish it with a new life, a new strength of self-assertion, a new power of achievement. They do not imply in fact any new addition or accretion of spiritual force, but simply a reawakening of interest and

enthusiasm already existing in a state of quiescence. But what is really required to revivify a moribund society, a society in which the spiritual principle that underlies the performance of *swadharmas* or duties is fading into extinction, does not consist in an intellectual rallying-in of enthusiasm round the centre of a Revelation that was made ages ago, but in the actual imparting to society of the Promethean fire of a new Revelation that infuses new vitality into all the *swadharmas* of our domestic, social and civic life. Here lies the necessity of new Revelations, of new Incarnations of Divinity, and it is only the blind sophistry of sectarianism that fails to admit this necessity.

It is therefore incumbent on us to ponder over the deeper significance of such lives as Swami Vivekananda and his Master lived amongst us,—the more so in this season of the year which is consecrated by the memory of their Mahasamadhi, their final exit from our physical plane of existence. Their spiritual achievements not only constitute the proudest assets of modern humanity, but also the source of its spiritual revitalisation. For their outlook was profoundly cosmopolitan, and their direct experience of the Beyond abides in the collective consciousness of mankind as a new elixir of spiritual life. The new Revelation that they have brought for modern man does not stir up enthusiasm, like all the old Revelations, by means of an antithetical creed; its modernness and its surpassing glory consist in its being the most marvelous synthesis of all creeds and sects. It has outdated all need for religious conversion and proselyting scramble, for it accepts all faiths as true, explains their ritualism and reveals their common basis and their common end. Religion has no longer to grow under the leading-strings or the ægis of colour or creed, clime or nationality; every race or community may exhibit within itself a variety of faiths while professing a unity in religion, while

every race or community has to accept the wardenship of religion in all its various forms. India, the land of the new Revelation, has to stand pledged to carrying out this synthetic idea in religious life as an object-lesson for all, for the spirit of the new Revelation is peculiarly bound up with the keynote of her whole life-history.

—

And this glorious future, this glorious consolidation of the universal faith in a Beyond, has been shadowed forth in the divine drama

of the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and his first-chosen apostle. In them was potentialised the whole unfoldment, and that potentiality lies niched and glorified deep into the collective consciousness of man. So let us turn our thoughts away from that sense of bereavement with which the great events of their Mahasamadhi affect our souls and recognise in all the noble efforts, made individually or collectively to further the world-wide cause they inaugurated, the potent impulses of their abiding presence with us.

THE SPIRITUAL BASIS.

IT is very common now-a-days to hear educated people in India thoughtfully opining that with regard to every problem that we have got to solve, we should proceed on a spiritual basis. This suggests, no doubt, the impression somehow formed in their minds that religion is the *forte* of the Indian people, a characteristic that governs all other features of their life. So far so good; but the question still remains unanswered as to what do we precisely mean when we say that spirituality is to be made the basis of all our collective activities, mostly secular in their nature.

In the sphere of human life, both individual and collective, we find two processes operating constantly. Of these, one, namely that of spiritualising the secular is a conscious process involving conscious effort or will; while the other, namely that of secularising the spiritual, is a process embodying the natural tendency of matter to shut our minds up within its sway. These processes are always seeking to countervail and defeat each other, and religion provides us with that organising principle which sets and maintains in operation the spiritualising process in all the activities of our life. The problem before us,

therefore, is to give religion the fullest scope to organise and spiritualise all our activities.

But instead of this absolute self-surrender to religion, we mostly make religion subservient to other purposes in life. Some people think it is good to practise religion, for he would thereby enlist supernatural influences in his favour in order that some cherished object may be attained. Some people make their idea of religion conform to the fancied environs of their life after death, and then try to be as much religious as possible. To some other people, religion is purely a matter of peculiar utility for idealising all their activities for some kind of secular advancement. Only in recent years in India, for example, the Western brand of patriotism has been sought to be idealised in this way by means of religion. The geographical entity called India has been represented as a divinity, and patriotism of the political type has been regarded as her worship. Over and above these methods of putting religion to some secular use, there are some who admit the utility of religion only in so far as it conduces to moral or social good, or tends to steady and strengthen good, altruistic efforts of men.

In all these cases, religion is sought to be utilised in the interest of some other object in life, or in one word, it is secularised. Even there are cultured people all over the modernised countries who have no better conception of religion than its being a power to be converted into all sorts of secular good. They compute the religiosity or piety of a people or country by the amount of social or political good actually realised by that people or country. To them the value of religion lies wholly in the secular results it produces. This is the most modern process of secularising religion, as distinguished from all these antiquated methods by which supernatural agencies used to be invoked for fulfilling secular objects. There are educated people in India who fix their eyes with evident avidity on the reserved fund of spirituality which their countrymen are credited to possess, simply because all this fund means so much potentiality for secular good.

To this idea of religion as something to be converted into secular good is to be opposed the other idea of religion as the only authority to determine for us what is good or bad in our secular life. This true idea of religion implies the absolute right of religion not only to dictate to us what is good or bad in our life, but also to fulfil only its own purposes in and through all the interests and pursuits of our life. It is religion utilising in its own interest all that our secular life implies, instead of itself being utilised in the interest of the latter. It is religion spiritualising the secular. It is religion in the true sense of the term.

Out of this conception of religion evolved that scheme of life which India has been pledged from the ancient ages to organise and carry out. In this scheme, it is religion which develops and governs all other interests and concerns of life. Every end in this scheme owes its existence and justification to religion so that religion can never be subordinated to any of these ends. Suppose, for example,

you want to teach people to serve their mother-country, and want therefore to inspire them with profound love for it. Now your Western education will naturally lead you to import into your country what we have described above as the Western brand of patriotism. This patriotism is grounded upon political aspirations. It becomes therefore a necessity for you to preach politics to the people,—to give them a political education. And because the people in India understand only the religious point of view and feel real enthusiasm for anything presented to them in the religious light, therefore you find it necessary to tag on religion to the tail of your political patriotism. All this amounts to exalting the political end to the supreme dignity of the all-regulative principle and making religion subservient or subordinate to it. In plain language, it is exploiting religion in the interest of the political end, and such exploitation is the last thing possible under that spiritual scheme of life which it is the life-mission of the Indian people to carry out themselves and perpetually offer to humanity as the solution of its life-problems.

Patriotism of the Western type implies a love which is in its essence nothing but selfishness idealised. It is essentially the love of a man for his own possessions and enjoyments, for his rights and privileges. It is the natural attachment of the primitive man for his soil, developed and nationalised, and this attachment for soil or for holding is evidently the outcome of the primary devotion to one's secular good. In no country was this primitive love for soil so thoroughly sought to be spiritualised as in India. Wherever the ancient Aryan settled, he could not live his life without having his sacred water (*Tirthodaka*) and his sacred soil (*Tirthorajah*) close by, and he used to set all manner of spiritual values to every geographical feature of that place, so that we find the scriptural names of famous rivers, hills or sites scattered all over India and finding their way even into Burma

or Java. We find also that the ancient site for the same great or small scriptural event is claimed as its own possession by numerous districts or provinces in India. This spiritual idealisation of the soil holds good even in the case of every holding on which the ancestral house has been built, for it is to the ancestral deity tabernacled in every house that every such holding with all the secular good derivable from it primarily belongs. Thus the unity of family members is founded not on the community in landed property but on community in worship, and the attachment for common soil is replaced in the Hindu consciousness by a common religious devotion to the ancestral deity.

This spiritual idealisation of the soil eliminates all secularism from the primitive attachment for it in the Hindu consciousness and subordinates that attachment to the spiritual sentiment instead of making it the groundwork of a political patriotism. The Hindu should love his country not because he derives by birthright all secular good from it, not because it provides him with a geographical basis for national unity, but because his religion has transformed it into a *Tirtha*, a holy place for his earthly pilgrimage, the abode of all his spiritual heritage and ideals. Our love of country should not imply a devotion to political unity but a devotion to spiritual unity. Our patriotism should have its foundation not in a love of political glory, but in a love of spiritual glory. Our love for India should be *based* not on the fact of her being to us a political possession *de facto* or *de jure*, a permanent asset for all our material resources, but on the fact of her belonging to us as the birthplace of our Spiritual Ideal, the physical background of its life-history, the eternal symbol of its lasting glory,—verily, the *tirath* and temple for that universal Ideal of mankind. We do not seek at her hand all the material wealth and power of the greedy nations of the earth, though of course we do look to her to supply us that food which will

sustain our life and our efforts devoted to her own glorification as the land of the Eternal Religion, Religion in its fullest reality. Let this self-denying patriotism inspire our individual and collective life and constitute itself thereby a spiritual force for reclaiming modern humanity from all the ruinous effects of that selfish patriotism which makes one nation fly at the throat of another.

For patriotism of the selfish type is only an euphemism for organised greed for material wealth and power. This modern creed of political patriotism India can never accept, inasmuch as this creed can have no spiritual basis. It is futile to seek to throw a religious garb over this patriotism by representing the mothercountry as a goddess to be worshipped through political heroism. The presiding deity of India is not a political goddess to be propitiated by the blood of, or the booty from, conquered nations. She is, on the other hand, our Divine Mother of Vedic salvation offering her boons to all mankind from this temple of our mothercountry where She has been made to reveal herself by the life-long *sadhana* of the Indian people. Our patriotism should consist, therefore, in worshipping this spiritual Goddess by developing and organising all those spiritual forces which the various faiths and cults prevalent in India embody, and knitting them all together in the unity of a collective life to be lived for cultivating and preserving this synthetic spirituality and for diffusing it all over the world. It is in this patriotic service that all the different religious denominations of India have to join hands and work shoulder to shoulder. No nation can have a higher mission to fulfil in this world; no patriotic cause can be more inspiring, more ennobling, more beneficent to all mankind; no patriotism can be more stimulating for human enthusiasm and effort.

All the other ends of the collective life should be subordinated to this supreme spiritual end; all the other problems, economical,

social or political, have to be solved in the light of this supreme problem of our collective life. Have we any needs to fulfil in the sphere of economics? That is because those needs must have made themselves felt as obstacles in the way of our pursuit of the collective spiritual end. Or have we again any grievances to be removed in the sphere of our political life? That must be because those grievances have been *actually* found to be obstructing the proper pursuit of the spiritual end. Or, for example, have we any social evils to remedy? That is surely because those evils have been found by actual experience to be hampering our spiritual progress. In this way, every other end in our collective life must have its *raison d'être* in a reference to the way in which it affects the supreme spiritual end of our collective life. This is, briefly speaking, what we mean by saying that the reconstruction of our collective life must have to proceed on a spiritual basis.

Let us thus make religion the organising principle in the whole system of our collective activities. Let it *determine* those activities instead of simply providing criteria for judging them good or bad. And let in this way India live and work in this world purely for religion. Let her gift to mankind be the gift of religion; let religion be the keynote of her collective life, the foundation and goal of her culture and thought, the inspiration of all her activities, the organising principle in all her organisations. Let every child born in India be brought up in the responsibility for this religion and in the patriotism which this religion inspires, for then only its education and culture will become a force for collective good. Let religion, in short, ensphere and permeate the life of the individual as well as the whole nation.

EPISTLES OF
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

XIV.

54. W. 33rd Street, N. Y.
The 1st Feb., 1895.

Dear Sister,

I just received your beautiful note..... Well, sometimes it is a good discipline to be forced to work for work's sake, even to the length of not being allowed to enjoy the fruits of one's labour.....I am very glad of your criticisms and am not sorry at all. The other day at Miss T—'s I had an excited argument with a Presbyterian gentleman, who as usual got very hot, angry and abusive. However, I was afterwards severely reprimanded by Mrs. B— for this, as such things hinder my work. So, it seems, is your opinion.

I am glad you write about it just now, because I have been giving a good deal of thought to it. In the first place, I am not at all sorry for these things—perhaps that may disgust you—it may: I know full well how good it is for one's worldly prospects to be *sweet*. I do everything to be *sweet*, but when it comes to a horrible compromise with the truth within, then I stop. I do not believe in *humility*. I believe in *Samadarsitvam*—same state of mind with regard to all. The duty of the ordinary man is to obey the commands of his "God," society, but the children of light never do so. This is an eternal law. One accommodates himself to surroundings and social opinion and gets all good things from society, the giver of all good to such. The other stands alone and draws society up towards him. The accommodating man finds a path of roses—the non-accommodating, one of thorns. But, the worshippers of "Vox populi" go to annihilation in a moment—the children of truth *live for ever*.

I will compare truth to a corrosive substance of infinite power. It burns its way in wherever it falls—in soft substance at once,



hard granite slowly, but it must. What is writ is writ. I am so, so sorry, Sister, that I cannot make myself *sweet* and accommodating to every black falsehood. But I cannot. I have suffered for it all my life, but I cannot. I have essayed and essayed, but I cannot. At last I have given it up. The Lord is great. He will not allow me to become a hypocrite. Now let what is in come out. I have not found a way that will please all, and I cannot but be what I am, true to my own self. "Youth and beauty vanish, life and wealth vanish, name and fame vanish, even the mountains crumble into dust. Friendship and love vanish. Truth alone abides." God of Truth, be Thou alone my guide! I am too old to change now into milk and honey. Allow me to remain as I am. "Without fear,—without shop-keeping, caring neither for friend nor foe, do thou hold on to truth, Sannyasin, and from this moment give up this world and the next and all that are to come—their enjoyments and their vanities. Truth, be thou alone my guide." I have no desire for wealth or name or fame or enjoyments, Sister,—they are dust unto me. I wanted to help my brethren. I have not the *tact to earn money*, bless the Lord. What reason is there for me to conform to the vagaries of the world around me and not obey the voice of Truth within? The mind is still weak, Sister, it sometimes mechanically clutches at earthly help. But I am not afraid. Fear is the greatest sin my religion teaches.

The last fight with the Presbyterian priest and the long fight afterwards with Mrs. B— showed me in a clear light what Manu says to the *Sannyasin*,—"Live alone, walk alone." All friendship, all love, is only limitation. There never was a friendship, especially of women, which was not exacting. Oh! great sages! You were right. One cannot serve the god of truth who leans upon somebody. Be still, my soul! Be alone! and the Lord is with you. Life is nothing! Death is a delusion! All this is not, God alone is! Fear not,

my soul! Be alone. Sister, the way is long, the time is short, evening is approaching. I have to go home soon. I have no time to give my manners a finish. I cannot find time to deliver my message. You are good, you are so kind, I will do anything for you; but do not be angry, I see you all as mere children.

Dream no more! Oh, dream no more, my soul! In one word, I have a message to give, I have no time to be sweet to the world, and every attempt at sweetness makes me a hypocrite. I will die a thousand deaths rather than lead a jelly-fish existence and yield to every requirement of this foolish world—no matter whether it be my own country or a foreign country. You are mistaken, utterly mistaken if you think I have a *work* as Mrs. B— thinks—I have no *work* under or beyond the sun. I have a message and I will give it after my own fashion. I will neither Hinduise my message, nor Christianise it, nor make it any 'ise' in the world. I will only my-ise it and that is all. *Liberty*—Mukti is all my religion, and everything that tries to curb it, I will avoid by fight or flight. Pooh! I try to pacify the priests!! Sister, do not take this amiss. But you are babies and babies must submit to be taught. You have not yet drunk of that fountain which makes "reason unreason—mortal immortal—this world a zero, and of man a God." Come out if you can of this network of foolishness they call this *world*. Then I will call you indeed brave and free. If you cannot, cheer those that dare dash this false God, society, to the ground and trample on its unmitigated hypocrisy; if you cannot cheer them, pray, be silent, but do not try to drag them down again into the mire with such false nonsense as *compromise* and becoming nice and sweet.

I hate this world—this dream—this horrible nightmare—with its churches and chicaneries, its books and blackguardisms—its fair faces and false hearts—its howling righteousness on the surface and utter hollowness beneath,

and, above all, its sanctified shop-keeping. What! measure my soul according to what the bond-slaves of the world say!—Pooh! Sister, you do not know the Sannyasin. “He stands on the head of the Vedas!” say the Vedas, because he is free from churches and sects and religions and prophets and books and all of that ilk! Missionary or no missionary, let them howl and attack me with all they can, I take them as Vartrihari says, “Go thou thy ways, Sannyasin! Some will say, who is this mad man? Others, who is this Chandála? Others will know thee to be a sage. Be glad at the prattle of the worldlings. But when they attack, know that the elephant passing through the market-place is always beset by curs, but he cares not. He goes straight on *his own way*. So it is always when a great soul appears there will be numbers to bark after him.”

I am living with L— at 54 W. 33rd Street. He is a brave and noble soul, Lord bless him. Sometimes I go to the G—’s to sleep.

Lord bless you all ever and ever—and may He lead you quickly out of this big humbug, the world! May you never be enchanted by this old witch, the world! May Sankara help you! May Uma open the door of truth for you and take away all your delusions!

Yours with love and blessings,

Vivekananda.

IN THE HOLY LAND.

(Continued from page 112.)

JERICHO.

Going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, the traveller has no need to put himself to any inconvenience, for a carriage road runs the whole way to Jericho, which lies about twenty miles north-east of the Holy City. In that comparatively short distance a descent is made of 3,000 feet. Our road skirts the northern wall of the City, and we cross the

brook Kedron and ascend the western side of Mount Olivet, beyond which we come to the squalid, modern village of Bethany perched aloft on the mountain side, and diverging for a few minutes from our course, reach the traditional tomb of Lazarus, now a Moslem shrine. From thence the road makes a sharp decline by many zig-zags. Open stretches with slight undulations alternate with rolling hills, and everyone who passes through this country is struck by its barren appearance. It is parched and shimmers in the heat, and rarely do we meet with any human or animal life. Few trees and flowers diversify the landscape and those few are scrubby and dusty in hue. Small grey-green bushes flourish here and there, but they seem to emphasise the dreary appearance presented by the soil. Stones lay everywhere upon the yellow earth. Despite the monotony I enjoyed the scenic effects. It is strange how the mind can be interested by scenery that presents so few objects to occupy it, but every slight modification of form or colour rivets attention, and the perceptive faculties, prone to sleep over a confused mass of ordinary things, act vigorously when the fancy and imagination are aroused. As we proceed, on every side there are steep mountains and deep ravines, formerly, as now, the haunt of robbers, and consequently travellers passing along the road need an escort. After some miles we stop at the *Khan* or modern inn of the Good Samaritan, erected at the top of a hill, on the spot which tradition has fixed as the most suitable for such an event as that described in our Lord’s parable, where the man fell among thieves. We halted here for a while to refresh and rest our horses. Then onwards once more and across the varied and picturesque hills we rattle along. After toiling up the last incline before reaching our destination we are somewhat compensated by the extensive view it commands over Jericho. We catch glimpses of the Jordan plain and the Dead Sea in front of us and a distant

view of the broken range of the white limestone mountains of Judæa, presenting one of the few jagged and beautiful outlines that can be seen amongst the southern hills of Palestine. The side of the mountain is perforated with caves, which in later ages afforded shelter to the Essenes and many monks and hermits who there took up their abode, in the belief that this was the mountain of the Forty Days' Fast of the Temptation, the "Quarantania," from which it still derives its name.

Our route took us past the remains of an aqueduct which in Roman times brought water from springs in the *Wady Kelt*, to Jericho. We gradually descend until we find ourselves at the wretched village called Eriha, beside which stood in ancient days Jericho, the City of Palm Trees. It was set in a grove of magnificent palms, nearly three miles broad and eight miles long. Now, not a single one remains. Fig-trees, maize, cucumbers and balsam-trees may be said to comprise all that is cultivated. In Solomon's time it was noted for balsam, palm-trees and roses, and carried on a flourishing trade in spices and balsam. One episode in the history of Jericho is that in which its gardens were given to Cleopatra by Antony. They were first farmed for her, and then redeemed for himself at a subsequent date by Herod the Great who made Jericho one of his princely residences, in which he was living at the time of his death.

It was this Roman Jericho through which Jesus passed on His last journey to Jerusalem.

There are some good buildings around, including an old ruined Castle, probably dating from the Crusades, a Russian Hospice and four hotels. Attached to the castle is a Mosque built in 1901. Ancient Jericho is at present being excavated by an Austrian society, and the old city walls have been demonstrated. From this spot a drive of a mile or so through gardens and groves brings us to a two-headed mound with an abundant spring of pure fresh water at its base. The spring is identified with Elisha's Fountain

from a tradition which associates it with the water which that prophet rendered sweet. The mound itself is almost undoubtedly the site of ancient Jericho.

THE DEAD SEA.

The carriage road from Jericho to the Dead Sea, a mere track over the desert plain, first crosses the *Wady-Kelt* and then winds over almost even ground for some miles. About two hours' drive brings us to the Sea which is the private property of the Sultan of Turkey. Along the shore are numerous salt pans where salt is made. It is a government monopoly, and in the summer months soldiers are kept here to prevent smuggling.

Considered merely from a scientific point of view, the Dead Sea is one of the most remarkable spots of the world. Figure to yourself a sea forty miles long and ten miles broad; it is the lowest water on the surface of the earth. It lies in a deep hollow, 1292 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. The water which is eight times saltier than the ocean, is clear as crystal and of a deep blue. It is encompassed by desert sands and low bushes closing in on every side, a limitless level of monotony, broken only by bleak, stony hills holding out no promise of refreshment to eye or spirit, but only conceiving of a still greater desolation lying beyond. Along the eastern shore the mountains of Moab stand like a mighty wall, and in the south there is a mountain of rock-salt which is cut into ravines and hollows by the winter rains, and columns of rock-salt are sometimes left standing. Sulphur is met with on the shores, and bituminous limestone, a kind of mineral pitch, is found floating in the water; it is black and hard, and rosaries and other articles are made from it at Bethlehem and Jerusalem, of which great numbers are sold to pilgrims visiting the holy places.

The sun smote strongly his distressful heat upon us, and a swift change of feeling from exhilaration of spirits to a sense of heaviness

was engendered by the stifling atmosphere of the Sea. I felt oppressed by the tense stillness, the solitude and the fantastic desolation as I surveyed the waste of sea and land. But there is another side to this picture when the Sun-god with his electrifying wand transfigures the scene with an unearthly light to an ideal world of exquisite colour where intangible beauty dwells. Mr. Crossland, in his attractive work, "Desert and Water Gardens of the Red Sea" thus describes the enchanting and infinite variety of colour at sunset:—

"The sun alone can throw over this emptiness a glory like that of the golden streets and jewelled gates of the prophet's vision. The sea becomes one splendid turquoise, the coral rock more beautiful than gold, the mountains, mere heaps of dead rock though they be, savage and repellent, change to great tender masses of lovely colour, ruddy violets and pinks, luminous as though they had some source of light within themselves and shared in the joy that they give to the solitary beholder; changing as the sun sinks to deeper, colder shades, announcing the benediction of a perfect night. Vessels entering harbour... become fairy craft, each sail like the rare pink pearls found within the rosy edge of certain shells. To visit sunset land is but a dream of children, happiness is nearer than the sunset clouds. That gold has been thrown about our feet over the common stones and bitter waters, and we have gathered spiritual wealth. The kingdom of heaven is within us, and the vision of Patmos is realised."

THE RIVER JORDAN.

Quitting the inhospitable shores of the Dead Sea, we extend our drive to the river, which made a welcome diversion and brought about a salutary change in the temperature. The Jordan, the principal river of Palestine, has its source in the north, near Mount Hermon, and emerges from underground as a full-bodied stream, flowing first through the waters

of Merom and then through the Sea of Galilee, and by devious windings for two hundred miles, finally falls with its tributaries into the Dead Sea. Its breadth varies: the sunken channel is from a quarter to half a mile wide, but although narrow, the river is generally so deep that it cannot be forded. The best known of the fords is that about six miles above Jericho, which is much frequented by pilgrims, who resort thither in thousands every year, believing it is the Bethabara of John the Baptist, where Jesus was baptised. From the frequency with which it is mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures as the scene of numerous remarkable events in the history of the Jews, it is regarded as one of the most celebrated rivers in the world. The pilgrims preserve some of this precious water, as a sacred treasure, and infants baptised with it are believed to acquire a peculiar sanctity.

As we drove along the valley we fell in with a band of Russian pilgrims wending their way to the Jordan. At the ford, its banks are not steep as at most places, but shelve down gradually to the edge of the water. Eager pilgrims, some wearing their death shrouds, joyful at beholding the holy spot, passed one after another to step down into the refreshing stream, and bathed their faces and bodies with the purifying water. I have already alluded to the intense enthusiasm and earnestness of the pilgrims, and I felt a presence, a strange influence of elevating thought. It seemed to me that their simple faith under the guiding star of love, brought to them for the time being a sense of bliss and freedom from the bonds of matter, a certain movement of the soul upward obedient to the call of the great Liberator. With some such thought does the heart win from the river peace and happiness.

My musings were broken in upon by a voice proceeding from a boat moored close to the bank, the owner of which was inviting me to enter his boat and pass up and down the banks of the stream. He could not have

chosen a better moment for his offer, for the dense fringe of tamarisk, poplar and willows along the edge of the shore offered agreeable and alluring shade; the drooping branches dipped down till they trailed their tresses in the stream, and the reflections looked like waving plants in some other world. The sun filtered through branch and stem, flecking the water with gleams of light. All was very quite and pure. The dreamy repose and gentle rippling of the river were strangely soothing after the heaviness of the Dead Sea, and the easy gliding of the boat lulled all desire save to drift tranquilly onward in a serene and blessed mood.

(To be continued).

C. E. S.

THE PARABLES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

IV

THE PARABLE OF THE GARDEN OF MYSTERY

A wondrous place, enclosed by soaring walls
Forbidding all access from world outside,—
The prying mind has given up the task,
Full glad that life finds still a scope so wide.

But so it chanced that on adventure bent
Four friends of robust mind and sprightly cheer
Strove day and night to climb the walls and see
The mystery that sealed to man lay there.

The toilsome secret won by ceaseless work,
The first of them, O wonder! scales the walls,
He topped and breathless peeped and laughed
“ha, ha”,
Then leaped clean o'er and vanished,—strange
impulse!

Now of the toiling rest, none wiser made,
A second too upclomb the high ridge due,
But gazed awhile and laughed he too “ha ha,”
And toppled o'er!—a riddle added new.

Their fruitless fortune to redeem perchance,
Behold the third as well the height to scale!

He reaches up and plays the same old game,
With “ha, ha, ha” a dip beyond the veil!

The fourth now woos success; and up he toiled,
Till fateful top he reached and peeped across,
The vision had he full with check'd impulse—
How strong to do this miracle, this pause!

Then hastened down again, a changed man, he,
Possessed of mystic lore — a holy grail!
And listening crowds besiege him where he moves
And hungry souls with eager quest assail.

So of the few who reach the Highest God,
In Bliss of Vision Full all fain dissolve,
But yet for love of man, in time of need,
The Teacher's life on one such may devolve.

—P. S. I.

THE VAIRAGYA-SATAKAM

OR THE HUNDRED VERSES ON RENUNCIATION BY VARTRIHARI.

वैराग्यशतकम् ।

(Continued from page 114).

अमीषां प्राणानां तुलितविसिनीपत्रपयसां
कृते किं नास्माभिर्विगलितविवेकैर्व्यवीसतमा
यदाह्यानामग्रे द्रविणामदनिःसंज्ञमनसां
कृतं मानवीडैर्निजगुणकथापातकमपि॥५॥

5. What have we not endeavoured to do, with our depraved conscience, for the sake of our *pranas* (five vital forces) which are unreliable and compared to water on the leaves of lotus, since in presence of the rich, with their minds stupefied by the pride of wealth, we have shamelessly committed the sin of recounting our own merits!

[According to the scriptures, self-glorification is tantamount even to the sin of suicide.]

क्षान्तं न क्षमया गृहोचितसुखं त्यक्तं न संतोषतः
सोढा दुःसहशीतवाततपनक्लेशा न तप्तं तपः
ध्यातं वित्तमहर्निशं नियमितप्राणैर्न शंभो पदं
तत्तत्कर्म कृतं यदेव मुनिभिस्तैस्तैःफलैर्बञ्चिताः॥६॥

6. We have forgiven, but not out of forgiveness (but out of our incapacity to right our wrongs); we have renounced the comforts of home life, but not out of contentment after satisfaction (but as an exile from home in quest of riches); though we have suffered inclemencies of weather, cold and heat so difficult to bear, still it is no religious austerities that we have undergone; with subdued vital forces, night and day have we brooded on money and not on the feet of Shiva; we have performed thus those very acts which the Munis (saintly recluses) do perform, but of their good effect we have deprived ourselves.

भोगा न भुक्ता वयमेव भुक्ता-
स्तपो न तप्तं वयमेव तप्ताः।
कालो न यातो वयमेव याता-
स्तृष्णा न जीर्णा वयमेव जीर्णाः ॥७॥

[Here there is an ironical pun on the participles भुक्ता and तप्ता, the former being used both in the sense of "enjoyed" and "eaten up", and the latter both in the sense of "(austerities) performed" and "heated." Similarly the participle जीर्णा means both "reduced in force" and "stricken down with age." The effect of course can not be preserved in translation.]

7. The worldly pleasures have not been enjoyed (भुक्ता i. e. enjoyed) by us, but we ourselves have been devoured (भुक्ता i. e. eaten up or dissipated); no religious austerities have been gone through (तप्तं), but we ourselves have become scorched (तप्ताः i. e. by the austerities of grief or anxiety); time is not gone (यातः, being ever-present and infinite), but it is we who are gone (याताः because of approaching death). Desire is not reduced in force (जीर्णा) though we ourselves are reduced to senility (जीर्णाः)

वलीभिर्मुखमाक्रान्तं पलितेनाङ्कितं शिरः
गात्राणि शिथिलायन्ते तृष्णैकातरुणायते ॥८॥

8. The face has been attacked with wrinkles, the head has been painted white with grey hair, the limbs are all enfeebled, but desire alone is rejuvenating.

निवृत्ता भोगेच्छा पुरुषबहुमानोऽपि गलितः

समानाः स्वर्गताः सपदिसुहृदो जीवितसमाः
शनैर्यष्टयुस्थानं घनतिमिररुद्धे च नयने

अहोमूढःकायस्तदपि मरणापायचकितः ॥९॥

9. Though my compeers, dear to me as life, have all taken such a speedy flight to heaven (i. e. before being overtaken by old age), though the impulse for enjoyment is wearied out and the respect commanded from all persons lost, though my sight is obstructed by deep blindness (or cataract) and the body can raise itself but slowly on the staff, still alas for its silliness, this body startles at the thought of dissolution by death.

आशा नाम नदी मनोरथजला तृष्णातरंगाकुला

रागग्राहवती वितर्कविहगा धैर्यद्रुमध्वंसिनी ।

मोहावर्तसुदुस्तरतिगहनाप्रोत्तुङ्गचिन्तातटी

तस्याःपारगताविशुद्धमनसोनन्दान्तियोगिश्वराः१०

10. Hope is like a flowing river of which the ceaseless desires constitute the waters ; it rages with the waves of keen longings and the attachments for various objects are its animals of prey ; scheming thoughts of greed are the aquatic birds that abound on it, and it destroys in its course the big trees of patience and fortitude ; it is rendered impassable by the whirlpools of ignorance and of profound depth of bed as it is, its banks of anxious deliberation are precipitous indeed. Such a river the great Yogis of pure mind pass across to enjoy supreme felicity.

(To be continued) .

A PAGE WITH TUKARAM

(By K. D. Rávat.)

When Jupiter enters Leo, the barbers and the priests enrich themselves by shaving heads and beards of millions who are bundles of sins. Will you tell me what is altered in the man? His evil habits are not changed, which would be the sign of the removal of his sin. Therefore, without faith, O man, all is in vain.

No separate time is required to meditate upon God. Every duty, every action that we perform,

should be performed for the sake of God. Truly he is blessed who always passes his time in uttering Narayen, Narayen, Narayen.

O man, casting out greediness, pride and hypocrisy become indifferent to your body and have one desire only viz. singing the praise of God.

Put aside wealth considering it to be like poverty and remove worldly distractions. Then alone you will be pure.

O God, you are kinder than a mother, more delightful than the moon, thinner than water,—all joy and light. To what shall I compare You? You created the Amrita (nectar), but You are sweeter than that. You are the Creator of the five elements and the Master of the universe. Therefore, O Pandurang, I am sure that you will forgive me my fault.

God is present in all things, so say the Vedanta Shastras and Puranas. He is present in all creatures whether high or low, rich or poor, wise or ignorant. The sun shines and gives light and heat to persons of all castes — Brahmins, Khsatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras,—without any fear that he would be an out-cast; the like of this sun is to be found in Bhaktas, and I behave towards my fellowmen in the same manner.

Verily, he is a saint and God is present in him who loves his fellowmen who are depressed and who have forgotten that they are human beings.

He, who loves his children and servants alike, is like God himself. When a flood comes, big trees on the bank are destroyed, but little shrubs remain unhurt. Therefore, O God let me have the poorest state, because no one will hate me and I shall be ever happy in worshipping you.

He who serves humanity is like God himself. Unless you give up everything in this world how is God possible! Do you know that God feels great love for him who abandons this world? He walks behind him. He makes his devotee's sorrows and pains His own and works for him.

O man, why do you travel from place to place to search God? As the deer does not know that it possesses an invaluable thing called "Kasturi" (musk), so you do not know that God is within you. Search God within you and you will find Him.

There is the abode of God, where pity, patience and calm prevail.

If we light up a jungle where there is no hay, the fire will be extinguished at once. In like manner

if a person possesses a sword of Kshama (forgiveness) no enemy will hurt him.

In this world everybody is for himself. We call our wives and children nearest and dearest, but they will not help us in time of difficulties. Only Nárâyen will help us.

O God, what difference is there between You and I? You talk, walk and do every kind of business through my body, therefore I am you.

Truly, he knows Brahma who helps others, does not hate anyone and sees God in every man and woman whether touchable or untouchable.

O God, only the repetition of your name is my charity, place of pilgrimage, religion, yoga and yajna.

O God, let me have the sight of seeing you in every man, woman and child.

ON THE CONNING TOWER.

THE appearance of Arthur Avalon as an exponent and defender of the Tantras is a momentous event in the history of Sanskrit research. No better or sturdier champion the Tantras could secure in modern times, and his powerful grasp of the Tantric philosophy and ritualism, his thorough appreciation of the Tantric ideals and methods, his unabating energy and zeal in tackling the Tantric mysteries, more than justify in us the hope that educated minds in the East as well as West will be ere long disabused of all that mass of prejudice that they have allowed to gather round the name of the Tantras. It is needless to point out that this noble vindication of the Tantras redounds directly to the benefit of Hinduism as a whole, for Tantrikism in its real sense is nothing but the Vedic Religion struggling with wonderful success to reassert itself amidst all those new problems of religious life and discipline which later historical events and developments thrust upon it.

In his Introduction to the "Principles of Tantra" ("Tantratattwa" of Pandit Shivachandra Vidyanava), Mr. Avalon has made an able attempt to trace the origin of Tantrikism and to adjudge its importance and place in the spiritual culture of the Hindus. In this new publication, (Messrs. Luzac

& Co. of London), the author has not only fully maintained the tradition of superior merits in his translation, but has again brought out before the world of Sanskrit research another testimony of his wonderful amount of study and insight in the shape of another Introduction, no less profound and weighty than his Introduction to the "Tantra of the Great Liberation." But the most noteworthy feature of this new Introduction he has written for the Tantratattwa is his appreciative presentation of the orthodox views about the antiquity and the importance of the Tantras, and it is impossible to overestimate the value of this presentation.

For hitherto all theories about the origin and the importance of the Tantras have been more or less prejudiced by a wrong bias against Tantrikism which some of its own later sinister developments were calculated to create. This bias has made almost every such theory read either like a condemnation or an apology. All investigation being thus disqualified, the true history of Tantrikism has not yet been written; and we find cultured people mostly inclined either to the view that Tantrikism originally branched off from the Buddhistic Mahayana or Vajrayana as a cult of some corrupted and self-deluded monastics or to the view that it was the inevitable dowry which some barbarous non-Aryan races brought along with them into the fold of Hinduism. According to both these views however, the form which this Tantrikism—either a Buddhistic development or a barbarous importation—has subsequently assumed in the literature of Hinduism is its improved edition as issuing from the crucibles of Vedic or Vedantic transformation. But this theory of the curious co-mingling of the Vedas and Vedanta with Buddhistic corruption or with non-Aryan barbarity is perfectly inadequate to explain the all-pervading influence which the Tantras exert on our present-day religious life. Here it is not any hesitating compromise that we have got before us to explain, but a bold organic synthesis, a legitimate restatement of the Vedic culture for the solution of new problems and new difficulties which signalised the dawn of a new age.

In tracing the evolution of Hinduism, modern historians take a blind leap from Vedic ritualism

direct to Buddhism, as if to conclude that all those newly formed communities, with which India had been swarming all over since the close of the fateful era of the Kurukshetra war and to which was denied the right of Vedic sacrifices, the monopoly of the higher threefold castes of pure orthodox descent, were going all the time without any religious ministrations. These aryanised communities, we must remember, were actually swamping the Vedic orthodoxy, which was already gradually dwindling down to a helpless minority in all its scattered centres of influence, and was just awaiting the final blow to be dealt by the rise of Buddhism. Thus the growth of these new communities and their occupation of the whole land constituted a mighty event that had been silently taking place in India on the outskirts of the daily shrinking orthodoxy of Vedic ritualism, long before Buddhism appeared on the field, and this momentous event our modern historians fail to take due notice of either, it may be, because of a curious blindness of self-complacency or because of the dazzle which the sudden triumph of Buddhism and the overwhelming mass of historical evidences left by it create before their eyes. The traditional Kali Yuga dates from the rise of these communities and the Vedic religious culture of the preceding Yuga underwent a wonderful transformation along with wonderful attempt it made to aryanise these rising communities.

History, as hitherto understood and read, speaks of the Brahmins of the pre-Buddhistic age,—their growing alienation from the Jnana-kanda or the Upanishadic wisdom, their impotency to save the orthodox Vedic communities from the encroachments of the non-Vedic hordes and races, their ever-deepening religious formalism and social exclusiveness. But this history is silent on the marvelous feats which the Upanishadic sects of anchorites were silently performing on the outskirts of the strictly Vedic community with the object of aryanising the new India that was rising over the ashes of the Kurukshetra conflagration. This new India was not strictly Vedic like the India of the bygone ages, for it could not claim the religious ministrations of the orthodox Vedic Brahmins and could not therefore perform Yajnas like the latter. The question therefore is as to how this new India

became gradually aryanised, for aryanisation is essentially a spiritual process, consisting in absorbing new communities of men into the fold of the Vedic religion. The Vedic ritualism that prevailed in those days was powerless, we have seen, to do anything for these new communities springing up all over the country. Therefore we are obliged to turn to the only other factor in Vedic religion besides the Karma-kanda for an explanation of those changes which the Vedic religion wrought in the rising communities in order to aryanise them. The Upanishads represent the Jnana-kanda of the Vedic religion and if we study all of them, we find that not only the earliest ritualism of Yajnas was philosophised upon in the earlier Upanishads, but the foundation for a new, and no less elaborate, ritualism was fully laid in many of the later Upanishads. For example, we study in these Upanishads how the philosophy of Pancha-upásaná (fivefold worship, viz. the worship of Shiva, Devi, Sun, Ganesh and Vishnu) was developed out of the mystery of the Pranava ("Om"). This philosophy cannot be dismissed as a post-Buddhistic interpolation, seeing that some features of the same philosophy can be clearly traced even in the Brahmanas. (e. g. the discourse about the conception of Shiva).

Here therefore in some of the later Upanishads we find recorded the attempts of the pre-Buddhistic recluses of the forest to elaborate a post-Vedic ritualism out of the doctrine of the Pranava and the Vedic theory of Yogic practices. Here in these Upanishads we find how the Vîja-mantras and the Shatchakra of the Tantras were being originally developed, for on the Pranava or Udgitha had been founded a special learning and a school of philosophy from the very earliest ages and some of the "spinal" centres of Yogic meditation had been dwelt upon in the earliest Upanishads and corresponding Brahmanas. The Upakarnas of Tantric worship, namely such material adjuncts as grass, leaves, water and so on, were most apparently adopted from Vedic worship along with their appropriate incantations. So even from the Brahmanas and the Upanishads stands out in clear relief a system of spiritual discipline,—which we would unhesitatingly classify as Tantric—, having at its core the Pancha-upásaná and around it a fair

round of rituals and rites consisting of Vîja-mantras and Vedic incantations, proper meditative processes and proper manipulation of sacred adjuncts of worship adopted from the Vedic rites. This may be regarded as the earliest configuration which Tantrikism had on the eve of those silent but mighty social upheavals through which the aryanisation of vast and increasing multitudes of new races proceeded in pre-Buddhistic India and which had their culmination in the eventful centuries of the Buddhistic *coup de grâce*.

Now this pre-Buddhistic Tantrikism, perhaps then recognised as the Vedic Pancha-upásaná, could not have contributed at all to the creation of a new India, had it remained confined completely within the limits of monastic sects. But like Jainism, this Pancha-upásaná went forth all over the country to bring ultra-Vedic communities under its spiritual ministrations. Even if we enquire carefully into the social conditions obtaining in the strictly Vedic ages, we find that there was always an extended wing of the aryanised society where the purely Vedic Karma-kanda could not be promulgated, but where the moulding influence of Vedic ideals worked through the development of suitable spiritual activities. It is always to the Jnana-kanda and the monastic votaries thereof that the Vedic religion owed its wonderful expansiveness and its progressive self-adaptability; and every religious development within the Vedic fold, but outside the ritualism of Homa sacrifices, is traceable to the spiritual wisdom of the all-renouncing forest recluses. This 'forest' wisdom was most forcibly brought into requisition when after the Kurukshetra a new age was dawning with the onrush and upheaval of non-Aryan and semi-Aryan races all over India—an echo of which may be found in that story of the Mahabharat where Arjuna fails to use his Gândiva to save his proteges from the robbery of the non-Aryan hordes.

The greatest problem of the pre-Buddhistic ages was the aryanisation of the new India that rose and surged furiously from every side against the fast-dwindling centres of the old Vedic orthodoxy struggling hard, but in vain, by social enactments to guard its perilous insulation. But for those religious movements, such as those of the Bhagavatas,

Saktas, Souryas, Shaivas, Ganapatyas and Jains, that tackled this problem of aryanisation most successfully, all that the Vedic orthodoxy stood for in the real sense would have gradually perished without trace. These movements, specially the five cults of Vedic worship, took up many of the non-Aryan races and cast their life in the mould of the Vedic spiritual ideal, minimising in this way the gulf that existed between them and the Vedic orthodoxy and thereby rendering possible their gradual amalgamation. And where this task remained unfulfilled owing to the mould proving too narrow still to fit into the sort of life which some non-Aryan races or communities lived, there it remained for Buddhism to solve the problem of aryanisation in due time. But still we must remember that by the time Buddhism made its appearance, the pre-Buddhistic phase of Tantric worship had already established itself in India so widely and so firmly that instead of dislodging it by its impetuous onset—all the force of which, by the bye, was mainly spent on the tottering orthodoxy of Vedic ritualism—Buddhism was itself swallowed up within three or four centuries by its perhaps least suspected opponent of this Tantric worship and then wonderfully transformed and ejected on the arena as the Mahayana.

The latest configuration of Tantrikism dates from this, its wonderful absorption and assimilation of Buddhism, and from this important fact it derives some important features of its later development. The prophecy of Gautama Buddha on the eve of investing his aunt with *Abhisampadā* or *Sannyasa* was fulfilled too literally when the proximity and free intercourse between the two orders of monks and nuns created in Buddhist history that odious problem of their religious life which they had to solve by introducing some mysterious rites, the philosophy of which, however, can be traced in the Vedas. No wonder if the current of such developments grew deeper and dirtier in time; only it is alleviating that there were cross-currents of constant correction flowing from Vedantic sources. Neither is it possible to deny that the Buddhistic phase of Tantrikism absorbed into the fold of Hinduism non-Aryan conceptions and rites of worship far more promiscuously than its pre-Buddhistic phase, but history proves that the digestive and

secretive processes, as it were, have ever since been working, tardily some times, but successfully always, and the Tantras as the marvelous restatement of the Vedas and the Vedanta have at last appeared in the boldest relief through that miraculous embodiment of the synthetic spirituality of the whole race which we have to recognise today by the name of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

THE VIVEKANANDA STUDENTS' HALL, SEREMBAN

In response to the widely circulated invitation issued by the Committee of the Vivekananda Students' Hall, Seremban, for the inauguration of the new premises just completed at Labu Road, Seremban, ladies and gentlemen of different nationalities residing in and out of Seremban assembled long before the appointed time on Saturday the 6th. June, 1914.

The new premises consist of one spacious lecture hall bordered by wide Verandah on the front three sides and a store room at the back. The steps on the first floor lead up to the second story of the Building where the Library and Reading Room are kept.

From this another set of steps lead further up to an open terrace. The front of the building displays the universal emblem of the Mission under the dome and the inscription "The Vivekananda Students' Hall" over it. In fact the whole architecture of the building is one worthy of admiration and it cannot fail to attract the attention of anyone who gets down at Seremban.

The whole premises were tastefully decorated with a circular pavilion in front of the building and at the appointed hour of 6.30. p. m., the Honourable Mr. J. R. C. Aldworth, Acting British Resident, Negri Sembilan, accompanied by Mrs. Aldworth drove in the State Car to the premises and were received by the Committee. On entering the gate Mr. Aldworth was garlanded and Mrs. Aldworth was presented with a bouquet by the Honorary Secretary and both were conducted to the attractive Pavilion where they took their seats. The Honorary Secretary read the following address which was nicely executed:—

The Honourable Mr. J. R. C. Aldworth,
Acting British Resident, Negri Sembilan,
Seremban.

Honoured Sir,

We, the Committee of the Vivekananda Students' Hall, Seremban, beg to approach you with this humble but none-the-less affectionate address of welcome to the new premises of our Hall, the opening ceremony of which you have kindly consented to conduct today.

The Committee beg to say that during the short period of 5 years' existence of this Association in this centre, it has been so well patronised by the members and well-wishers as to necessitate the provision of a permanent building of its own and they are now happy in the possession of a building which has cost about \$ 8000 out of which an amount of \$ 1000 was kindly granted on loan by the Government on the recommendation of your worthy predecessor, the Honourable Mr. A. H. Lemon.

Sir, although you have been in this State for only two short periods, your large-hearted sympathy, clemency and magnanimity is widely known in and out of Federated Malay States which is fortunate enough to have gentlemen of your type as Heads of Administrative Departments. During the last 25 years you have been in all the four States and have always displayed your great sympathy with all classes of the community and have established your name as a watchword of justice, which will be ever cherished in the hearts of all and in none more so than in the hearts of the Tamil Community.

In conclusion we fervently pray to the Almighty to pour on you and Mrs. Aldworth the choicest blessings of long life, health, wealth and prosperity and respectfully request you to kindly conduct and declare the Opening of the new Hall.

We are Honoured Sir,
The Committee of
The Vivekananda Students' Hall,
Seremban.

After the reading of the address was over, Mr. Aldworth, thanked the Committee for the honour done him and dwelt on the admirable qualities of Swami Vivekananda. He said that he was a great Saint and his teachings are not only acceptable to the East but also to every right-thinking man in the world. He also said that Institutions of this nature help a great deal a people, who are far away from their mother countries and have adopted this land, to keep up their ideals. He congratulated the Committee on their success in completing the Building and declared it open amidst great applause.

On entering the Hall, Mr. Aldworth took the Presidential chair and Mrs. Aldworth sat by his side and the Hall was fully packed up with a sprinkling of the fair sex.

Mr. P. Nagalingam of the Medical Dept. Seremban was called upon to read the history of the Institution in which he made special allusion to the names of Messrs. Rajagopal and Cumarasu who worked heart and soul for the great cause for a period of about 4 years in one stretch as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer respectively. The history of the Institution showed steady progress and was expressed in adequate terms.

Then Mr. Rajagopal delivered a short but sweet speech on the life of Swami Vivekananda. Mr. S.

S. Chelvanayagam made a short speech in Tamil summarising the history of the Hall and the Swami's life which he did to the satisfaction of all present.

Then, the Hon. Secretary, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Hon. Mr. Aldworth for the kindness with which he presided over and conducted the function to the satisfaction of all concerned. He also thanked the other ladies and gentlemen present at the function for the kindness with which they had responded to the invitation.

At the close of the meeting refreshments were lavishly served and there was musical entertainment for a short time.—“The Hindu Organ.”

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES.

THE Ramkrishna Mission Sevashrama of Brindaban stands supplicant before every kind-hearted person in our country. Its appeal for the building funds has been published in the Prabuddha Bharata last month and its Seventh Annual report, of which we have received a copy this month, speaks volumes about the deplorable way in which its useful work is being hampered for want of proper accommodation. In our May number we pointed out the peculiar significance of charity performed in helping the distressed through the medium of Ramkrishna Mission Sevashramas located in the most sacred places of pilgrimage. We appeal again to all who feel charitably disposed to help their diseased and distressed fellow-beings to take this opportunity to do them substantial service. All donations and proposals for endowments or special funds in commemoration are to be sent to the President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur P. O., Howrah, or to the Secretary, R-k. Mission Sevashrama, Bansibat, Brindaban, Muttra.

WE are glad to announce that the Kankhal Sevashrama of the Ramkrishna Mission has got possession of a plot of land, six *bighas* in area, acquired very kindly by the Government in its behalf. The extension in accommodation contemplated will provide the Sevashrama with one special cholera ward and one general ward, and the cost of construction is estimated to amount to Rs. 3000 and Rs. 5000 respectively. It is very wisely proposed that the construction of these two wards should be completed before the famous Kumbha Mela takes place next year at Hardwar in the month

of April, for, as it is well-known, the outbreak of epidemics like cholera constitutes the saddest feature of these big *melas* and the Kumbha Mela is considered to be the greatest religious fair in India. We appeal to the public therefore to enable the Kankhal Sevashrama to carry out their noble proposal. It is suggested that the whole of a ward or part of it or a room therein may be taken up by a single donor who may have it built as a fitting memorial of a relative or friend in a holy place like Hardwar. The construction of one room, it is calculated, would cost about Rs. 500. We appeal to the charity of all people who feel interested in the sort of philanthropic work carried on by this Sevashrama to help it with funds as promptly as possible. Contributions are received either by the President, Belur Math, Howrah, or by Swami Kalyanananda of the Kankhal Sevashrama, Dt. Saharanpur.

A correspondent writes to say that in Kottayam, North Travancore, an association called the Ramakrishna Vaktajana Sangam was started on the 24th June last with the object of imparting moral and religious instructions to local young men especially. Regular classes and Bhajana are conducted on Sundays and the message of Sri Ramakrishna is studied and discussed by the members and visitors. We wish all prosperity to this newly formed association.

THE 81st Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Mutt, Swami Vivekananda Sangam, High Road, Pudur, Vaniyambady on the 28th June 1914. The programme consisted in Puja and Bhajana procession with Sri Gurumaharaj Vemanam (car), feeding the poor of all castes, recitation of Stotras by the Ramakrishna School boys and a lecture on the life and teachings of Sri Gurumaharaj by Mr. K. G. Chettiar Avergal. The proceedings of the day were brought to a close with Mangalarathi and distribution of Prasadam.

THE dedication ceremony of the new home of the Vedanta centre of Boston, at 1 Queensberry Street, was performed by Swami Paramananda on the 21st May, 1914. This permanent home is a nice monument of the Swami's success as a teacher of Vedanta in the West. It is also a noble fruition

of Sister Devamata's cherished hopes, for she will now be able to preserve with proper form and worship those valuable relics of Sri Ramakrishna which she collected during her travels in India. Both these noble workers on the Vedanta vineyard receive our hearty congratulations.

THE generosity of Her Excellency the Lady Hardinge enabled the Mayavati Charitable Dispensary to give a treat to its children patients, as in the last year, on the birthday anniversary of His Excellency our Viceroy. This year, such patients on the 20th of June in the indoor department of the Dispensary happened to be three in number and they were given some special food and new dress which delighted their little hearts very much. How proud they must have felt of the fact that all this joy on this day came to them as a message of love and sympathy from such a great personage as Her Excellency, the noble consort of the "*Burro Lat*"!

The members of Sri Ramakrishna Bala Sanmargha Sava (Bangalore) celebrated the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Sri Swami Vivekananda on Sunday the 31st. May 1914. The festival commenced at 8 a. m. with a car procession with the portraits of Gurumaharaj and Swamiji beautifully decorated in it, and attended by several Bhajana parties and native music. In the afternoon Mr. T. Ramanujachariya gave an excellent Harikatha performance, which was well attended. At 5 p. m. before a large gathering, Mr. M. G. Varadachar, B. A. B. L., delivered a very interesting and inspiring lecture on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, at the conclusion of which Mr. K. Krishna Iyengar, B. A., L. C. E., Deputy Chief Engineer in Mysore, who presided on the occasion, referred in very appreciative terms to the extraordinary spiritual power of Swami Vivekananda and pointed out how unselfishly he worked for the cause of India's religion and her people. The meeting then came to a close with a vote of thanks to the Chairman, lecturer, and the Swamis of the local Ramakrishna Ashram who were also present and with the distribution of the Prasad. On the following Sunday about one thousand poor were people sumptuously fed in the vicinity of the Sava premises.