

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upan. I. iii. 4

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XX]

MAY 1915

[No. 226

UNPUBLISHED NOTES OF CLASS TALKS BY THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*In Madras, 1892—1893.—IX.*)

You cannot injure anybody and sit quietly. It is a wonderful machinery—you cannot escape God's vengeance.

Kāma is blind and leads to hell. Prema is love, leads to heaven.

There is no idea of lust sympathy in the love of Krishna and Radha. Radha says to Krishna 'if you place your feet on my heart all lust will vanish.'

When abstraction is reached lust dies and there is only love.

A poet loved a washer-woman. Hot dāl fell upon the feet of the woman and the feet of the poet were scalded.

Siva is the sublime part of God. Krishna the beauty part of God. Love crystallises into blackness. Black colour is expressive of intense love. Solomon saw Krishna. Here Krishna came to be seen by all.

Even now when you get love you see Radha. Become Radha and be saved. There is no other way. Christians do not understand Solomon's song. They call it prophecy symbolising Christ's love for the Church.

They think it nonsense and father some story upon it.

Hindus believe Buddha to be an Avatāra.

Hinduism believes in God positively. Buddhism does not try to know whether He is or not.

Buddha came to whip us into practice—be good, destroy the passions. Then you will know for yourself whether Dvaita or Advaita philosophy is true—whether there is one or there is more than one.

Buddha was a reformer of Hinduism.

In the same man mother sees a son, while wife at the same time sees differently with different results. The wicked see in God wickedness. The virtuous see in Him virtue. He is a mould of all forms. He can be moulded as to the imagination of each person. Water assumes several shapes of various vessels. But water is in all of them. Hence all religions are true.

God is cruel and not cruel. He is all being and not being at the same time. Hence he is all contradictions. Nature also is nothing but a mass of contradictions.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

SOCIETY never grew up anywhere on earth as a chance grouping of human units, for almost all primitive societies are found to have proposed to themselves certain schemes of life as the end they had to fulfil through collective effort. Such schemes might not have been revealed to the pioneers of society in all their maturity, but gradually as they were worked out through social strivings, they began to assert more and more the various problems and necessities they involved and the various aspects they organically contained within themselves. But the important point to note is that man almost everywhere took a particular idea of life as his end, not only individually but socially likewise. Such an idea, about life as man has to live it in this world, being but the product of experience, the range of the latter must have determined the nature of that idea; and in studying primitive history, we find this range of experience to have been, in almost all cases except one, so circumscribed that there was no recognition of a Reality, experienced as distinctly higher than human life and decisively calculated to make every scheme of life only a means to a higher end.

It may be regarded now as an impossibility that at the very dawn of human life on earth any man should have a vision of some Reality higher than that life itself, but such must have been the case undoubtedly among Aryan Rishis in the earliest Vedic ages. Yes, some may now wonder as to how were the very first experiences of human life on earth sufficient to enable man to envisage a distinct Beyond, but even the very process comes down to us embodied in those famous Vedic utterances contained in the fourth chapter of the first part (propātīhaka) of the

Chhandogya Upanishad and beginning with **देवा वै मृत्योर्विभ्यस्तस्यै विद्या प्राविशन्** etc. that is, the Devas out of dread of death took refuge (as it were) within the Vedic mantras. This mystery of death was as old as life itself both animal and human, and what made man a superior creation was his ability to face this mystery to which type after type of animal creation had helplessly succumbed. The whole cycle of lower animals was just able to carry this great mystery to the threshold of human evolution, and when brought face to face with it, nowhere except in the earliest Vedic community we find primitive man able to persevere and aspire beyond a self-complacent compromise. Every other community of primitive men sought to mitigate the dreadful destiny by recognising a continuity of human life after death, but such temporary postponement of relentless doom did not satisfy the Vedic Rishi. He boldly aspired to complete conquest, and the result was his discovery of **अमृतत्वं** or immortality.

This conquest of death and discovery of a state of perfect deathlessness constituted the most unique as well as the crowning achievement of the earliest Vedic Rishis. The tradition of this achievement was carried far and wide with migrating communities and its echoes we come across in later ages in the ancient myths of various countries, such as the Grecian myth of the Promethean fire. But the real achievement lived with the Vedic Rishis as the foundation, the governing idea and the goal of all their efforts to evolve a Vedic society and culture. It lifted up these Vedic pioneers of society and culture to an altitude of vision never attained anywhere else by any founders of society or

nation. History records some successful attempts at social construction on the basis of a faith in God who "art in heaven." But in every such case, the Beyond was conceived of in terms of human life itself and was therefore no Beyond in the true sense of the term. For wherever life as we find it here on earth exists, there death is bound to follow, sure as night follows day or as the dissolution of a compound into its elements. True immortality or **अमृतत्वं** transcends life as well as death, and nowhere except in India did its conception and realisation inspire the birth of a society and culture. **इह चेद्वेदीदथ सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टिः**, knowing That (the Supreme State) here, one obtains everlastingness, but knowing It not here, great ruination follows,—it was with this conviction that the Vedic Rishis set about forming a society, and naturally enough they regarded human life itself as a means to the supreme end of transcending that life to realise the goal of immortality,

It was therefore only in the Vedic society of primitive ages that we find a scheme of life deliberately subordinated at the very outset to a higher purpose. While other primitive societies sought to develop and produce particular types of human character in pursuance of their particular schemes of life, the Vedic society had a particular type of man held up before it as the supreme object in pursuance of which it adopted a particular scheme of life. This highest type of individual life which the Vedic society always sought to produce defined its ultimate individualism, and this individualism tempered in no small measure that stringent authority which the society always tended to impose on the individual. For centuries and centuries in this way the social organism which the Vedic seers nursed into being lived and laboured to realise its end of perpetuating the highest experience of individual man, namely the attainment of

Amritatvam. Age after age the labours and achievements of new seers went to the enriching of the ideal till it came to be discussed as *Moksha*. Thus this perpetuation of the ideal gradually transformed itself into a sort of fundamental biological characteristic of the Aryan social organism. No function once acquired by an organism becomes lost to it if there are occasions at proper intervals for its exercise, and in studying the records of ancient India we find that such occasions were anything but rare.

Natural selection in the domain of sociological evolution, or whatever else you may choose to call it, we come across this wonderful phenomenon while tracing the growth of social organism among the ancient Aryans,—this never-failing potentiality for asserting in the most effective way in response to the demand of proper circumstances that highest ideal which inspired its birth and governed its growth and life. When Sri Krishna, himself an embodiment of that highest ideal, was declaring on the eve of a mighty social transition his great promise of incarnating himself age after age as necessity would arise, (**सम्भवामि युगे युगे**), he was only describing, in perhaps a traditional form, the operation of an inexorable law that existed as a potentialised principle in the life of that social organism to which he belonged. If popular tradition in India failed to notice the existence of this great sociological principle evolved through centuries of social effort and hailed its operation on the historical plane as the miracle of a Divine Incarnation, it simply erred on the side of truth, for it has yet to be proved inaccurate to call the embodiment through human life of the highest spiritual ideal that man can conceive of by the name of Divine self-revelation. But to characterise such an event in the social history of the Hindu race as a miracle is surely an error.

For it was but the natural operation of the fundamental law of the Vedic social organism, and no miracle, when Sri Krishna was born to embody in himself the highest ideals and fruits of the Vedic culture evolved through centuries of history and to guide the destinies of India and transfer them from the greedy hands of political and military power that threatened to upset the spiritual scheme of Indian life to the custody of its collective spiritual organisation which sages like Veda-vyasa were building up. It was no miracle again when the great Buddha was born to solve the most critical problem created by that fatal preponderance of non-Aryan elements of life and thought in India from which, as from imminent death, the orthodox Vedic society broken up into scattered communities was struggling with evident ill-success to protect itself by multiplying social and religious self-restrictions. His great personality and his realisation of the highest Vedic spiritual ideal he surrendered to the demands of the situation, to make of them the connecting medium through which those seething and swarming non-Aryan elements were to pass to become fit for absorption into the collective Aryan life and culture as reconstituted in form by the Tantras round the spirit of the ancient Vedic religion,—of which the ceremonial aspect lay dead under the weight of the Buddhistic onslaught.

Because amidst all the mighty convulsions in this way the individuality of the ancient Vedic society could be preserved, we find it, through the operation of the fundamental law of its being and not through any miracle, asserting its highest again in the birth of Sankaracharya. The Tantrik development of the pre-Buddhistic ages had only prepared the ground for a proper reception of the hordes of Buddhistic converts into Aryan modes of life and thought, and the resulting impact was smoothed by the inevitable rise of the Mahayana. But the very vigorous

novelty of this stupendous amalgam constantly threatened to efface and ignore the outlines of the Vedic cultural basis on which it must needs have to stand. And that highest spiritual and intellectual illumination which Sankara acquired was utilised not only in restoring and strengthening this Vedic cultural basis, but also in firmly establishing on it by the help of his synthetic genius all that huge medley of religious views and doctrines that was creating a ferment within the fold of the Aryan society. The same process of welding together this heterogeneity into one Vedic homogeneity occasioned later on the birth of Sri Chaitanya, for just as Sankara allayed all harmful intellectual ferment by making all doctrinal varieties proceed on *lines of Vedic thought*, so Sri Chaitanya brought many post-Buddhistic heterodoxies with peculiar religious practices back to the fold of orthodox society by driving them, with the impelling force of his doctrine of Bhakti and the Rasas, along the *lines of Vedic sentiment*.

Thus we see that so long as the ancient Vedic society lives, the fundamental law of its being is bound to operate, and so long as we find that law operating, we must admit that the Vedic society is still living. It is essential for all who study the problems of Indian life and history to recognise this sociological law of self-assertion,—this law of the self-revelation of that highest governing end which created and evolved the ancient Vedic social organism. The Hindus have all along been giving the fullest recognition to this law through their doctrine of the Avatâra. In modern times, educated people in India have discussed this doctrine from a philosophical and theological standpoint, but neither its advocates nor its opponents have discovered the sociological bases of this Hindu belief. An Avatâra in Hindu society is God incarnate on earth simply because self-identification in God is the highest ideal

in that society, and because this highest ideal is bound to reveal itself, whenever such necessity arises, according to the fundamental law of the Hindu social organism. Belief in the Avatâra is an essential, though not compulsory, doctrine of Hinduism. Everybody who calls himself a Hindu, or more properly a Vedantist as the Swami Vivekananda pointed out that he should, everybody who belongs to the Hindu society and recognises the fundamental law of its being should naturally believe in the Avatâra.

In a marvelous way, indeed, has this sociological basis of the Hindu belief in the Avatara been demonstrated in modern times. Religion and society in Hindu India presented rather a pitiable sight at the dawn of the modern age. They were indeed such as to merit the sad description given of them by the Swami Vivekananda, "a misleading enigma for our own countrymen and a butt of ridicule for foreigners." When through the achievements of Sankara and Sri Chaitanya, a Vedic basis and character were imparted to the stupendous mass of beliefs and practices and when their classification under one distinctive religion was facilitated by the advent and spread of Islam in India, the course of Hindu religious life and thought in almost all parts of India became confined to preserving their historical character by the interpretation of tradition on supposed Vedic bases, as also to adapting themselves as best as they could to the new conditions brought about by the spread of Islam. This self-adaptation and self-preservation through traditional forms did not proceed in an organised way as from one common centre of authority and initiation, and therefore, as was natural in a vast continent like India, the fold of Hinduism within a few centuries became a vast congeries of innumerable faiths and sects, castes and customs, beliefs and practices, sometimes divergent, sometimes convergent, but all claiming a common distant Vedic

source and mostly similar traditions of religious evolution. This spectacle of a seemingly hopeless disorganisation coupled with a universal tendency to blindly cling to external forms oblivious of the underlying spirit,—this endless multiplication of diversities in theory and practice creating never-ceasing disputes and jealousies on the most trifling grounds,—this strange stupefaction of the collective religious self-consciousness in Hindu society,—this utter failure to define or assert itself, its unity, its sufficiency under modern conditions, its inherent resourcefulness in face of all the demands of an Indian collective life,—it was all this which made Hinduism "the misleading enigma for our countrymen and the butt of ridicule for foreigners."

Attempts now followed—attempts that argued no doubt the nascent energy of a religious awakening—to force a solution of the big enigma by lopping off parts that proved too enigmatical to the reformed intellect of modern reformers. These forced solutions gave rise to reform movements like the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj. Each succeeded well as an apology for that curious miscellany which had been evoking the ridicule of foreigners. But was Hinduism to live in modern times through such inglorious apologies? Would it stoop to barter away for the sake of being allowed a prolonged term of contemptuous existence its noblest characteristics,—its wonderful capacity to provide scope to all men in all grades of religious belief and practice, its unique power of holding together in real synthesis all modes and degrees of progress in spiritual culture, or its perpetual attestation to mankind of the truth that religion is one, however much creeds may differ? With the prospect of such an ignoble fate, worse than death, looming before it, the Hindu religion was counting its days in utter helplessness within and utter helplessness without, unable to take up its preordained

task of a national reconstruction in modern India or that of saving modern mankind from the insidious effects of a materialistic civilisation. If this was not an occasion for the operation of the fundamental law of its being, then alas for Hindu society and religion! It was indeed a tremendous challenge to the latter, inability to meet which meant their

absolute death. It was a tremendous test to which the promise of Sri Krishna in the Gita was put; but the terrible-suspense did not continue for long, for in Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Hinduism redeemed its pledge and stood self-revealed in all its glory and equal to all the task that lay waiting before it.

MAYA, A STATEMENT OF FACTS.

MUCH discussion has been raised round the doctrine of Maya, and much of the dust and smoke of controversy is due to misconceptions.

We find the Swami Vivekananda trying to clear the ground of these misconceptions when dealing with the subject in one of his lectures on Jnana-yoga. What do people mean when they say, all this is Maya? They mean to make a generalised statement about facts as they find them in this life and this world, and observation on the ordinary plane thereof is sure to lead to such a generalisation. Who does not see the never-ending flux, the impermanence, the contradictoriness of things? Who does not find after all that wherever we build in this world we build on shifting sands? Do you ask us to dive beyond material things to human sentiments that lie underneath? Ideas and sentiments constitute the play of the human mind with form or matter. The playing mind, the play and the playing are all subject to modifications; and the whole thing one day turns out to be a vanity with no consideration left to mitigate it. Does the play lift us up nearer to Reality? There is no asserting it, for any moment the same play may as well fling us down. We are swinging all the time on a seesaw of life and death, pain and pleasure, merit and demerit, progression and retrogression, rise and fall, and such contradictions *ad infinitum*. Look at nature,—and you say,

it is all laws operating there. But does not the tiniest dust in the balance upset your uniformity, rejecting one law and installing another? The uniformities are multiform and multiformity stares on human intellect even from the most hypothetical atom. Nothing brings us to a satisfactory ultimatum while everything slips away most inconveniently. Everything is inviting to the play of intellect and feeling, everything tempts the exercise of will, while nothing stays long enough to unfold the 'whither,' but passes the game and its victims on to something else to follow. No world-theory, no life-scheme can remodel this despairing game; no flowers can beautify a rotten carcass. Only give up the game and be free, for it is all Maya.

It is only this giving up that can really improve the situation, and every theory or scheme that professes to do that or succeeds in doing that must needs involve this giving up as its essential factor, whether it admits that in so many words, or not. Call this Maya by any other name, call it the Lila of a God or the training-ground of the soul or the like, you cannot but admit thereby, more or less in an implied form, the process of giving up. The truth is that those who state facts by the word Maya do what we are required to do in philosophy,—they call a spade a spade. While those who replace that name by other sweet-sounding names, confound philosophy with practice.

Even Sri Chaitanya, according to the most faithful record of some of his preachings left by Govinda, calls this life and this world as Maya. Maya means a generalised statement of facts which no sect of religious aspirants can set aside as untrue. Only when we step beyond philosophy and talk religion, only when we mean to practically deal with Maya, seeking to cross beyond, we try to superimpose on it a religious outlook, regarding it as Mother, Divine Lila and so forth.

So that part of the doctrine of Maya which consists in giving the name Maya to a generalised statement of facts, need not raise any controversial outburst, for to every philosophical sect, that part of the doctrine is really unexceptionable.

The real controversy rages, not round the question as to how we came to call all this Maya, but rather round the question: whence is this Maya? How would we explain it? All parties agree in admitting a Becoming and even in characterising it as Maya in the sense explained above, but those who oppose Mayavada maintain that there is no harm in allowing as much reality to the Becoming as to the Being. In consequence of this the opponents of Mayavada argue out some sort of relation between the Being and the Becoming. Hegel makes the Being move out of itself as Becoming by something like necessity of thought.* Ramanuja seeks to relate the Being to the Becoming by postulating †

*This is evidently *thought* as we know it, namely thought as a product of Becoming. To impose the conditions of such thought upon Being which we ourselves place by common consent beyond all Becoming is to argue in a circle.

†The authority is supplied by Vedantic texts interpreted in this light. But these texts may either be shewn to speak not of the Highest Reality transcending everything else by "neti neti," or they would otherwise contradict reason by subsuming the Absolute under the intellectual category of organic unity, "sesh and seshi."

a sort of organic unity between them. But this tendency to relate Being to Becoming betrays, so far as philosophy is concerned, only a constitutional necessity of the intellect. It is the failure of the intellect to remain satisfied with something unrelated or absolute. It controls us and compels us to relate in spite of ourselves, when to relate to any the slightest extent is to wander again within the maze of Becoming. At the last moment we surrender ourselves to our relating faculty and thereby betray our philosophy.

But Sankaracharya ceases to philosophise rather than betray his philosophy at this critical juncture. To the intellect of every man no doubt this is a hopeless quandary. On the wings of philosophy you begin to scale the dizzy heights of reasoning. Now by bold aviation you reach a point where either you must suppress your relating faculty or else falsify your philosophy. Sankar avoids the dilemma; he gives up aviation at that point and comes down, while others still navigate the air and allow their philosophy to be victimised by their relating faculty.

Sankara boldly confesses that his philosophising ends at this point. Having reached the idea of Absolute Being, he leaves it unrelated to Becoming. The line which his philosophy draws between the Unconditioned and the Conditioned in causation, time and space is inviolable; and this is the last achievement of his philosophy, for beyond that it does not aspire. It is consequently open to the criticism that it does not explain the Becoming or the Maya. But Sankara suffers his philosophy to remain halting in this respect rather than compromise his idea of Absolute Being like many others with prouder but hollow pretensions who have preceded and followed him in the domain of philosophy.

Maya as the explanation of Becoming, and not as the statement of its actual nature, is perfectly inscrutable, *anirvachaniyâ*. But the word power or *Sakti* as used commonly involves a peculiar way of thinking. When

we find any thing producing a change or phenomenon that did not exist before, we say that that thing had the power of producing the change. To denote a subsequent change or becoming we attribute a pre-existent power or Sakti. So behind this world-creation or Becoming we posit a power thereof and say that there is a power which evolves all this. This positing of power is nothing but a form of thought by which we recognise the possibility or actuality of a subsequent event. By applying this form of thought to all the facts which we state as Maya, we may attribute them to a Mayasakti or power of Maya. So if nobody has any objection to accepting Maya as the generalised statement of facts, nobody would also object to accepting a Mayasakti as their cause. But we should distinctly remember that this recognition of a Mayasakti is nothing but the application of a form of thought, nothing but the product of conditioned thought. It only gives a new convenient form to the statement of facts as Maya. It is really another statement of the same facts satisfying only a necessity of conditioned thought. The term Mayasakti leaves therefore the real *wherefore* of Maya as unexplained as before. It is as much a statement of facts as the uncompounded word Maya.

But like Mayasakti, the Absolute Being or Brahman of Sankara is not a mere form of thought. We predicate a causal relation of Mayasakti, but we do not do that of Brahman. We predicate nothing of It. When thought denies all the conditions which limit it, when it exhausts them by "neti, neti," it does not itself meet with death, for death is a condition it has transcended already. At that point all the conditioned forms of its activity are held in abeyance, but thought still exists. We cannot deny to thought this existence in an unconditioned form. So when thought goes on denying to itself all conditions by "neti, neti," it ultimately touches some ground beyond all conditions. This universal ex-

perience of an Unresolvable Something in human thought expresses itself in our idea of Absolute Being. This Fundamental Experience lies covered and hidden as it were under the constant play of conditioned thought by which we are being swayed hither and thither.

In Sankara's philosophy this Absolute Being remains unaffected by any relation with Mayasakti or Becoming. To say that both Being and Becoming are true is to imply some sort of relation between the two, some relation which conditioned thought creates. So the dictum of philosophy is, Being only exists. But if you say that facts in our life oppose that dictum, Sankara replies, "well, these facts which I call Maya cannot be explained by my philosophy though all the time it would declare, Brahman alone exists. What is required of us is to realise this Brahman, leaving those facts or Maya unexplained. Attempts at explanation make you wander only within the maze of Maya."

"But," you insist, "I have got to do with Maya when I proceed to realise Brahman. Even in that process, I find it is a necessity to deal with Maya. So in what light am I to regard it?"

Sankara replies: If on the way to realise Brahman, you find it a necessity to have dealings with Maya, why, you should accept that necessity. That goes without anybody saying it. Don't regard such acceptance as *philosophy* but take it as a preparation for finally putting philosophy into practice. But during this self-preparation you should deal with Maya in some attitude of mind enjoined upon in the Vedic Scriptures (which include the Tantras in so far as they restate the same culture in a new form). Such injunctions about worship seek to remedy the philosophical inexplicableness of Maya by its religious symbolisation which ultimately leads us through the symbolic to the real as in Brahman."

Thus the philosophy of Sankara leaves the practice of religion quite unobstructed. It has of course a practical aspect of its own in which is developed a system of spiritual discipline peculiar to itself and known commonly as Jnana-yoga; but that does not debar it from admitting and justifying from its own standpoint other systems of spiritual discipline. This standpoint Sankara of course claims as philosophically the highest; and if we appreciate the success with which Sankara establishes the idea of Absolute Being, we cannot but admit this claim.

Brahman alone is true. Other things are true not relatively to Brahman, for It does not enter into relation at all, but they are true relatively among themselves, the whole system of relations disappearing as a dream when Brahman the only Truth is realised. But so long as we know ourselves as contained within the system of relations, and therefore know it to be true, we can only try to transcend it, and through religion we make that attempt.

Those who blame Sankara as a Mayavadi, to them a term of reproach, really miss their mark, for Sankara's doctrine does not prejudice or oppose their own conceptions of Maya or their own methods of spiritual progress so long as these conceptions or methods do not necessarily involve a bigoted attack against the truth of Absolute Being. Sankara was a Brahmanavadi before anything else. He was not a Mayavadi in the sense in which that reproach is hurled at him, for the one aim of his philosophy was to re-establish with all the emphasis which circumstances demanded the truth of One Brahman-without-a-second, the goal and support of Vedic spirituality, and his view of Maya does not ignore the practice of religion or of duty in any form in which they are compatible with the one aim of his philosophy.



EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

XLVIII.

Human society is in turn governed by the four castes—the priests, the soldiers, the traders and the labourers. Each state has its glories as well as its defects. When the priest (Brāhman) rules, there is a tremendous exclusiveness on hereditary grounds—the persons of the priests and their descendants are hemmed in with all sorts of safeguards—none but they have any knowledge—none but they have the right to impart that knowledge. Its glory is, that at this period is laid the foundation of sciences. The priests cultivate the mind, for through the mind they govern.

The military (Kshatriya) rule is tyrannical and cruel, but they are not exclusive and during that period arts and social culture attain their height.

The commercial (Vaisya) rule comes next. It is awful in its silent crushing and blood-sucking power. Its advantage is as the trader himself goes everywhere he is a good disseminator of ideas collected during the two previous states. They are still less exclusive than the military, but culture begins to decay.

Last will come the labourer (Sudra) rule. Its advantages will be the distribution of physical comforts—its disadvantages (perhaps) the lowering of culture. There will be a great distribution of ordinary education, but extraordinary geniuses will be less and less.

If it is possible to form a state in which the knowledge of the priest period, the culture of the military, the distributive spirit of the commercial and the ideal of equality of the last can all be kept in tact minus their evils it will be an ideal state. But is it possible?

Yet, the first three have had their day, now is the time for the last—they must have it—

none can resist it. I do not know all the difficulties about the gold or silver standards, (nobody seems to know much as to that), but this much I see that the gold standard has been making the poor poorer, and the rich richer. Bryan was right when he said, "we refuse to be crucified on a cross of gold." The silver standard will give the poor a better chance in this unequal fight. I am a socialist not because I think it is a perfect system, but half a loaf is better than no bread.

The other systems have been tried and found wanting. Let this one be tried, if for nothing else for the novelty of the thing. A redistribution of pain and pleasure is better than always the same persons having pains and pleasures. The sumtotal of good and evil in the world remains ever the same. The yoke will be lifted from shoulder to shoulder by new systems, that is all.

Let every dog have his day in this miserable world, so that after this experience of so-called happiness they may all come to the Lord and give up this vanity of a world and governments and all other botherations.

With love to you all,

Ever your faithful brother,

Vivekananda.

CREATION AS EXPLAINED IN THE TANTRA.

BY MR. JUSTICE J. G. WOODROFFE.

(Continued from page 76.)

For the sake of Upasana a development is described in Ishvara, but as it is apparent only it is really a species of Vivartta. What is called an evolution is but another name or aspect of that which is the immutable subject of such ideal process. Shakti is one. It appears as various by its manifestation in various functions. There can of necessity be no real Parinama, for in the first place Sachchidananda or pure spirit is as such immut-

able. Before and after creation in every stage it remains what it was. There is therefore no real Parinama in or of the Aksharabrahman as such. Nor again though Prakriti is the source of change is it changing here. For Maya considered as the body of Ishvara is undifferentiated, that is as such it is assumed not to change. And this must be so, for directly there is a real development (parinama) the Jiva-body of Avidya appears. Even the three Gunas do not change each remaining what it is. They are the same in all forms but appear to the Jiva to exist in different combinations. The appearance of the gunas in different proportions is due to Avidya or Karma which is this apparent Gunakshobha. The three worlds are Asat. It is Sangskara which gives to the Samya Prakriti the appearance of an existence as Vaishamya. Ishvara is free of all Avidya. What the Tantra describes as Sadrisha Parinama is but an analysis of the different aspects of what is shortly called in other Shastras Ikshana. The Sadrisha Parinama is concerned with the evolution of what is named Para Sound (Parashabdasthiti). This is Cosmic Sound; the causal vibration in the substance of Mula-prakriti which gives birth to the Tattvas which are its Vikritis. Such cosmic sound being that which is distinguished in thought from the Tattvas so produced.

The Sharada says that from the Sakala Parameshvara who is Sachchidananda issued Shakti. This Shakti is not in a sense co-extensive with the Parameshvara but is only that power of Him which is necessary for creation. God and His power are more than the creation which He manifests. Shakti is said to issue from that which is already Sakala or associated with Shakti, because as Raghava Bhatta says, She who is eternal (Anadirupa) existed in a subtle state (as it were Chaitanya) during the great dissolution (pralaya). Ya anadirupa chaitanyadhyasena mahapralaye sukshma sthita. This important passage contains the whole teaching on this particular point. Adhyasa is the attribution of the nature of one thing to another according to which something is considered to be what it is not. In other words during pralaya there is some principle in the Brahman which is not Chit but which owing to the absence of operation is identified with it. Chit and Maya appear as the former, the latter being suppressed.

With however the disturbance of the gunas Prakriti became inclined (uchchbuna) to creation and in this sense is imagined to issue. Shakti, in other words passes from a potential state to one of actuality. The Parameshvara is, he adds, described as Sachchidananda in order to affirm that even when the Brahman is associated with Avidya its own true nature (Svarupa) is not affected. According to the Sharada, from this Shakti issues Nada and form the latter Vindu (known as the Paravindu). The Sharada thus enumerates seven aspects of Shakti. This it does according to Raghava so as to make up the seven component parts of the Ongkara. In some Shakta Tantras this first Nada is omitted and there are thus only six aspects. The Shiva Tantras mention five. Those which recognise Kala as a Tattva identify Nada with it. In some Tantras Kala is associated with Tamoguna and is the Mahakala who is both the child and spouse of Adyashakti; for creation comes from the Tamasic aspect of Shakti. In the Sharada Tilaka, Nada and Vindu are the same as Shakti being the names of two of Her states which are considered to represent Her as being more prone to creation (Uchchhunavastha). These are two states of Shakti under which It creates (upa-yoga-avastha). As there is no mass or ghana in Nishkala Shiva that Brahman represents the aghanavastha. The Prapanchastara Tantra says that She who is in the first place Tattva (mere "thatness") quickens under the influence of Chit which She reflects; then She longs to create (vichikirshu) and becomes massive (ghanibhuta) and appears as Vindu (Paravindu). Ghanibhuta means the state of being with ghana (Ghanavastha). It involves the notion of solidifying, coagulating, becoming massive. Thus milk is said to become ghanibhuta when it condenses into cream or curd. This is the first gross condition (Sthulavastha). The Brahman associated with Maya in the form of Karma assumes that aspect in which It is regarded as the primal cause of the subtle and gross bodies. There then lies in it in a potential undifferentiated mass (ghana) the universe and beings about to be created. The Paravindu is thus a compact aspect of Shakti wherein action of Kriya-Shakti predominates. It is compared to a grain of gram (chanaka) which under its outer sheath (maya) contains two seeds (Shivashakti) in close and un-

divided union. The Vindu is symbolised by a circle. The Shunya or empty space within is the Brahmapada. The supreme Light is formless but Vindu implies both the void and guna for when Shiva becomes Vindurupa He is with guna. Raghava says "She alone can create. When the desire for appearance as all Her Tattvas seizes Her She assumes the state of Vindu whose chief characteristic is action" (Kriyashakti). This Vindu or Avyakta as it is the sprouting root of the universe is called the supreme Vindu (Paravindu) or causal or Karana Vindu to distinguish it from that aspect of Itself which is called Vindu (Karyya) which appears as a state of Shakti after the differentiation of the Paravindu in Sadrisia parinama. The Paravindu is the Ishvara of the Vedanta with Maya as His Upadhi. He is the Saguna Brahman that is the combined Chitshakti and Mayashakti or Ishvara with undifferentiated Prakriti as His Avyaktasharira. Some call Him Mahavishnu and others the Brahma Purusha. Here is He Taranashiva. "Some call this the Hanga Devi. They are those who are filled with a passion for her lotus feet." As Kalicharana the Commentator of the Shat-chakranirupana says, it matters not what It is called. It is adored by all. It is this Vindu or state of supreme Shakti which is worshipped in secret by all Devas. In Nishkala Shiva, Prakriti exists in a hidden potential state. The Vindu or Parashaktimaya (Shivashaktimaya) is the first manifestation of creative activity which is both the expression and result of the universal Karma or store of unfulfilled desire for cosmic life.

It is then said that this Paravindu "divides" or "differentiates." In the Satyaloka is the formless and lustrous One. She exists like a grain of gram surrounding Herself with Maya. When casting off (utsrija) the covering (bandhana) of Maya She intent on creation (unmukhi) becomes twofold (dvidhavhitva) or according to the account here given threefold and then on this differentiation in Shiva and Shakti (Shiva-Shakti vibhagena) arises creative ideation (srishatikalpana). As so unfolding the Vindu is known as the Sound Brahman (Shabda-brahman). "On the differentiation of the Paravindu there arose unmanifested sound." (Vhidya-manat parad vindoravyaktatmaravo bhavat). Shabda here of course does not mean physical sound which is the guna of the Karyakasha or atomic

Akasha. The latter is integrated and limited and evolved at a later stage in Vikriti Parinama from Tamasika Ahankara. Shabdabrahman is the undifferentiated Chidakasha or Spiritual Ether of philosophy in association with its Kala or Prakriti or the Sakala Shiva of religion. It is Chitshakti vehicled by undifferentiated Prakriti from which is evolved Nadamatra ("Sound only" or the "Principle of Sound") which is unmanifest (Avyakta): from which again is displayed (Vyakta) the changing universe of names and forms. It is the Pranavarupa Brahman or Om which is the cosmic causal principle of the manifested Shabdārtha. Avyakta Nada or unmanifested Sound is the undifferentiated causal principle of manifested sound without any sign or characteristic manifestation such as letters and the like which mark its displayed product. Shabdabrahman is the all-pervading impartite unmanifested Nadavindu substance, the primary creative impulse in Parashiva which is the cause of the manifested Shabdārtha. This Vindu is called Para because it is the first and supreme Vindu. Although it is Shakti like the Shakti and Nada which precede it, it is considered as Shakti on the point of creating the world and as such it is from this Paravindu and not the states above it in the imaginary procession of Shakti that Avyakta Sound is said to come.

Raghava Bhatta ends the discussion of this matter by shortly saying that the Shabdabrahman is the Chaitanya in all creatures which as existing in breathing creatures (Prani) is known as the Shakti Kundalini of the Muladhara. The accuracy of this definition is contested by the Compiler of the Pranatoshini, but if by Chaitanya we understand the manifested Chit that is the latter displayed as and with Mulaprakriti in cosmic vibration (Spandana) then the apparently differing views are reconciled.

The Paravindu on such differentiation manifests under the threefold aspects of Vindu, Nada, Vija. This is the only development and kinetic aspect of Parashahda. The Vindu which thus becomes threefold is the principle in which the germ of action sprouts to manifestation producing a state of compact intensive Shakti. The threefold aspect of Vindu, as Vindu (Karya), Nada and Vija are Shivamaya, Shivashaktimaya, Shaktimaya; Tamas, Sattva, Rajas; Moon, Fire and Sun; and the

Shaktis which are the cosmic bodies known as Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha, and Virat. All three, Vindu, Vija, Nada are the different phases of Shakti in creation being different aspects of Paravindu, the ghanavastha of Shakti. The order of the three Shaktis of will, action and knowledge differ in Ishvara and Jiva. Ishvara is all-knowing and therefore the order in Him is Ichchha, Jnana, Kriya. In Jiva it is Jnana, Ichchha, Kriya. Ichchha is said to be the capacity which conceives the idea of work or action, which brings the work before the mind and wills to do it. In this Vindu Tamas is said to be predominant, for there is as yet no stir to action. Nada is Jnana Shakti, that is the subjective direction of will by knowledge to the desired end. With it is associated Sattva. Vija is Kriya Shakti or the Shakti which arises from that effort or the action done. With it Rajasguna or the principle of activity is associated. Kriya arises from the combination of Ichchha and Jnana. It is thus said "Drawn by Ichchhashakti, illumined by Jnanashakti, Shakti, the Lord appearing as Male creates (Kriyashakti). From Vindu it is said arose Raudri; from Nada, Jyestha; and from Vija, Vama. From these arose Rudra, Brahma, Vishnu." It is also said in the Goraksha Sanghita, "Ichchha is Brahmi, Kriya is Vaishnavi and Jnana is Gauri. Wherever there are these three Shaktis there is the Supreme Light called Om." In the Sakala Parameshvara or Shabdabrahman in bodies, that is Kundalini Shakti, Vindu in which Tamas abounds is, Raghava says, called Nirodhika; Nada in which Sattva abounds is called Arddhendhu and Vija the combination of the two (Ichchha and Jnana) in which Rajas as Kriya works is called Vindu. The three preceding states in Kundalini are Shakti, Dhvani, and Nada. Kundalini is Chit Shakti into which Sattva enters; a state known as the Paramakashavastha. When She into whom Sattva has entered is next pierced by Rajas She is called Dhvani which is the Aksharavastha. When She is again pierced by Tamas She is called Nada. This is the Avyaktavastha, the Avyakta Nada which is the Paravindu. The three Vindus which are aspects of Paravindu constitute the mysterious Kamakala triangle which with the Harddhakala forms the roseate body of the lovely-limbed great Devi Tripurasundari who is Shivakama and manifests the universe. She is the trinity of Divine

energy of whom the Shritattvarnava says :—“ Those glorious men who worship in that body in Samarasa are freed from the waves of poison in the untraversable sea of the Wandering (Sangsara).” The main principle which underlies the elaborate details here shortly summarised is this. The state in which Chit and Prakriti exists as one undivided whole that is in which Prakriti lies latent (Nishkala Shiva) is succeeded by one of differentiation, that is manifestation of Maya (Sakala Siva). In such manifestation it displays several aspects. The totality of such aspects is the Maya-body of Ishvara in which are included the causal subtle and gross bodies of the Jiva. These are according to the Sharada seven aspects of the first or Para state of Sound in Shabdastishti which are the seven divisions of the Mantra Om, viz :—A, U, M, Nada, Vindu, Shakti, Shanta. They constitute Parashabdastishti in the Ishvara creation. They are Ishvara or Om and seven aspects of the cosmic causal body ; the collectivity (Samashti) of the individual (Vyashti) causal, subtle and gross bodies of the Jiva.

Before passing to the manifested Word and its meaning (Shabdārtha) it is necessary to note what is called Arthasrishti in the Avikriti or Sadrisha Parinama ; that is the causal state of Sound called Para Shabda ; the other three states, viz : Pashyanti, Madhyama and Vaikhari manifesting only in gross bodies. As Paravindu is the causal body of Shabda He is also the causal body of Artha which is inseparably associated with it as the combined Shabdārtha. As such He is called Shambhu who is of the nature of both Vindu and Kala and the associate of Kala. From Him issued Sadashiva “the witness of the world” and from Him Isha and then Rudra, Vishnu and Brahma. These six Shivas are various aspects of Chit as presiding over (the first) the subjective Tattvas and (the rest) the elemental world whose centres are the five lower Chakras. These Devatas when considered as belonging to the Avikriti Parinama are the Devata aspect of apparently different states of causal sound by the process of resolution of like to like giving them the semblance of all pervasive creative energies. They are sound powers in the aggregate (Samashti). As appearing in, that is presiding over, bodies they are the ruling Lords, of the individual (Vyashti) evolutes from the primal cause of Sabda.

The completion of the causal Avikriti Parinama with its ensuing cosmic vibration in the Gunas is followed by a real Parinama of the Vikritis from the substance of Mulaprakriti. There then appears the manifested Shabdārtha or the individual bodies subtle or gross of the Jiva in which are the remaining three Bhavas of Sound or Shaktis called Pashyanti, Madhyama, Vaikhari. Shabda literally means sound, idea, word ; and Artha, its meaning, that is the objective form which corresponds to the subjective conception formed and language spoken of it. The conception is due to Sangskara. Artha is the externalised thought. There is a psycho-physical parallelism in the Jiva. In Ishvara thought is truly creative. The two are inseparable neither existing without the other. Shabdārtha has thus a composite meaning like the Greek word Logos which means both thought and word combined. By the manifested Shabdārtha is meant what the Vedantins call Namarupa, the unreal world of name and form, but with this difference that according to the Tantrik notions here discussed there is underlying this world of name and form a real material cause that is Parashabda or Mulaprakriti manifesting as the principle of evolution.

The Sharada says that from the Unmanifested root being in Vindu form (Mulabhuta avyakta vindurupa) of the Paravastu (Brahman) that is from Mulaprakriti in creative operation there is evolved the Sangkhyan Tattvas. This Tattva Srishti, as it is called, is regarded as real from the standpoint of Jiva : the notion of Vikriti involving that of change just as the idea of Chit implies changelessness.

(To be continued).

There are no really insoluble problems, because everything is in its right place in the cosmic order. If its place in the cosmic order is such that it is your duty to readjust it, then that was its right place, as a stimulating agency to you. “All things,” however apparently contradictory, “work together for good.” The ultimate end depends not upon your or my choosing aright, though our individual education may greatly depend upon it. The ultimate end depends upon the power of Infinite Mind to bring His nature into perfect manifestation in His own children, and, in this, He cannot fail.

—Archdeacon Wilberforce's book, “Seeing God.”

SRI RAMAKRISHNA: THE GREAT
MASTER.

Chapter II.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

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ABOUT three miles to the east of Dereypore, there stands a cluster of villages, known even to this day as Sripore, Kamarpukur and Mukundapore. The three lie in such close proximity to one another that for all practical purposes they may be regarded as one, and are referred to generally as Kamarpukur by the people of the surrounding neighbourhood. They cover an area of about four square miles and are on the latitude $87^{\circ}-42'$ with a longitude of about $22^{\circ}-54'$. They stand at the crossing of four roads, which lead to Burdwan about thirty miles to the north, to Arambagh about twelve miles to the east, to Midnapore and Puri on the south and to Ranigunge on the west. The roads must have been made during the Pathan and Moghul rule of Bengal for military purposes,—at least some of them. The big tanks or dighis at regular intervals, the ruins of a structure for keeping elephants, the battlefield of Moghulmari, the ruins of the old fort of Mandaran and of the triumphal gateway with Persian inscriptions on it a few miles to the west of the same, bear witness to the fact.

Kamarpukur must have known better days and had a bigger population in old times than it has at present. The vast ruins of brick-built houses, temples and wall-enclosures that greet the eye of the traveller at every step in the village testify to the fact. The facility of communication with Burdwan, Midnapore and Calcutta on account of the well-built roads helped the place to carry on formerly a brisk local trade. Thus instead of being entirely a rural village, it supported a good number of artisans, traders and mechanics in former times. One can find signs of the same in the declining local industries of hookah-pipes made of Ablush-wood, Dhutis and napkins etc. which its people carry on even to this day with Calcutta

and other remote places. The place used to have its two marketting days every week since very early times, when the people of the surrounding villages assembled in it to buy or sell foodgrains, vegetables, clothes, medicines, ropes, mats, wicker-work baskets and all sorts of necessary household things. The 'hát' or market is held even to the present times on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

The presence of numerous temples dedicated to Siva and Vishnu bears testimony to the religious tendency of the people. Temples dedicated to Dharma or Buddha also are not rare, though the name has lost its former significance and the god is being looked upon by the people at present as one of the many incarnations of Vishnu. Less than a generation ago the car-festival in honour of the god used to be celebrated with great *ecclat* in the village. And the story is told today by the villagers how the wheels of the big car got stuck into the deep ruts of a muddy road and it capsized and broke on such an occasion, how the broken parts were then destroyed by the white ants in an incredibly short space of time and finally how the people looked upon the whole thing as caused by the will of the god Dharma to discontinue the festival. Be that as it may, the three villages still have three separate places for the worship of Dharma, though the worship of Siva and Vishnu in the form of Sri Krishna seems to have gained the upperhand during later years.

Kamarpukur belonged formerly to the estate of the Raja of Burdwan. The Raja made a grant of it to his spiritual preceptor sometime ago. Thus the people of the three villages acknowledged the Goswami family as their Zemindar in the time of which we are speaking. A scion of the family, Gopilal by name, had built a big temple near the market place and dedicated the same to Sri Krishna. Sukhlal, possibly a descendant of Gopilal, was the head of the family in 1814 A. D. Unlike the zemindar of Dereypore, this man was held in high respect by the villagers on account of his piety, charity and nobleness of mind. He had his residence on the western extremity of the village. And the ruins of his house and his brick-built tomb on the side of a big tank close by, are pointed out even to the present day. He died probably in 1824. His son Krishnalal then fell on

evil days and had ultimately to sell his zemindary-rights on the village to the Laha family about thirty years after his father's death. The Goswami family must have retired elsewhere from the village since that time and the Lahas remain to this day the zemindar of the place.

Now Sukhlal Goswami had a genuine friendship for Srijut Khudiram, the head of the Chatterjee family of Dereypur and was sorely grieved to learn of the dire misfortune that had befallen him in consequence of just quarrels with the wicked Ramananda. He immediately came forward to help his friend in trouble and invited him to come over and live with him at Kamarpukur. Khudiram saw the hand of God in the kind offer of his friend and accepted it with all gratefulness. Thus a few days after the sad event at Dereypur we find Khudiram settled in a thatched hut at Kamarpukur, close by his friend's residence. And Sukhlal was not only content with enabling his friend to have that cottage, but also made over to him about half an acre of the most fertile of his own fields, known to this day as Lakshmi-jāla, to enable him to support his little family in future.

Swami Saradananda.

THE VAIRAGYA-SATAKAM

OR THE HUNDRED VERSES ON RENUNCIATION BY BHARTRIHARI.

(Continued from page 16).

वैराग्यशतकम् ।

भोगा भङ्गवृत्तयो बहुविधास्तैरेव चायं भव-
स्तत्कस्येह कृते परिभ्रमत रे लोकाः कृतं चेष्टितैः ।
आशापाशयतोपशान्तिविशदं चेतः समाधीयतां
कामोत्पत्तिवशात्स्वधामनि यदि श्रद्धेयमस्मद्भवः ॥

39. Manifold and transitory in nature are the enjoyments and of such is this world made up. So what for would you wander about here, oh! men? Cease exerting yourselves (for them); and if you put faith in our

word, on its Supreme Foundation (lit. abode) concentrate your mind, purified by quelling hope with its hundred meshes, and freed from its liability to create desire.

कामोत्पत्तिवशात्, (we accept this reading as found in the edition we translate from, but the meaning given of it by the commentator Budhendra we do not here follow. He makes the expression qualify the verb 'concentrate,' explaining काम as अनुराग or love. His meaning thus becomes: swayed by the development of love or Bhakti). Literally, (turned) away from the necessity (वश) (imposed upon it) of (or by) the creation of desires.

Enjoyments are transitory individually and inexhaustible collectively, so we are in a never-ending wild-goose chase which brings in turns stimulation and grief. Desire produces this terrible entanglement and hope keeps it on. Therefore don't exert yourself for these enjoyments and freeing your mind from hope and desire, set it high on its supreme goal. This is the argument.

ब्रह्मेन्द्रादिमरुद्गणांस्तृणकणान्यत्र स्थितो मन्यते
यत्खादाद्विरसा भवन्ति विभवास्त्रैलोक्य-
राज्यादयः ।

भोगः कोऽपि स एक एव परमो नित्योदितो जृम्भते
भो साधो क्षणभङ्गुरे तदितरे भोगे रतिं
मा कृषाः ॥४०॥

40. There is one Enjoyment and one alone, lasting immutable and supreme, of which the taste renders tasteless the greatest possessions such as the sovereignty of the three worlds, and established in which a Brahma, Indra or the gods (i. e. their positions) appear like particles of grass. Do not, oh! Sadhu, set your heart on any ephemeral enjoyment other than that.

सा रम्या नगरी महान्स नृपतिः सामन्तचक्रं च त-
त्पार्श्वे तस्य च सा विदग्धपरिषत्ताश्चन्द्रवि-
म्बाननाः ।

उद्धृतः स च राजपुत्रनिबहस्ते वन्दिनस्ताः कथाः
सर्वे यस्य वशादगात्स्मृतिपथं काजाय तस्मै
नमः ॥४१॥

41. That lovely city, that grand monarch and that circle of feudatory kings at his side, that cabinet of shrewd counsellors of his and those beauties with moon-like faces, that group of princes in the heyday of youth, those court-minstrels and their songs of praise,—all this fled away along the way of memory under whose power, to that Kāla (time or the principle of change) salutation!

[उद्भूतं is, here 'with full-blown energies.']

यत्रानेकः क्वचिदपि गृहे तत्र तिष्ठत्यथैको
यत्राप्येकस्तदनु बहवस्तत्र नैकोऽपि चान्ते ।
इत्थं नेयै रजनिदिवसौ लोखयन्द्वाविवाक्षौ
कालः कलयो भुवनफलके क्रीडति प्राणेशरैः॥४२

42. Where in some home (or, a square in the case of a checkerboard) there once were many, there is now one, and where there was one or many successively, there is none at the end (of the game),—this is the process in which expert Kāla plays (his game) on the checkerboard of this world with living beings as the pieces and casting the two dice of day and night.

(To be continued).

THE KUMBHA-MELA

AND

THE R-K. MISSION SEVASHRAM AT KANKHAL.

Swami Kalyanananda in charge of the above Sevashrama writes to us in the course of a long letter :—

There were over ten lakhs of people, I suppose, assembled here during the Kumbha-mela, and the Government succeeded in meeting the situation most admirably. A police force of about five thousand units and sweepers of the same

number were placed under the charge of many executive officials and there was nothing left to be desired in arrangements made for sanitation and proper food. Besides this, there was the splendid organisation of volunteers under the auspices of the Marwari Shahayaka Samiti and the Servants of India Society, who proved specially useful in managing crowds during the bathing ceremony. Workers of the Ramkrishna Mission, you know, always keep themselves ready to do pioneer work wherever necessary and to serve where there is actual room and need of service. During two previous Kumbhas, our Sevashrama had carried all sorts of relief among thousands of pilgrims. But this year in view of the big arrangements that both official and non-official organisations were making to face the situation, our Sevashram deemed it inexpedient to waste all its resources and energies on the same field merely for the sake of advertising its existence and reputation, and availed itself of the more fruitful means of justifying both by confining itself to medical relief for which there was much scope in view to prove its usefulness.

Most fortunately, epidemic cholera did not break out this year till after the great bathing was over on the 13th April. When that stupendous affair was over, the impulse to leave for home seized the huge concourse of pilgrims and the fatigued volunteer workers naturally obeyed the same impulse. The terrible rush at the railway station was indescribable. And this was the moment chosen by cholera to let loose its horrors amidst the jaded pilgrims. The Government had cholera camps to segregate and treat the victims, but the work was beyond the capacity of hired men to cope with. Now helplessness was seen on every side laying low the pilgrims who had till the bathing on the 13th been such fond objects of careful attention from those who came to serve so heroically from distant parts of the land. There were only a few stray cases of cholera, say eight or ten, before that date and they had received treatment from this noble band of volunteers. But now? Confusion stalked freely everywhere amidst the pilgrims.

A party of Brahmacharins of the Ramkrishna Mission (Br. Harendranath of Brindaban Sevashram, Br. Panchanon of Allahabad Sevashram and

Brahmacharins of other centres, some of whom came from the hills where they were practising 'tapasya') were staying at our Sevashram as visitors during the Kumbha, and there were two medical students from Calcutta sent by Dr. J. N. Kanjilal, Dr. Abinashchandra Das from Brindaban, Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerji, Dr. Jatindranath Mitra from Dehradun, the well-known Dr. Chandrasekhar Kali and another homœopathic physician from Calcutta, Dr. Sri Ram Sub. Asst. Surgeon of Kaithal and others. We are grateful to all these kind visitors who promptly transformed themselves into the most hard-working members of our relief-party as the pressure of our work gradually increased.

We are also thankful to Babu Bhajan Lal Lohia and his colleagues of Calcutta who placed medicines to the value of Rs. 300 and food-stuffs to that of Rs. 100 at our disposal during the Mela and who enabled us to transfer medicines and accessories from their local Dharmasala to our Sevashrama when the cholera hospital there was closed during the Mela.

Guests to our Sevashram during the Mela numbered, of course, very high and we had to arrange for boarding and lodging for about one hundred of them daily at our Ashram, and Brahmacharins had to drudge day and night even in the kitchen.

Medical relief to Mela pilgrims was given from the following departments of our work: (1) the outdoor dispensaries, a second homœopathic dispensary having been opened on the acquired land by the side of the main road to Hardwar; (2) indoor hospital work, temporary huts having been raised for affording larger accommodation; (3) a travelling dispensary with one physician, one compounder and one dresser; (4) a disinfecting party who had to work hard to prevent the disease from spreading among crowds of pilgrims whence cases for indoor treatment were picked up; (5) a band of workers for burning corpses; (6) an enquiry department where informations about the Mela, its arrangements, accommodation etc. were sought by pilgrims.

We had first to secure the permission of the Sanitary Commissioner in charge of the Mela to keep indoor cholera patients in the new temporary wards. We had altogether 30 cholera patients to

treat and nurse in these wards, of which five are still undergoing treatment and nine died, the rest being discharged perfectly cured. Besides these indoor cholera patients who were picked up after the 13th April, we had to treat 102 patients during the Mela and 2 small-pox patients in our indoor hospital.

The number of patients treated at our outdoor dispensaries during the Mela and up to the 22nd of April was 3537, of which 26 again were cholera patients.

The travelling dispensary which carried relief from place to place throughout the Mela area had 255 patients to treat suffering from various diseases.

The work devolving on the disinfecting party was arduous, but it was thoroughly performed and was evidently successful throughout. The health officers of the Government strictly forbade the well-known custom in Hardwar of throwing corpse in the river and so we had to send our own band of workers to burn dead bodies whenever he had such to dispose of.

Amongst our cholera patients, the Secretary of the Hon'ble Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nandy of Cossimbazar was one. He was cured. The daughter of the late son of the Maharaja had the disease also. She was treated by worker Dr. Abinash Chandra Das of Brindaban and he had to accompany his patient and the Maharaja to their home in Bengal. His Highness the Maharaja himself kindly paid a visit to our Sevashram on the 11th April and remarked as follows: I visited this institution. It has given me great pleasure to find the workers of this institution are taking much care and interest for the indoor as well as outdoor patients. In a place like Hardwar it is a great help to the helpless patients. It is a true object of charity.

Mr. M. K. Gandhi, the famous patriot, was one of our distinguished visitors. His remarks are in Gujrati.

The Deputy Sanitary Commissioner in charge of the Kumbha Mela inspected our Sevashram work on the 27th of March. We have received intimation that our efforts to carry medical relief to pilgrims will receive recognition in the Govern-

ment Report in the official gazette. The Remarks of the Deputy Sanitary Commissioner are as follows :—

I visited this institution this morning. I found the place neat and clean. The wards were tidy and the food supplied to the patients of a good quality. The staff are doing much to relieve the sufferings of the sick and only with the object of serving the humanity. They have got a good stock of medicines. I found that the number of out patients attending the dispensary was about 150 a day which is bound to increase during the period of the fair. I may mention that my visit was an unexpected one. The compound was also found clean.

Sd. D. D. Pandya,

Dated } Deputy Sanitary Commissioner,
27/3/15. } IV Range, U. P.

REVIEWS

Stray Thoughts on The Literature and Religion of India. By Swami Saradananda (of whom a nice picture has been presented to the readers in the frontispiece). Published by the Ramkrishna Mission, Mylapore, Madras, and to be had also of the Manager, Prabuddha Bharata. Price Cloth Re. 1-4. Paper Re. 1. Pp. 230.

The title sufficiently indicates the scope of the book and the author's views will help the readers to get an adequate idea of the religious thought of India and to learn to take up our ancient and modern literary productions from the standpoint of a literary and philosophical man. The book consists of two parts: Excepting one all the papers of the first part which deal briefly with the ancient and modern literature of India, were written at the invitation of the Literary Section of the Summer School at Greenacre in the County of Main. The author was then representing Vedantism to the school, there, for the comparative study of Philosophy and Religion. The second part of this book contains his religious and philosophical writings. It is reprinted from the addresses given by the author

at different places in India and America and from his contributions in different periodicals.

We heartily recommend this book to the reading public in India and abroad where the author is well-known both as a teacher of religion and a literary man, and congratulate the Madras branch of the Ramkrishna Mission on this new success of their publishing enterprise.

Whence have I come? A short treatise on the origin of individual being, by Richard A. Bush. Published by the Garden City Press Ltd., Letchworth, Herts.

The problem which gives this book its title has been tackled herein from the standpoint of a modern spiritualist. What is called a spirit-body has been shewn to be a determining factor in the process of evolution and an attempt has been ably made to prove the origin of this spirit-body through the same parental procreation from which our physical body derives its seed. The argument seems quite natural to a modern spiritualist. It is natural to draw a parallelism between the processes of gross matter and those of subtle matter. None can deny that what modern spiritualism calls a spirit-body is material. It is as much a vehicle for the expression of human consciousness as this physical body we have here on earth,—may be, more perfect. A spirit-body is still a body and not spirit. We say "my body, your body or his body" as much with regard to that spirit-body as with regard to the gross body we have. So the question as to whence have I come cannot be properly resolved into that as to whence has my spirit-body come. The author of this book has to go still further in solving the question he has himself proposed. Even to say, as he has done, that God imparted something of Himself to the spirit-body at its birth or conception does not carry the solution much further than to say that God imparted something of Himself to our grosser body at its embryonic conception. The spirit-world of spiritualism is only a replica of this world in all essential respects, and the deeper problems which this world raises can never be fully solved by the spirit-world. We have to go beyond both the Sthula (gross) and the Sukshma (subtle) to find the real cause of things.

BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY SERVICE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

(As celebrated in San Francisco, California.)

A correspondent writes from the Hindu Temple, San Francisco:—

Following the custom observed in other years, the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, California, held a service in commemoration of the birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa at the Hindu Temple on Sunday the 21st of February, 1915.

On this occasion, the observance of the day became also memorial in character, the Swami Trigunatita, the long beloved and devoted teacher of the Society, having given up his body on the previous 10th of January. Throughout the service, the students' minds ever reverted to the familiar presence of the untiring, unselfish, patient teacher, and it was to this spirit of reverent remembrance of both master and disciple that this anniversary Sunday bore affecting witness.

Not many in numbers, but loyally earnest, the student members assembled in the auditorium for a continuous service of fifteen hours, from six o'clock in the morning until nine in the evening. The service consisted of chanting, music, and singing, reading and with three lectures given in the morning, afternoon, and evening, the subjects being respectively, "Sri Ramakrishna,—His Message to the West," "Sri Ramakrishna,—Divine Incarnation"; and "Sri Ramakrishna,—His Life."

The readings of the day were selected from the "Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna," "The Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna," and from the lectures of Swami Vivekananda. Surely better food for meditation and spiritual benefit could not have been provided. The life and teachings of the God-inspired Master introduces one intimately to ways of peace and blessedness, to a devotion so deep and unvarying that its reading and the hearing of it are themselves holy.

Pearls of divine wisdom in truth are the "Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna," in which all the beauty

of appropriate metaphor and parable serves to illustrate the essential unity of the personal soul and the Absolute.

Adding, then, to this richness of the spiritual feast, some of the lectures of Swami Vivekananda, the bountifulness of the day's offering was complete.

Thus with the urn containing the ashes of the beloved teacher the Swami Trigunatita which had been placed at the holy feet of his Master Sri Ramakrishna, (the picture, which hangs on the east wall of the auditorium and which was beautifully decorated with flowers and electric lights), with the meditation, chanting and devotional reading, did the anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna's birthday pass into cherished memory.

To the great Hindu saint and Divine Incarnation, and no less to those brothers of humanity who carried the sacred flame to waiting hearts in these Western lands, was this service of grateful worship offered by those to whom had been brought the message of universal tolerance and the Oneness of all things.

And more clearly and still more sweetly comes the prayer for love by Ramakrishna to His Divine Mother:—

"Mother here is ignorance, here is knowledge, Oh! take them; I want them not; grant that I may have pure Love alone. Here is cleanliness of the mind and the body; here is uncleanness; what shall I do with them? Let me have pure Love. Oh! here is sin, here is merit; I want neither the one nor the other. Let me have pure Love alone. Here is good, here is evil, Oh! take them! I want none of them! Let me have pure Love alone. Here are good works, here are bad works, Oh! place me above them. I want them not. Grant that I may have pure Love alone."

The Swami Trigunatita, who had just passed out of the body, sacrificed his life for us, and his holy spirit we felt so strongly to be with us all day,—Swami the great teacher, who had a method all his own, Swami who was so anxious for our spiritual welfare only, and who so often said, "I am only an assistant and a servant, and not a boss or tyrant, nor a self deluded person, but guided by God just as he guides me to serve his children, sacrificing

my own peace, comfort, reputation, pleasure and welfare."

He would say at times: I would rather enter into a cave, and practice further Yoga, which I positively know that I can do without any trouble. I have been sacrificing all that personal welfare just to serve like a slave his children, just as he wants me to do. I would not do my will, even if I have the power to do so. I will follow Him and His will, as far as I can understand; God knows it and you will know it when I am gone.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES.

As an outcome of the growing, silent but solid influence of the Sannyasins of the Ramkrishna Mission of Bangalore and Madras in this part of the west coast, the Yoga Mutt, a place originally dedicated to religious purposes, has been duly gifted over to the president of the Mission. His Holiness Swami Nirmalananda, the president of the Ramakrishna Mutt at Bangalore and Swami Visuddhananda reached this place on the 30th of March. The Yoga Mutt was thenceforth called the "Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Sinlaway." Early morning on the 31st, the Swamis and some of the most devoted Bhaktas of Sree Ramakrishna assembled in and about the worship room of the Ashrama. Swami Visuddhananda installed the pictures of Sree Ramakrishna and the Swami Vivekananda in a convenient part of the worship-room and conducted the worship in a right orthodox Hindu fashion. All the Bhaktas took part in the Puja, which was concluded with Arati and the distribution of Prasadam. At noon all the Bhaktas and other guests were treated to a sumptuous feast. In the evening there was a *Homa* performance conducted by Swamis. On the 2nd April there was a public celebration. Devotees from all parts of Malabar and from Travancore and Cochin had come to take part in the function. The programme of the morning was Pooja, Bhajana, and a procession with the pictures of Sree Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda mounted and carried on elephant.

At noon the poor and hungry Narayans were fed. In the evening there was a public meeting, presided over by the Swami Nirmalananda, which was very largely attended. Lectures on the Life and teachings of Sree Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and on the aims and objects and the world-wide activities of the R-k. Mission, were delivered in the vernacular language of the place by various well-known speakers. The Swamis in the course of their trip visited Calicut, Tellicherry, Ottappalam, Tirar, Pattanibi, the foremost towns in Malabar. The Swami Nirmalananda, though very weak after a recent attack of malarial fever, held talks and conversations with various people in these places, on the lives of Bhagavan Sree Ramakrishna and the Swami Vivekananda and on other religious and philosophical topics. The Swamis then returned to Bangalore on the 8th April. Swami Nirmalananda is hopeful about his work in this part of the west coast.

R-k. Mission Sevashram, Brindaban, reports that there having been in March last a large concourse of Vaishnavas, both Sadhus and laity, from all parts of India, at Brindaban, previous to their departure for the Kumbh Mela at Hardwar, a violent epidemic of Cholera and small-pox and other diseases broke out in the town. To meet this situation, a band of workers was sent every day from the Sevashram to pick up helpless cases and daily the Sevashram had about 200 outdoor patients and 35 indoor patients to treat. Of 18 indoor and 70 outdoor cholera cases, more than half the number got cured. Under the wonderful treatment and nursing of Brahmachari Harendra nath in charge of the Sevashram almost all the small-pox cases even which numbered many were cured. The Brahmachariji lent his services to the Ramkrishna Mission Sevashram at Kankhal during the Kumbha. This Sevashram is still appealing to the public most earnestly to help to place it beyond all the exasperating difficulties of accommodation by subscribing to its building fund. Even its general fund for the maintenance of the work suffers deplorably for lack of adequate co-operation from the public.