

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

Awakened India



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.

Vol. XX, No. 228, JULY, 1915.

CONTENTS:

Unpublished Notes of Class Talks by the Swami Vivekananda.—(<i>In Madras 1892-1893—XI</i> )	...	...	...	...	121
Occasional Notes	...	...	...	...	122
Religion as the Nation-builder.—I.	...	...	...	...	126
Epistles of Swami Vivekananda.—XLXI & XLXII	...	...	...	...	130
Lessons on Bhakti-Yoga, I., <i>Unpublished Class-notes by the Swami Vivekananda</i>	...	...	...	...	131
The Vairagya-Satakam or the Hundred Verses on Renunciation by Bhartrihari. (Translated into English)	...	...	...	...	133
From the Psalms of Tayumana Swami.—X., <i>by A. K.</i>	...	...	...	...	134
Some Letters of Swami Ramakrishnananda.—I.	...	...	...	...	135
On The Conning Tower	...	...	...	...	137
Famine in East Bengal and the Ramkrishna Mission	...	...	...	...	138
News and Miscellanies	...	...	...	...	140
The Mayavati Charitable Dispensary	...	...	...	...	ii
Important Notice to Subscribers	...	...	...	...	ii

Mayavati : Almora, (Himalayas).

London: E. HAMMOND, 30 PARK ROAD, WIMBLEDON, S. W.

New York: S. E. WALDO, 249 MONROE STREET, BROOKLYN.

Berlin: PROF. PAUL ZILLMANN, GROSS-LICHTEFELDE 3, RINGSTRASSE 17 a.

Kuala Lumpur: SECY. THE VIVEKANANDA READING HALL.

Indian annually :

Re. 1-8.

Single copy As. 3.

1915.

Foreign annually

4s. or \$ 1.

Single copy 4d. or 8 cents.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XX]

JULY 1915

[No. 228

UNPUBLISHED NOTES OF CLASS TALKS BY THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*In Madras, 1892—1893.—XI.*)

The feeling of want is the real prayer, not the words. But you must have patience to wait and see if your prayers are answered.

You should cultivate noble nature by doing your duty. By doing our duty we get rid of the idea of duty; and then and then only we feel everything as done by God. We are but machines in His hand. This body is opaque, God is the lamp. Whatever is going out of the body is God's. You don't feel it. You feel 'I.' This is delusion. You must learn calm submission to the will of God. 'Duty' is the best school for it. This duty is morality. Drill yourself to be thoroughly submissive. Get rid of the 'I.' No humbugism. Then you can get rid of the idea of duty; for all is His. Then you go on, naturally, forgiving, forgetting etc.

Our religion always presents different gradations of duty and religion to different people.

Light is everywhere visible only in the men of Holiness. A Mahapurusha is like crystal glass,—full rays of God passing and repassing through. Why not worship a Jivanmukta?

Contact with holy men is good. If you go near holy men you will find holiness overflow-

ing unconsciously in everything there.

Resist not evil done to yourself but you may resist evil done to others.

If you wish to become a Saint you should renounce all kinds of pleasures. Ordinarily, you may enjoy all, but pray to God for guidance and He will lead you on.

The universe fills only a small portion of the heart which craves for something beyond and above the world.

Selfishness is the devil incarnate in everyman. Every bit of self, bit by bit, is devil. Take off self by one side and God enters by the other. When the self is got rid of only God remains. Light and darkness cannot remain together.

Forgetting the little 'I' is a sign of healthy and pure mind. A healthy child forgets its body.

Sita!—to say that she was pure, is a blasphemy. She was purity itself embodied: the most beautiful character that ever lived on earth.

A Bhakta should be like Sita before Rama. He might be thrown into all kinds of difficulties. Sita did not mind her sufferings; she centred herself in Rama.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE first steps in the real practice of religion are difficult, and the difficulty appears differently to persons having different conceptions of religion. Some think religion to be centred round a personal God and its practice to consist in developing and intensifying devotion towards Him. Some take religion to be a systematic process by which the powers of the mind may be so fully developed that those mysteries which are so variously conceived of as the goal of religion would lie within easy reach. There are others who feel religion to be a diving of thought towards that mystic depth of experience where, reaching the very heart of all things, the highest truth, the deepest peace or the most absorbing gladness is realised. Still others there are who believe unselfish work in some favourite cause to be religion. These conceptions again are mostly found to exist in many people in various combinations and in diversified strength.

These fourfold tendencies of spiritual progress render it necessary to speak of the practice of religion as comprising the fourfold Yogas, the Bhaktiyoga, the Rajayoga, the Jnanayoga and the Karmayoga. But such divisions are decidedly good for purposes of study, and much less so for purposes of practice. In the concrete case of a man aspiring after religion, we may of course find a leading tendency for one of these fourfold paths, but that does not mean that he need not adopt, where possible, any method or expedient from the other Yogas as a feeder discipline, as it were, to the main line of practice. The concrete personality of a man is such a complex whole that in dealing with its spiritual needs, the theoretical help which books render can never suffice. The only adequate way is to bring the religious aspirant

into contact with another concrete personality in whom the wisdom of a spiritual teacher is combined with a true insight into human nature. The ancient custom of going to a Guru was based on this principle, and a good deal of the spiritual degeneration in modern times is due to the abuses which have made this ancient custom a sad failure.

It is this circumstance which has helped much in rendering the first steps in the practice of religion now-a-days so difficult. A Guru who fully appreciates the trend of spiritual forces in the age and is at the same time above all attachments to self-interest in any form is very rare indeed now-a-days, and this is the very root of the crying evil we find now in the form of a deplorable shallowness in our collective spiritual life. The movement which has taken its rise in the country from the wonderful life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa may not be generally accepted yet as a remedy calculated to remove the very root of this evil. Such recognition will come slowly according as our collective spiritual life gradually steers clear of the Scylla of narrow orthodoxy on the one hand and the Charybdis of blind, denationalising prepossessions of Western culture on the other. But for the sake of this bold steering it is necessary that religion in all its various forms should be practised more and more enthusiastically all over the country. For this preliminary spade-work in the reconstruction of our collective spiritual life, a work which has none the less to be done most vigorously, it is highly desirable that all of us should possess clear and correct notions as to how the very first steps in the practice of religion should be taken. Let us briefly discuss the question with this object in view.

Whatever be the spiritual temperament of a man to determine his peculiar relation with the fourfold paths of Yoga, the very first condition of his progress is earnestness. Religion is a very jealous task-master; if you do not make it the supreme pursuit in your life, it never yields you its real fruits. You may of course reap its benefits in some measure, if you take it merely as the source of strengthening and steadying your footsteps in other walks of life. But this is only at most a secondary function of religion. Here it remains merely as an unseen helper; here it does not reveal to you its intrinsic glories. For when a man stands face to face with religion and makes a sincere self-surrender to it, it is enabled only then to fulfil his birth-right of divinity. But when your face is really turned towards other pursuits of life and you simply call upon religion to render you its help from behind, you may enrich your life with achievements, but the most real potentialities of that life as realised in a life divine will remain untapped and neglected. So earnestness in the practice of religion implies sincere self-surrender to it; all other tasks and pursuits of individual life must come and own allegiance to it. None of them should not only run counter to the supreme interest of religion, but every one of them must have its scope, purpose and importance determined and regulated constantly by religion in the light of its own supreme purpose.

Otherwise there cannot be any systematic progress towards the higher realities of religion. No other pursuit in life demands such single-mindedness in the real sense of the term. If in a cabinet of various pursuits, as it were, you have a drawer for religion, and take it out daily at some fixed hour to sit *vis à vis* with it and then shelve it away for the rest of the day, religion is bound to remain a mystery to you throughout your life. From the very outset, you must have the earnestness to make religion the governing

factor in all your daily activities; as if you are living your life to religion from hour to hour and all other things have to subserve its supreme interest. This firm attitude of the mind, this living constantly with the grip of religion closing firmly on mind and soul, may not come to many at the very beginning. But sincere efforts towards it constitute the first step in the practice of religion, and so many disturbing influences in modern life rush in from all sides to break up this attitude of mind, that Sri Ramakrishna used to advise occasional retreats into solitude to strengthen the first efforts towards it. This habitual attitude of self-surrender to the practice of religion in the form in which one adopts it, this constant holding out of the mind for religion like the point of a compass, must have to be acquired if we want to stand on the threshold of religion. If this is once gained, then other obstacles on the way, internal and external, drop off almost as a matter of course.

But what renders it difficult to attain to this habitual flow of the mind-stream to practice of religion as the only *real interest* amidst all the various occupations of life, is not any want of desire for it, but a peculiar insubordination of the mind itself. This mind appears to be wonderfully pliant and submissive, when it wishes for that state in which all its impulses will be at the service of religious practice. How fondly then it contemplates on that possibility, with what sincere pleasure and hope! But alas, when it tries to make that self-surrender to the religious interest, other interests of life crowd in upon it and make it self-oblivious at once. This irresistible spirit of rebellion against itself has been developed in the mind by its previous habits of self-surrender to other than religious interests of life. The stored-up momentum of these habits make the mind, which is after all material, act in this way against its own wishes. Our own mind has thus become the greatest

obstacle against single-mindedness in the pursuit of religion. In fact, all throughout our practice of religion the real impediments always come out of our own mind. Our mind has brought us where we are and placed us within the labyrinth of Maya. This tendency of the mind to play itself more and more into the unsuspected perplexities of Avidya is a fundamental fact of our existence, and every man intent upon making religion the supreme, and the only governing, interest in his life should remember that his real path to spiritual progress lies through a growing conquest over this tendency.

Is there any provision in our mental constitution for conquering this innate mental tendency? This is the most central question in the practice of religion, for if there is no constitutional provision, then practice of religion becomes impossible for ordinary man. But if there really exists such a provision, then by all means we have first to cling to it, for otherwise no amount of mental exertion would avail us in resisting the fundamental tendency of our mind to play itself into the mazes of Avidya. Here Advaita philosophy comes in and boldly declares that our mind carries within itself a constitutional provision for transcending its constitutional necessity of being constantly victimised by Maya. It is this provision which constitutes the basis of every system of religious discipline, be it of Jnanayoga, of Bhaktiyoga, of Rajayoga or of Karmayoga. But in Jnanayoga only, this basis is presented to us in the boldest relief, while in the other paths it lies implied in the initial methods. In Bhaktiyoga, for example, a Bhakta seeks to divert the flow of his sentiment from worldly objects of enjoyment towards his God, and he is found to succeed. Here the very precondition of his success, that something in his sentimental nature which by extricating that nature gradually from Avidya proves itself to be stronger than the latter, remains generally unknown and unanalysed

by the Bhakta. Perhaps it serves his purpose best to call it the inscrutable mercy of his God.

In Rajayoga also, the whole process of eightfold stages makes a fundamental assumption. It lays down that if concentration be practised after the body and the mind have been brought to some preliminary state, then the mind will naturally become disentangled from outward objects (प्रत्याहार) and spontaneously catch on to the internal object of concentration. This assumption of and reliance on the characteristic spontaneity of the mind to be brought out by certain preliminary exercises constitute the backbone of the whole system of Rajayoga. But what is the cause of this spontaneity? What is the reason that the same mind which is so helplessly befooled with endless preoccupations by Avidya, if placed by certain processes in some particular attitude, spontaneously plunges away from all entanglements of the object-world and seeks to lose itself in higher realities? Then in Karmayoga, the worker who gradually succeeds in working without any attachment to the results, good or bad, whose activities like physical phenomena become mere reactions implying no reference to self-interest, finds out one day that his energies of thought and deed, when exerted, touch on the inner side of his nature a mysterious ground,—a realisation of his nature, one step higher, wherein all his activities are to find their consummation being resolved into a supreme unity of experience. Here also, the process assumes beforehand a fundamental spontaneity in human nature strong enough to defeat one day the treacherous tangle of Avidya.

This mysterious element in human nature by virtue of which man is able to throw off the yoke of Avidya requires to be fully brought out now-a-days in our study of the important question of religious practice. This

mysterious element has been spoken of above as a constitutional provision in our internal nature for conquering the opposite tendency of mind to subject itself to the play of Avidya, and the Advaita philosophy explains this element as the inviolability of the inmost truth of our being. Advaita declares that the real truth in us is Brahman, everything else is unreal, and the real however much obscured is always bound to prove stronger than the unreal. Somehow assert the real, and the unreal cannot but shrink away. The inviolability of our real nature is the highest law, and when this operates, all the laws of Avidya hide their diminished heads. When we boldly stand on this inviolability of our real nature, the crushing weight of countless *samskaras* (long-acquired tendencies) is for the moment lifted up from our shoulders. When once a man has learnt to tap this source of infinite strength, his spiritual progress is assured more than that of others, be he the most despicable sinner of them all. The miraculous conversion of sinners which we come across as anecdotes in the life of great saints and prophets implies nothing but the sudden opening up in them, in one form or other, of this source of inexhaustible strength.

The secret of sure success in the practice of religion is to make this bold stand on the inviolability of our real nature. Such a bold stand enables us to perpetually assert our 'superiority over the law of *samskara* which set in operation by the primeval power of Avidya cannot be expected, if left to itself completely, to lead us beyond that Avidya itself. Our philosophy maintains that Maya had both the aspects of Vidya and Avidya, that while Avidya entangles, Vidya extricates, and that at the last point of progression, these forces exhaust and nullify each other and our real transcendent nature shines forth. But in actual practice, we find by analysis that this Vidya force we feel in the form of an unceasing revolt against the workings of the

other force seeking to bind us down to unreality. This irreconcilableness of our real nature we have to deliberately assert by making the bold stand described above. That attitude of active faith on our real nature is the practical counterpart of the philosophical theory about the operation of Vidya. In practice we have not to remain idle witnesses of the operations of Vidya and Avidya or of the laws of *samskara*; we have to rise up and identify ourselves with Vidya, and the real secret of habitually doing this is to maintain always a strong attitude of active faith on our real nature.

So we conclude that along with an earnest self-surrender to religious practice as the governing purpose in all that we do or think, we must have always an *active* faith on our real nature. These two requisites make the first steps in the practice of religion in every form much easier to take. By putting the word "active" before faith, we mean to distinguish the latter from a sort of passive faith on our real nature which mere philosophy may produce in us. Passive faith does not avail us in moments of struggle, while active faith on our real nature,—the attitude of believing a truth with the eagerness at the same time to carry it out, to profit by it in practice,—is a great uplifting force. Thus faith on our real nature is said to be active, when it assures us, standing face to face with the dark side of our nature, full of evil tendencies, that 'that is not all, assert your better self'; when it cuts short the evil suggestions of our own mind appearing as the tempter and fills us with a sense of superior strength to resist; when moreover it raises us up on our legs instantly after a fall and dispels at once the inclination to whine and wail over such past misfortunes; when it keeps off despondency, that putrefying factor in religious life, and clears the ground about us of all the bacilli of weakness which despairing thoughts breed in plenty; and lastly, when it

holds up constantly before our mind the ultimate vanity of all worldly desires and attractions, and with a triumphant assurance of success, enables our mind in every case to make the last successful effort after a series of failures. If Advaita philosophy is best calculated to maintain this active faith within us, then that must be one reason at least why Sri Ramakrishna gave this general direction in his terse, epigrammatic way to all aspirants for religious practice : First take Advaita tied up

in your clothes and then safely proceed on as you choose. When Arjuna asked Sri Krishna as to how the mind can be made capable of concentration, the reply was : by **अभ्यास** (repeated application) and **वैराग्य** (non-attachment); but what constitute again the preconditions of these two, are, first, this active faith on our real nature, and second, the sincere adoption of religion as the supreme purpose to govern everything else in our life.

RELIGION AS THE NATION-BUILDER.

I.

MUCH have we seen in history how politics builds up a 'nation.' No historian however has yet traced or set forth how religion also can build up a nation.

It has become a deeply ingrained habit with us to think of a nation as the product of political growth, and to associate with the word 'nationalism' a groundwork of collective political aspiration and development. Nationalism with us is *essentially* a phenomenon in the political life of a people.

But all this is really absurd. Analyse the conception of a nation. First, it is a collective body, not a loose grouping of units, but a real organisation. Secondly, it is not an organisation of one or many interests or pursuits of the people who form the nation, but an organisation of their whole collective life. All the possible collective interests and pursuits of a people are brought under one comprehensive scheme, and when this scheme is set to work through the machinery of adequate ways and means, we get a living nation.

So three things go together to make a nation : 1st, the collective body of the people of a country ; 2nd, an organised scheme of collective life in which every interest and pursuit of that body become related to

every other and all of them to some supreme end ; and 3rd., a proper mechanism of human agency by which the above scheme is to be worked.

And the whole process may be briefly represented thus to our mind ; 1st, there rises a common end in the minds of the people, and round this common end they rally ; 2nd, they seek to make all other ends, pursued by them in common, subservient to the first end, and thus an organic system of ends presents itself ; 3rd, they develop a systematic arrangement for working this system of ends. Therefore the very backbone of an efficient national life is the organic system of collective ends.

Now if it can be proved to be an absolute necessity for every people in this world to adopt politics as being the only supreme end calculated to evolve and govern this system of collective ends in their life, then and then only can we maintain that there is a necessary correlation between politics and nationalism, and that it is politics alone that can build up a nation. But from what we have briefly stated above as the theory of nation-building, it is quite evident that the choice of that supreme end need not at all be confined to politics. The organic system of collective ends in the life of a nation may very well be

conceived of as revolving round religion as the supreme governing end.

So at least in theory, we find it quite possible for religion to build up a nation in the true sense of the term.

But the difficulty arises when we go to discuss as to what place the political end is allotted in that system of collective ends which religion evolves and governs. For if we surrender to religion the task of building up a nation, then it will mould and regulate according to its own purposes every other interest or end of our collective life. It will inevitably limit to the requirements of its own collective pursuit the sphere of every other interest or ambition of our collective life; just as politics in the case of political nations limits the sphere of other collective pursuits (such as for example that of altruism and religion) proportionately to the interest of its own efficiency and power. If it is necessarily implied in our adopting religion to be the nation-builder in India that all other collective pursuits will have their scope restricted proportionately to the interest of our collective spiritual pursuit, then apparently serious questions arise with regard to such national interests as those of politics, commerce and economics.

All the world over we find every country in modern times seeking to strengthen its political power, for modern history proves it to be the stepping-stone to prosperity in every direction. If one country is not strong enough in politics, it is quietly sat over by another, and it is all over with all the chances of its own economic and commercial prosperity, and even its intellectual, moral and religious life inevitably declines. So indubitable experience dictates that every modern nation in the world must have plenty of political power, at least to keep off slow death by starvation if not to realise its economic or commercial ambitions. Now what guarantee is there that religion when accepted as our nation-builder and when shaping all the other

pursuits of our collective life in the mould of its own interests will leave to politics scope and strength enough to resist the worst evils of a political subjection? Will or will not religion leave us politically emasculated?

Let us see what sort of assurance religion gives in reply to this question. We have seen that organised national life implies an organic system of collective ends. Now every organisation has its advantage as well as disadvantage; it cannot be an unmixed good. While this nationalisation of collective ends places collective life on a lasting, stable basis, strong to pursue and fulfil its mission in this world uniformly and unerringly, it is bound to transform each end of national life excepting the supreme one into a means to the latter. In ancient India, all the ends of human life used to be classified under the four *Vargas*: *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *moksha*. Now, for example, when collective life becomes nationalised, each of these generalised ends cannot severally claim the utmost freedom of collective pursuit, however much in individual life the same freedom might be exercised in scattered instances all over the country. Properly speaking, these generalised fourfold ends were never placed even before individual man as of equal value as objects of pursuit. So now in placing them before our collective life, we only act up to the real spirit of our ancient civilisation, when we organise them in such a way that religion moulds each of the others to its own supreme uses and purposes. So in upbuilding the Indian nation today, religion asks our collective life to make what is both a self-exalting and a self-denying ordinance. It is a self-exaltation, because by working out an organic system of its ends, our collective life rises to the glories of an organised nation; and it is at the same time a self-sacrifice, because by making religion the governing end in that organic system, our collective life restricts itself to such pursuit only of all the other ends as may not go beyond their subserviency to the supreme

end and thus upset the balance of the whole system.

So at the very outset, religion warns us that in the nation it would build up for us, the pursuit of wealth, or politics or commerce will not necessarily tend to attain to such gigantic proportions as the ambitions of a modern nation generally picture to it. The production and distribution of so much wealth in the country as would provide for national units that easy, plain living which best suits the purposes of pursuing the supreme collective end in their individual life, must of course remain the essential economic object of our national life. It is not difficult to work out in detail what this economic ideal implies. According to Western methods of administering the needs of a country, methods which are being applied today in India in many respects, the mainspring of the whole machinery of its economic life lies in the hands of politics. So present conditions demand that religion our nation-builder must provide for us a sphere of political interest and pursuit, from which we may seek to remove such hindrances to our national spiritual pursuit as are created out of any distress in our economic and political circumstances. From the fact that Providence has placed the British in supreme political authority in our country, we are not only deriving the requisite training in the modern art of nation-building while veering round by the constraint of circumstances to the proper choice of the supreme end in that task, but the occasion also arises for constant endeavour in the sphere of politics to safeguard the interests of our collective spiritual pursuits. This political aspect of the national life which religion offers to build up for us will evidently have its fulfilment under present circumstances, if the political government properly participates with our chosen representatives deputed for the purpose in the work of relieving such distress in our economic and political condition as hamper the realisation of our collective spir-

itual end. A political demand for such participation is modest enough for full recognition and acceptance by the British government.

So if we surrender today to religion the task of nation-building, our political leaders will not have to go back upon what progress they think they have made in making the popular voice heard in the councils of the Empire. But the whole standpoint they now maintain in the work will have to be changed. For then they will have to represent not the political aspirations of the Indian people, but simply the actual political needs of our collective spiritual pursuit. The vision of a nobler national glory will hush into silence all those clamorous watchwords, they have accepted, of political ambition, such as Colonial Self-government, Autonomy within the Empire etc. But they are bound to be recognised in the political field as the real representatives of their country, its life-history, its mission in the world, and its high destiny.

But still the question would be asked as to what becomes of the necessary evils of political subjection, evils which J. S. Mill described as human cattle-farming? Every evil in this world is a relative reality. What is evil to you may not really be quite an evil to another. There is something in you which makes some circumstance an evil to you, while somebody else may be free from that something and therefore may have quite another bearing towards that same circumstance. Political subjection is really a death-blow to the nation which politics builds up, for in its case political subjection destroys the very organising principle of its nationality. When the whole sphere of its political life is usurped by another nation, then the very life-principle is wrenched apart from the national body and the nation becomes disorganised and ceases soon to exist as a separate entity.

But why would the same evil of political subjection be a death-blow to another nation which religion has built up? Does not history

show that this same evil fell flat more or less on the collective life of the ancient Hindus? And the reason is not far to seek. Collective life in India had never trusted itself to the keeping or leading of politics, and whenever it had been tempted into such trust, it had to extricate itself through a big cataclysm like that of Kurukshetra. But since that momentous lesson was taught, it never turned its face trustingly towards politics, though political rulers appreciating the spirit of that collective life have vied with one another in serving its needs and adorning the spheres and haunts where it moved. This collective life we have to reconstruct today with more mature and deliberate methods and with a fuller self-consciousness glorifying every step in thought and activity. Why should we get disheartened at the thought of political subjection? The truth is that there can be no subjection for man unless he subjects himself. Man first allows his political desires to make of him a political man, and then he becomes a prey to political fear and political hope, rendering himself subject to political evil and good. Political aspirations never formed any determining factor in the evolution of collective life in India. There have been great achievements of political bravery in the past, but what dictated the underlying impulses in such cases has always been religion. Besides these, individual political ambitions have developed over the spiritual main-current of our life-stream big and small waves of political glory,—kingdoms, wars, revolutions, conquests etc.—but like waves they have disappeared simply to add to the flux of the main-current of our collective life. So unless today by our own newly evolved fretful political cravings we compel our minds to brood over thoughts of political subjection, this term should never be used to describe our case. Political conquest of our land should mean the alien occupation of just an insignificant fraction of the whole ground of our collective life. And if it now appears to mean

much more than that, we have only ourselves to blame in that we have withdrawn ourselves wilfully from the real scheme of our collective life into a new scheme in which that life has to be lived from the foundation of politics. This perverted view of life is really responsible for all the humiliation to which our life seems to be exposed today in most of its spheres of activity. We feel ourselves to be 'emasculated' because we neglect the *national* resources for developing our manhood, and fondly expect to have them developed in spheres of life which politics governs.

Otherwise, analyse the actual evils we complain against so persistently today, and it will be found that they are mostly the necessary outcome of our own disorganisation not in the political sense, but in the sense in which our own type of collective life has always to be organised. *Some* type of organisation of life is the universal demand of the modern age. No people on earth today can be in a position to solve the problems of sanitation, of food, of education unless they are organised on a national scale. Have we organised our rural life properly to fight insanitation? No. Have we organised our national ideals properly to fight illiteracy? No. Have we organised our agricultural producers to control to any extent the sale of their productions? No. We have not commenced yet the very fundamental work of organisation, and when we feel like commencing it, we make a fuss on the political field where naturally we create suspicions in the minds of the political rulers and upset the whole beginning. Are these political rulers to blame? Is it a necessity for you to run counter to their interests whenever you seek to do good to your own country? If you think that Providence has brought you to such a pass, you are miserably self-deluded.

Our country's good lies elsewhere than through a course of political aspirations and activities. We have to rally round the Spiritual Ideal which India stands for and begin

the work of organisation therefrom. India lives for the preservation, practice and preaching of the Spiritual Ideal which synthesises and focusses the whole world-culture in religion. This Spiritual Ideal is our collective religion in India, and to this religion we should have to *fully* surrender the fundamental task of nation-building. When religion builds up the nation, it will assure to us freedom in all respects essential to its own scheme of collective life, actually demonstrating how throughout our line of progress, we may not have cause to resent or smart under our political connection with the British Empire. This connection was brought about for the good of our spiritual collective life and however much it may seem to have given rise to difficulties at present, these difficulties are easy of solution if we veer round to our own scheme of collective life and our political rulers to the nobler traditions of their history.

So we understand now the precise nature of the offer which religion makes to us for building up an Indian nation. In another article we shall try to see how religion as the nation-builder will proceed in its task.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

XLXI.

39 Victoria Street,
9th Dec. '96.

Dear Mrs. B.—

It is needless to express my gratitude at your most generous offer.

I don't want to encumber myself with large amount of money at the first start, but as things progress on I will be very glad to find employment for that sum.

My idea is to start on a very small scale. I do not know anything yet. I will know my bearings when on the spot in India. From India I will write to you more details

about my plans and the practical way to realise them.

I start on the 16th and after a few days in Italy take the steamer at Naples.

Kindly convey my love to Mrs V. and Saradanada and to the rest of my friends there. As for you I have always regarded you as the best friend I have and it will be the same all my life.

With love and blessings,

Vivekananda.

XLXII.

Saturday,
Ramnad, 30th June '97.

My dear M—

Things are turning out most curiously for me. From Colombo in Ceylon, where I landed, to Ramnad, the nearly southern-most point of the Indian continent where I am just now as the guest of the Rajah of Ramnad, my journey has been a huge procession—crowds of people, illuminations, addresses etc. etc. A monument 40 ft. high is being built on the spot where I landed. The Rajah of Ramnad has presented his address to “**His most Holiness**” in a huge casket of solid gold beautifully worked. Madras and Calcutta are on the tiptoe of expectation as if the whole nation is rising to honour me. So you see M— I am on the very height of my destiny, yet the mind turns to quietness and peace, to the days we had in Chicago, of rest, of peace and love and that is why I write just now, and may this find you all in health and peace. I wrote a letter to my people from London to receive Dr. B. kindly. They accorded him a big reception but it was not my fault that he could not make any impression there. The Calcutta people are a hard-headed lot. Now B. thinks a world of me, I hear. Such is the world.

With all love to mother, father and you all,

I remain

Yours affly.

Vivekananda.

LESSONS ON BHAKTI-YOGA.

[*Unpublished Class-notes given by the Swami Vivekananda.*]

I.

THE YOGA THROUGH DEVOTION.

We have been considering Rajayoga and the physical exercises, now we will consider Yoga through devotion. But we must remember that our system is that there is no system *necessary*. We want to set before you many systems, many ideals in order that you may find one that will suit you; if one does not, perhaps another may.

We want to become harmonious beings: the psychical, spiritual, intellectual, and working (active) side of our nature equally developed. Nations and individuals typify one of these sides or types and cannot understand more than that one. They get so built up into one ideal that they cannot see any other. The ideal is really that we should become many-sided. Indeed the cause of the misery of the world is that we are so one-sided that we cannot sympathise with each other. Consider a man looking at the sun from beneath the earth, up the shaft of a mine; he sees one aspect of the sun. Then another man sees the sun from the earth's level, another through mist and fog, another from the mountain top. To each the sun has a different appearance. So there are many appearances, but in reality there is only one sun. There is diversity of vision, but one object, and that is the sun.

Each man, according to his nature, has a peculiar tendency and takes to certain ideals and a certain path by which to reach them. But the goal is always the same to all. The Roman Catholic is deep and spiritual, but he has lost breadth. The Unitarian is wide, but he has lost spirituality and considers religion as of divided importance. What we want is the depth of the Roman Catholic and the breadth of the Unitarian. We must be as broad as the skies, as deep as the ocean; we must have the zeal of the fanatic, the depth of the mystic, and the width of the agnostic. The word "Toleration" has acquired an unpleasant association with the conceited man who thinking himself in a high position looks down on his fellow-

creatures with pity. This is a horrible state of mind. We are all travelling the same way, towards the same goal, but by different paths made by the necessities of the case to suit diverse minds. We must become many-sided, indeed we must become Protean in character, so as not to tolerate but to do what is much more difficult, to sympathise; to enter into the other's path, and feel *with him* in his aspirations and seeking after God. There are two elements in every Religion,—a positive and a negative. In Christianity, for instance, when you speak of the Incarnation, of the Trinity, of Salvation through Jesus Christ, I (the Yogi) am with you. I say "Very good, that I also hold true." But when you go on to say, "there is no other true religion, there is no other revelation of God," then I say, "Stop, I cannot go with you when you shut out, when you deny." Every religion has a message to deliver, something to teach man, but when it begins to protest, when it tries to disturb others, then it takes up a negative and therefore a dangerous position, and does not know where to begin or where to end.

Every Force completes a circuit. The Force we call Man starts from the Infinite God and must return to Him. This return to God must be accomplished in one of two ways,—either by slowly drifting back, going with Nature, or by our own inward power, which causes us to stop on our course, which would if left alone carry us in a circuit back to God, and violently turn round and find God, as it were by a short cut. This is what the Yogi does.

I have said that every man must choose his own ideal which is in accord with his nature. This ideal is called a man's *Ishtam*. You must keep it sacred (and therefore secret) and when you worship God, worship according to your *Ishtam*. How are we to find out the particular method? It is very difficult, but as you persevere in your worship it will come of itself. Three things are the special gifts of God to Man: (1) The human body; (2) the desire to be free; (3) the power to get help from one who is already free. Now we cannot have devotion without a personal God. There must be the lover and the beloved. God is an infinitised Human Being. It is bound to be so, for so long as we are human we must have a humanised God; we are forced to see a personal God and Him only.

Consider how all that we see in this world is not the object pure and simple, but the object *plus* our own mind. The chair plus the chair's reaction on your mind is the real chair. You must colour everything with your mind and then alone you can see it. (Example: the white square shiny hard box, seen by the man with three senses, then by the man with four senses, then by him with five senses. The last alone sees it with all the enumerated qualities, and each one before has seen an additional one to the previous man. Now suppose a man with six senses sees the same box, he would see still another quality added).

Because I see Love and Knowledge, I know the universal Cause is manifesting that Love and Knowledge. How can that be loveless which causes Love in me? We can't think of Universal Cause without human qualities. To see God as separate from ourselves in the universe is necessary as a first step. There are three visions of God:

1st. The lowest vision, when God seems to have a body like ourselves (see Byzantine art).

2nd. A higher vision, when we invest God with human qualities, and then on and on till, we come to the,

3rd. The highest vision, when we see God.

But remember that *in all* these steps we are seeing God and God alone; there is no illusion in it, no mistake. Just as when we saw the sun from different points it was still the *sun* and not the moon or anything else.

We cannot help seeing God as we are,—infinite, but still as we are. Suppose we tried to conceive God as the Absolute, we should have again to come back to the relative state in order to enjoy and love.

The devotion to God as seen in every religion is in every religion divided into two parts. The devotion which works through forms and ceremonies and through words, and that which works through Love. In this world we are bound by laws and we are always striving to break through these laws; we are always trying to disobey, to trample on Nature. For instance, Nature gives us no houses, we build them. Nature made us naked, we clothe ourselves. Man's goal is to be free and just in so far as we are incompetent to break Nature's laws shall we suffer. We only obey Nature's laws in order to be *outlawed*,—beyond

Law. The whole struggle of life is *not* to obey. (That is why I sympathise with "Christian Scientists" for they teach the liberty of man and the divinity of Soul). The Soul is superior to all environment. "The Universe is my Father's Kingdom; I am the Heir-Apparent"; that is the attitude for Man to take. "My own soul can subdue all."

We must work through Law before we come to Liberty. External helps and methods, forms, ceremonies, creeds, doctrines, all have their right place and are meant to support and strengthen us *until* we *become strong*. Then they are no more necessary. They are our nurse and as such indispensable in youth. Even books are nurses, medicines are nurses. But we must work to bring about the time when man shall recognise his mastery over his own body. Herbs and medicines have power over us as long as we allow them; when we become strong these external methods are no more necessary.

THE DEVOTION THAT WORKS THROUGH WORDS.

Body is only mind in a grosser form, mind being composed of finer layers and the body being the denser layers, and when man has perfect control over his mind he will also have control over his body. Just as each mind has its own peculiar body, so to each word belongs a particular thought. We talk in double consonants when we are angry:—"stupid fool," "idiot" &c.; in soft vowels, when we are sad,—*"Ah! me."* These are momentary feelings, of course, but there are eternal feelings, such as love, peace, calmness, joy, holiness, and these feelings have their word-expression in all religions; the word being only the embodiment of these, man's highest feelings. Now the thought has produced the word, and in their turn these words may produce the thoughts or feelings. This is where the help of words comes in. Each of *such* words covers one ideal. These sacred, mysterious words we all recognise and know, and yet if we merely read them in books they have no effect on us. To be effective they must be charged with Spirit, touched and used by one who has himself been touched by the Spirit of God and who now *lives*. It is only he who can set the current in motion. The "laying on of hands" is the continuation of that current which was set in motion by Christ. The one who has the power of transmit-

ting this current is called a "Guru." With great Teachers the use of words is not necessary—as with Jesus. But the "smaller fry" transmit this current through words.

Do not look on the faults of others. You cannot judge a man by his faults. (Example: Suppose we were to judge of an apple tree by the rotten, unripe, unformed apples we find on the ground. Even so do the faults of a man not show what the man's character is). Remember, the wicked are always the same all over the world. The thief and the murderer are the same in Asia and Europe and America. They form a nation to themselves. It is only in the good and the pure and the strong that you find variety. Do not recognise wickedness in others. Wickedness is ignorance, weakness. What is the good of telling people, they are weak? Criticism and destruction are of no avail. We must give them something higher; tell them of their own glorious nature, their birthright. Why do not more people come to God? The reason is that so few people have any enjoyments outside their five senses. The majority *cannot* see with their eyes nor hear with their ears in the inner world.

THE VAIRAGYA-SATAKAM

OR THE HUNDRED VERSES ON RENUNCIATION BY BHAKTRIHARI.

(Continued from page 115).

वैराग्यशतकम् ।

वयं येभ्यो जाताश्चिरपरिचिता एव खलु ते
समं ये संवृद्धाः स्मृतिविषयतां तेषु गमिताः ।
इदानीमेते स्मः प्रतिदिवसमासन्नपतना
गतास्तुल्यावस्थां सिकतिलनदीतीरतरुभिः ॥४८

48. Those from whom we were born, well, they are now on intimate footing with Eternity (i. e. hereafter); those with whom we were brought up have also become objects of memory. Now (that we have become old) we are approaching nearer to our fall day by

day, our condition being comparable to that of trees on the sandy bank of a river.

आयुर्वर्षशतं नृणां परिमितं रात्रौ तदर्धं गतं
तस्यार्धस्य परस्य चार्धमपरं बालत्ववृद्धत्वयोः ।
शेषं व्याधिवियोगदुःखसहितं सेवादिभिर्नीयते
जीवे वारितरङ्गचञ्चलतरे सौख्यं कुतः

प्राणिनाम् ॥४९॥

49. The life of man (as ordained) is limited to one hundred years; half of it is spent in night, and out of the other half one half again is passed in childhood and old age; and the rest which has its illnesses, bereavements and troubles is spent in serving (others). What happiness can there be for mortals in a life (again) which is even more uncertain than the ripples (on the surface) of water.

क्षणां बालो भूत्वा क्षणमपि युवा कामरसिकः
क्षणं वित्तैर्हीनः क्षणमपि च संपूर्णविभवः ।
जरार्जिणैरङ्गैर्नट इव बलीमण्डिततनु-
र्नरः संसारान्ते विशति यमधानीयवनिकाम् ॥५०

50. Now a child for a while and then a youth of erotic ways, a destitute now for a while and then in abundance, just like an actor thus, man makes at the end of his role—when diseased in all limbs by age and wrinkled all over the body,—his exit behind the scene that veils the abode of Yama (death).

त्वं राजा वयमप्युपासितगुरुप्रज्ञाभिमानोन्नताः
ख्यातस्त्वं विभवैर्यशांसि कवयो दिक्षु प्रतन्वन्ति नः ।
इत्थं मानधनातिदूरमुभयोरप्यावयोरन्तरं
यद्यस्मासु पराङ्मुखोऽसि वयमप्येकान्ततो
निःस्पृहाः ॥५१॥

51. Thou art a king, we too are elevated through self-assurance about our wisdom acquired from our preceptor whom we served. Thou art celebrated through thy possessions, our fame is spread abroad in all quarters by the learned men. Thus a great difference

there is between both of us, made by honour and riches. If thou art cold towards us, we too are perfectly indifferent towards you.

[This Sloka is addressed by a *Yati*, (one who has renounced the world) to a king. The *Yati* wants to inform the king of the vanity of his possessions, and so is declaring that a *Yati* is greater than the king. For, the king is rich in wealth only but he is rich in wisdom which should command even the respect of a king.]

(To be continued).

FROM THE PSALMS OF TAYUMANA
SWAMI.—X.

O ! BLISS SUPREME.

I.

The Love that killeth nought, how well it mends
All crookedness ! In me devoid of Love
What ugly features dwell ! What partial love !
What cruel passions ! What gross ignorance !
What self-conceit ! What craftiness of mind !
What lack of apprehension of the right !
And how averse to Freedom's path of love !
But yet how drawn towards the vulgar life !
With what endeavour ! how absorbed therein !
How fond of this phantasmal fleeting frame !
How full of vice hast thou thus made me too !
Am I Thy slave and slave to these as well ?
O Bliss Supreme that fills, embracing all,
The globes near us and systems far away !

II.

Reason Thou art and blind delusion too !
Thou art the whirling mind, the souls as well,
That linked to mind, evolve, and yet besides
The All-embracing Light of Love Supreme !
Diverse yet constant, Thou hast still become
The manifold of sense, the organs five,
The senses five and yet the el'ments five !
Without and yet within, remote yet near,
Thou dost still come and go ! Thou art withal
Darkness and light and good and evil too !
Thou art the present, Thou the time to be,
Eternity art Thou ! Thou art the One,

Thou art the many and all and yet beyond !
They only know on whom Thy Grace descends !
O ! How can any else know Thee with ease !
O Bliss Supreme that fills embracing all
The globes near us and systems far away !

III.

Men know their perverse wrangles how to spin
Or seeking else to have their stomach's fill,
Their rolling minds confounding Heav'n and earth,
They live in frenzy still ! They likewise know
Their changing masks to don, or mumbling still
They can conceal their hearts or else like us
They can parade their love as in a fair :
Or breathing hard like angry tigers too
They can control their breath with crimson eyes ;
Or yet they blab and hold their faiths supreme
Though steeped in cruel ways ! O ! Who can know
Thy varied sports in all the diverse faiths !
O Bliss Supreme that fills embracing all
The globes near us and systems far away !

IV.

The sages wise appeased their hunger dire
With water, fallen fruits, dry leaves and green :
In gloomy mountain caves they sat so long
With closed eyes, unmoved like blocks of stone :
They lived by fire and bathed in sacred streams,
And in the sun, their bony frames exposed,
Their tangled locks pecked at by swallows too :
They held their breath, subdued their minds in peace
Drove up the Fire* to reach the Lunar realm
And drank the Nectar there amidst the woods :
And thus indeed they longed and sought Thy Grace,
The end and aim of all the Sacred Lore.
Is 't right for me to seek this earthly life ?
O Bliss Supreme that fills embracing all
The globes near us and systems far away !

V.

The pure, th' impure, the diverse joys and woes,
The relative, the absolute as well,
The gross, the fine, dispassion, passion too,
The Veda and the end of Vedic lore,
Bondage, release, unreal and real,
Diversity and unity as well,
The great, the small, the rare, the easy too,
The male and female sex in creatures all,
The Eternal and the transient life, the stain

* i. e. of *Kundalini*.

And stainlessness, and formlessness and form,
The right, the wrong, the source, the sourceless too,
The sensuous, the supersensuous,—
No whit of these, without Thee, does subsist.
Can we then live, however, but for Thee !
O Bliss Supreme that fills embracing all
The globes near us and systems far away !

IV.

Clearing the woods of ignorance so dense,
Breaking the rock of self, preparing well
The open field of mind and sowing too
The seeds of Peace unknown in Heav'n and earth,
They watered it with Love and till it grew
They guarded it from rav'nous Maya's reach ;
Thus did the Lovers Thine enjoy the crop
Of Blessed Life, and ever upon thy Grace
The burden rests to show Thyself to me
And make me Thine and fill my heart's desire.
O Thou Transcendent Form that is revealed
In Space Supreme that passes all our wit !
O Bliss Supreme that fills embracing all
The globes near us and systems far away !

VII.

Thou art the el'ments, Thou the million orbs,
Thou art the mountains, Thou the girding seas,
Thou art the moon, Thou art the sun and all,
Thou the swelling flood of Grace Divine,
And I Thou art as well ! Thus hast Thou taught :
But with the sense of ' I ' not yet extinct
And blabbing still ' I ' ' I ' in myriad moods
I'm steeped in ignorance with all my love !
How hard to escape Karma's force unseen !
O ! Who can bid pretending Sleep awake
That folds its eyes ere yet the day departs !
What more hast Thou to teach ! Alas ! Alas !
To whom shall I complain if not to Thee !
O Bliss Supreme that fills embracing all
The globes and near us systems far away !

VIII.

Liar am I, a murderous rake am I,
Although enlightened by Thy Grace revealed,—
A sordid fool,—I have yet missed the Life !
A sinner, I, that empty phantoms seek !
Wrathful and mad and shallow too am I !
Shouldst Thou think fit to leave me to my fate,
Then shall I have to fall and flounder too.
O ! Say where else may I then seek refuge !
O Holy One ! O Truth ! O Life of life !

O Friend ! O Thou Supreme without a peer !
Transcendent One beyond the highest Grades,
O Lord ! O Sire ! The Crown of Vedic Lore !
O Grace that never forsakes the souls of Saints !
O Bliss Supreme that fills embracing all
The globes near us and systems far away !

IX.

Howe'er I learn, whate'er discourse I hear,
My mind is not subdued, and not a whit
The sense of ' I ' has waned, and in my heart
A myriad longings hide ! Ne'er have I known
Bounty and charity in all my life !
Of righteousness and stern austerities
Never have I yet dreamt ; no word of truth
Do I ever speak, but lies and lies indeed !
Though wise to teach, I'm yet a simple fool,
Devoid of Love and Peace ! Is there on earth
E'er seen or heard, such crooked mind as mine ?
O Bliss Supreme that fills embracing all
The globes near us and systems far away !

X.

' Thou hast ne'er more to strive for selfish ends,'
Thus didst Thou teach as Sage of Silence mine
And took my body, soul and all for Thine !
And from that hour this seeming time and space,
The thirst for transient things, the clinging faith
In fleeting flesh, the forging of false ties,
All vanish off ! The sense of ' I ' as well
The falsest lie of lies doth pass away !
No dark'ning cloud of ignorance e'er more !
No more shall good and evil too ensnare !
No more is mind nor yet the brood of mind,
No more is birth nor death nor then nor now,
For all are merged in Thy Transcendent Being !
O Bliss Supreme that fills embracing all
The globes near us and systems far away !

—A. K.

SOME LETTERS OF SWAMI
RAMAKRISHNANANDA.

(1)

Mylapore,
17-5-09.

My dear Mr. Rai,

I received your letter of the 16th ultimo duly, but several other engagements prevented me from replying to you earlier.

1. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna says, "God is like water. As water has no definite form, and assumes the form of the vessel in which it is kept, so God has no definite form, He assumes all sorts of forms for the sake of His devotees. You are a man, therefore you love a human form. But God is the God of all living beings and therefore you should not confine Him to human forms only. If your father dresses himself as a foreigner he does not lose your estimation and reverence on that account. Hence whatever be the form of God, because he is *your* God, you should love Him always in all forms. But some particular form may be liked by some one. That particular form goes by the name of इष्टसुक्ति, and as such a Vaishnava loves the Krishna form, a Sákta loves the Sakti form etc. Whatever form you like most, please worship Him in that form. But have always Bhakti for all His Forms. Just as a daughter-in-law in a Hindu family reveres all the members of the family, but only shares her bed with her husband, so you should have reverence for all the various Manifestations of the Deity, but your इष्टसुक्ति should be the only Lord of your life. It is very good that you have great reverence and love for Sri Ramakrishna. By worshipping Him you do not cease to worship Sakti for He Himself is the most beloved child of Sakti.

2. God's forms are not allegorical. They are real. In Nirvikalpa Samadhi, there is neither the creation nor the creator. So let us keep that aside. The salt doll has lost itself in the ocean, who is to worship! But so long as there is individuality, there must be the personal God. God the creator is always personal; and each manifestation of Him is as real as Himself. Worship is possible only in reference to the personal God. I advise you to take up this course. In Nirvikalpa Samadhi there is no worship.

3. Most of His (Sri Ramakrishna's) direct disciples have seen Him after His disappearance from mortal view. If you have a real longing to see Him, He is sure to satisfy you.

4. There is no tree without a root, there is no external without an internal world. Both are inseparably connected. The Personal God is realised just as you see your friends &c. in the wakeful condition. Senses are not overpowered but become wide awake.

5. You should worship both outside and inside yourself as He is everywhere. He is as much in the Image, as inside yourself. So worship Him everywhere, always regarding yourself as a servant or son of Him, and thus distinct from Him. Unification only comes in the Nirvikalpa Samadhi where there is no worship, as I have already told you.

6. A whole-souled devotion is the only means to realise Him. This is the general, as well as, special teaching. In your case, have a whole-souled devotion for Sri Ramakrishna.

7. Read Sri Swami Vivekanandaji's Bhakti Yoga, Inspired Talks, Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna, and the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna by M., one of His disciples, &c.

8. A born dramatist can really appreciate and love Shakespeare. A born poet can really appreciate and love Milton. A Scotch Professor of Mathematics after reading Milton's Paradise Lost exclaimed with disgust, "After all, what does it prove?" So, if you want to love God really you must have to be a God yourself, देवो भूत्वा देवं यजेत् i. e. you must have to be a God in order to worship God. The idea of your being sinful should be absolutely thrown overboard. "It is a sin to call a man a sinner." Thus Sri Ramakrishna has reconciled Dvaita and Advaita. If you understand this, Swami Vivekananda will not appear to you to be contradictory.

9. That Dualism which is based upon weakness is absolutely false and harmful. नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः, i. e. God can never be realised by the weak, says the Sruti. If I am God's child I must belong to His cast, and if He is perfectly pure, I am also perfectly pure. There is no difference between शुद्धज्ञान and शुद्धा भक्ति, says Sri Ramakrishna; you are perfectly right when you say, "If we surrender ourselves at the feet of the Ideal and forget all *me* and *mine* it will be the same as Advaita"; and so, where is the difference between them? Superficial thinkers only find difference.

10. The Dualist says "I belong to Brahman," and the Monist says "I am one with Brahman." There is not much difference in these two sayings, for he who belongs to Brahman is one with Him as well. The Dualist will derive as much benefit from

reading Sri Sankara's commentary on the Vedanta Sutras as any Monist. This is my experience. Sri Sankara has brought God nearer home than any other commentator. You are right, "He comes when the lower self is crushed." This crushing of the lower self is the aim of both the parties.

11. By worshipping Sri Ramakrishna you do not cease to be a Sâkta, as Sri Ramakrishna is the manifested form of that Sakti who is your Kula Devatâ. Sakti, who is Infinite and hence Inaccessible, in order to be accessible to all has assumed the benign form of Sri Ramakrishna in this age. When she assumed the form of Sri Krishna in the beginning of this Yuga she gave Her reasons for Her repeated Incarnations through Him: यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवेति etc.

So work and live for Sri Ramakrishna, and worship Him with your whole soul, and thus attain salvation even in this life.

With my best love and blessings,

I am yours truly,

Ramakrishnananda.

ON THE CONNING TOWER.

WORLD-WIDE interest was rivetted for some time on the probable developments of the Lusitania affair. It had been a fact admitted by all that the U. S., America, held the peculiar position of a probable peace-maker in some favourable stage of the war. So speculation was rife as to whether that position would be jeopardised or not by the exasperation caused by the sinking of the Lusitania. President Wilson's attitude became the object of world-wide scrutiny, and some index to it was furnished by the remarkable speech he delivered at Philadelphia on the occasion of conferring citizenship on some alien candidates, on whom he wanted to impress how they had just then taken "an oath of allegiance to a great ideal, to a great body of principles, to a great hope of the human race." "My urgent advice to you would be," he said, "not only always to think first of America, but always also to think first of humanity. You don't love humanity

if you seek to divide humanity into jealous camps. Humanity can be welded together only by love, by sympathy, and by justice, not by jealousy and hatred. I am sorry for the man who seeks to make personal capital out of the passions of his fellowmen. He has lost touch with the ideal of America, for America was created to unite mankind by those passions which lift, and not by passions which separate and debase." After explaining in this strain how America constitutes herself "the hope of the human race," he went on to make that memorable statement which created a great stir all over the world of Western jingoism: There is such a thing as a man becoming too proud to fight. There is such a thing as a nation being so right that it does not need to convince others by force that it is right.

So if the sentiments of the noble President be allowed to represent and determine the policy and temper of the whole American nation, we are confident that it will neither stoop to fish for selfish gain in troubled waters like Japan or Italy, nor play the jingo by declaring war on Germany to convince her of the righteousness of its note on the Lusitania affair. But facts seemed for a while to drift the other way, and even news of an ultimatum to Germany was flashed all round the world. Wish is father to the thought, and there exist strong combinations, specially in the camps of American journalism, to develop bellicose tendencies in the nation; perhaps they thought they had scored and were on the tiptoe of fond expectations. Now in fact it is difficult to guess as to which path conflicting influences will ultimately speed America on. But counting upon President Wilson's consistency in views, it seems that the strong attitude he maintains in the American note, an attitude verging close on armed protest is due not really to any fighting motive born of righteous wrath but to an anxiety to maintain America's position as a probable peace-maker. That position depends absolutely on the belligerents recognising in her some amount of power to dictate and arbitrate when peace terms would be discussed. This recognition is the basis on which rests the possibility of America coming to the help of the warring nations and President Wilson most probably seeks

to keep this basis unaffected by anything in his conduct that may appear as confession of national feebleness in the military sense. Mr. Bryan on the other hand probably thinks that the course of the war has made circumstances so keen that even this solicitude on the part of the President may necessarily embroil America in the general affray. The President is loth to lose the scope of ultimate American usefulness as a peace-maker, while his Secretary has already grown sceptic about that scope. Both stand firm for the idea of peace and its triumph, but they differ as to the method to be employed under present circumstances. This is our reading of the events which are exercising just now the minds of onlookers all over the world.

This American topic has some interest and significance for those in India who are working at the problem of her spiritual nationalism. No country which enters as a nation into the arena of political competition and joins the race for political power can avoid the inevitable penalty of becoming a potential peace-breaker in this world. In an article in September last the Prabuddha Bharata sought to prove how political nationalism is incompatible with peace. A nation organised on the political basis is placed by exigencies of modern politics under the unavoidable necessity of making its political power *felt* among other nations. This necessity again will plunge it heels over head into the merciless intricacies of modern diplomacy, and there in that sphere it will find absolutely no scope or value for its best humanitarian intentions. The diplomatic atmosphere does not recognise such lofty ideals as President Wilson wants American nationalism to realise. If he really wants his nation to become too proud to fight for proving its own righteousness, the best course for him is to organise his nation on the lines which an article in a pious American monthly, (The Bible Review, May, 1915) so definitely suggests. This article quotes many Scriptures to show how a truly Christian nation leaves vengeance in God's hands, who "always chooses a murderer to execute a murderer." The article indirectly but clearly makes out a strong case for the spiritual type of nationalism when, in the concluding paragraph, it says:

We not only need a school of prophecy, but we need also an illuminated citizenship, who can

consider the principle of peace in the mind of the nation, and realise that it is only thru the development of real peace in the *great within* of our nation that it is possible absolutely to overcome the "fight" principle that is continually being manifest in the *without*. This is the sublime state of mental peace, serenity and power that characterises the "Peace-maker" of whom Jesus speaks. If a universal consciousness of peace could be established in the mind of the nation, then God, by the mouth of his prophets could safely guide our nation thru all these perils.

FAMINE IN EAST BENGAL

AND

THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION.

The following two appeals issued by Swami Saradananda to the public speak for themselves. The first appeal was published in May and the second in June.

(1)

For some time past we have been learning through the newspaper columns that there has been an outbreak of famine in several parts of the Tippera and Noakhali districts. To ascertain the real state of affairs, we deputed a worker to Chandpur, who returned with the report that the condition of the people in that district is very serious and needs immediate relief. We have also received touching appeals for immediate help from the people of Ramganj Thana in the district of Noakhali. Owing to the outbreak of the war, jute, which is the principal stay of the people of East Bengal, was either sold at a nominal price or did not find market at all. The misery of the people consequent on this can be better imagined than described. Their little stock of money was soon exhausted, and to keep the wolf from the door, they had to sell everything they had, including their bullocks even. Matters have now come to such a pass that many families in the Noakhali district are living on half meals and sometimes on still scantier diet. The ensuing Aus crops will be ready by the middle of August, and if the people are maintained somehow during these two months

and a half, hundreds of men, women and children will be saved from the jaws of death.

On the 31st last, we sent 9 workers to open relief centres in the affected parts of the Tippera and Noakhali districts. Some of them have reached Hajiganj, in the Tippera district, and have started preliminary inspection work there, whence they will visit other places. We shall soon acquaint the public with the detailed report they furnish us about the nature of the work in hand. We have started the work with the balance of Rs. 7,760-11-10 out of the Flood Relief work (from which sum about Rs. 500 will be needed for the Fire Relief Work we have already started at Bhubaneswar), and considering the nature of relief to be given the average monthly expenditure, even working on a moderate scale, will amount to Rs. 6,000 nearly. It may be mentioned here that even with this rate of expenditure, we shall be able to relieve only a part of the total area affected. It is needless to point out that the sum at present at our disposal will be soon spent, so there is need for an immediate supply. In the name of suffering humanity, we appeal to all sympathising souls for more funds to enable us to continue the work. Contributions of money however small, clothes, old and new, homœopathic medicines and such allopathic medicines as Chlorodyne, Aqua Ptychotis etc. will be thankfully received and acknowledged.

(2)

In our last appeal we acquainted our readers that we have sent nine workers to the famine-stricken area in the Tippera and Noakhali districts.

They have since inspected most of the villages in the affected area and have already started four centres:—viz. at Hajiganj, Paikpara, Ramganj and Khalispara, the first two in Tippera and the last two in the Noakhali districts. The Hajiganj centre intends to take over some thirty villages, the Paikpara about 52, the Ramganj centre about 60 and Khalispara about 25. The first distribution has already been made dealing out one week's ration to the needy families. In some cases especially at the Ramganj centre, the stock of rice at present being small prevented the full measure from being given. The following is an abstract of the distributions at the different centres:—

(a) Hajiganj centre (Tippera), number of villages

10, number of families 79, total heads 150, quantity of rice given 7 maunds 32 seers.

(b) Paikpara centre (Tippera), number of villages 42, number of families 282, total heads 462 quantity of rice given 16 maunds 5 seers.

(c) Ramganj centre (Noakhali), number of villages 13, number of families 63, total heads 126, quantity of rice given 6 maunds 16½ seers.

(d) Khalispara centre (Noakhali), number of villages 8, number of families, 53, total heads 105 quantity of rice given 6 maunds 12 seers.

Our workers, have reported that the distress is general and everywhere, and there is need for immediate relief. Here is an extract from our workers' report of a village named Dumari that is 5 miles from the Hajiganj centre:

"There are about 40 families of whom 13 families are in a particularly wretched condition. Most of these scarcely get one meal a day and go out every two or three days to beg their miserable pittance from the villagers. They are subsisting on a very sour wild fruit named 'Kauphal,' and boiled jute leaves and herbs. In two families famine has made its presence horribly felt: the boys and girls have hollow cheeks and sunken eyes, thin limbs, have lost all flesh and their stomachs have become unusually bloated. They have been given the pith of plantain trees ('thor') to eat; the condition of the grown-up people is much worse. The women could not come out for want of clothes. This want of cloth is quite a common occurrence now. Boys are everywhere clothed in rags, and in one family the net of mosquito curtain was extemporised into a cloth! It is clear that unless this state of things be remedied from now, it will grow from bad to worse. The condition of other villages is very similar. We are distributing rice according to circumstances."

This is indeed a pitiable state. Yet there is not a bit of colouring or exaggeration in it. Two other centres are urgently needed in the Ramganj Thana, where many more villages are yet sorely in need of relief. But we cannot open them for want of sufficient funds to carry them on. The local people are of opinion that if adequate help be given for a month the condition will be much improved. But this one month is a crisis in their

lives and we leave it to our kind-hearted readers to picture to themselves what a state of agony these people are living in, to see their dear ones pine away day after day while they themselves are powerless to help them. We have undertaken this relief work relying solely on the generosity of our countrymen who have always stood by us heart and soul in such time of trial and we are confident that they will do so still. In the name of our suffering brothers we appeal to all to help us with money and clothes. In such times as these even a little counts for much and such humble offerings may save many a precious life. Once more we appeal to all who can think and feel not to hesitate in sending their aid, for it may be too late, and the would-be recipient will be far beyond the reach of earthly help. All contributions of money, and clothes old and new, will be thankfully received and acknowledged at either of the following addresses:—(1) The Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukerji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta. (2) The President, Ramkrishna Mission, the Math, Belur P. O., Dt. Howrah.

(Sd.) Saradananda,

Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission.

12th June.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES.

THE 82nd birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa Dev was celebrated at the Sree Ramakrishna Muth with great éclat under the auspices of the Swami Vivekananda Sangam, High Road, Pudur, Vaniyambody, on Sunday the 13th June, 1915. The programme consisted of the Pooja and Bhajan procession, with Sri Guru Maharaj Vimanam, feeding the poor of all castes, the Ramakrishna School boys' Stotra Arathana, Hari Katha and musical performance. Then a public meeting was held; Mr. K. Govindachettiar Avl. B.A. delivered a lecture on the life and teachings of Sri Gurr Maharaj and Mr. M. V. Vellodiraja Avl. B. A. presided over the meeting. The festivities concluded with Mangalarathi and distribution of Prasadam.

SWAMI Abhedananda delivered a lecture at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, on the "Religion

of the 20th Century," about the beginning of the month of March. The hall was crowded and people were standing at the door to hear the words that fell from the lips of one of the greatest Vedantists in America. The Swami dealt with different phases of Vedanta,—dualism, qualified monism and monism. He pointed out how in this age God could be realised through work. The audience was greatly pleased to hear his masterly exposition of the Vedanta philosophy. The Swami also delivered a lecture at the Pacific Vedanta Centre, San Francisco, being invited by Swami Prakashananda of the Ramkrishna Mission. It is also reported that the Swami has established recently a Vedanta Library at Los Angeles.

WE have been asked to announce that the Indian South African League in a meeting held on Friday, the 7th May, 1915, has declared itself dissolved, having successfully fulfilled its object of looking after the interests of the South African Indians who were in distress during the well-known passive resistance movement.

ON the 20th of June last, His Excellency the Viceroy's birthday anniversary, the yearly entertainment given to little children in the Mayavati Charitable Dispensary passed off with characteristic enthusiasm. Five poor children happened to be present that day and adding a small amount to the money (Rs. 5) kindly sent by the Government to the Dispensary for the purpose, they were treated to some nice articles of diet, light but to them extraordinary, and were presented each with some nice article of dress as well. This year's entertainment in the Dispensary was fraught with the sad thought about Her Excellency's transition for ever from our midst, but it was felt that it must have done good to her soul in another sphere that our noble Viceroy kept up this annual festival, adding to it a new significance.

It is interesting to know that Dr. Ram Lall Sarkar, Medical Officer, Tengyeh, China, has obtained possession of a Chinese book of history entitled "Nan-Chao-Ye-Shih" or History of the Southern Princes, which contains the authentic

(Continued in page iii)