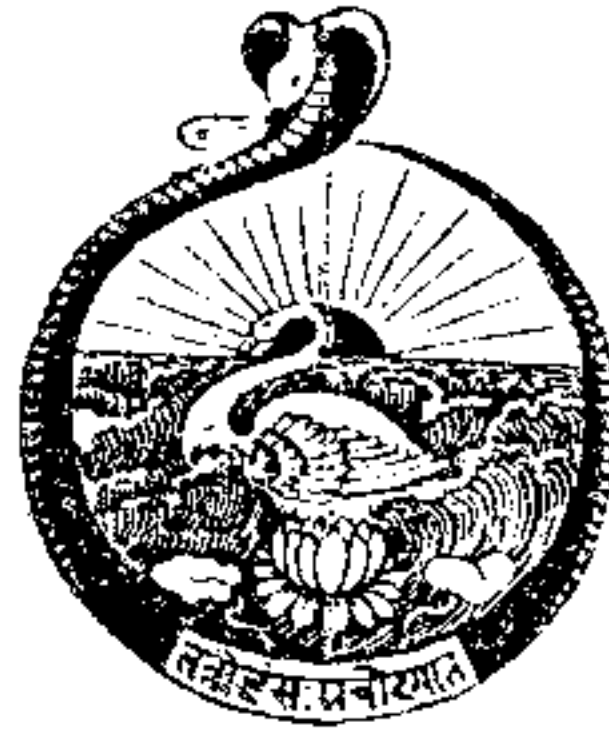


Prabuddha Bharata

OR

Awakened India



वसिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 2.

Vol. XXI, No. 245, DECEMBER, 1916.

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इतिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XXI]

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[No. 245

CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

[VI.—Continued from page 303.]

Subjects: The source of the ideas of virtue and vice is in ego-consciousness.—The revelation of the Atman follows upon the casting off of the lower self.—The true self manifests when the mind disappears.—The nature of that Self is “to be experienced in due course of time.”

When the disciple was being initiated by Swamiji in the temple, one member of the Math, making up his mind forthwith to accept initiation, was standing outside the door. Though Swami Suddhananda had been admitted into the order of the Math as a Brahmacharin, he did not yet have initiation according to the Tantrik form. Seeing the disciple thus initiated, he felt highly encouraged to go through it and directly the disciple came out of the chapel after his initiation, he approached Swamiji and expressed his desire. Swamiji, also, appreciating Suddhananda's earnestness in the matter agreed to it and again took his worship-seat.

The second initiation over, Swamiji came out in a short while. He then had his dinner and went to take a short rest abed. And the disciple with Suddhananda gladly partook of what was left of the dinner by Swamiji and

then he went to sit at his feet to do a little shampooing.

After the siesta Swamiji came and sat in the hall of the upper story. The disciple fully appreciating the opportunity asked, “Sir, how and whence came the ideas of virtue and vice?”

Swamiji— It is from the idea of the manifold that these have evolved. The more a man advances towards oneness, the more the ideas of ‘I’ and ‘you’ subside, ideas from which all these pairs of distinction such as virtue and vice have originated. When the idea that ‘so-and-so is different from me’ comes to the mind, all other ideas of distinction begin to manifest, while with the complete realisation of oneness, no more grief or illusion remains for man.—तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः “For him who sees oneness where is there any grief or any illusion?”

Sin may be said to be the feeling of diverse kinds of weakness. From this weakness springs jealousy, malice and so forth. Hence weakness is sin. The self within is always shining forth resplendent. Looking away from that, people fall into crying "I," "I" with their attention held up by this material body, this queer cage of flesh and bones. This is the root of all weakness. From that habit only, all the relative outlook and experience of life have emerged in this world. The absolute supreme experience lies beyond that standpoint of duality.

Disciple— Well, is then the *esse* ('is-ness') of relative experience not true?

Swamiji— As long as this idea of 'I' remains, so long it is true. And the instant the realisation of 'I' as the Atman comes, this world of relative existence becomes false. What people speak of as sin is the result of weakness,—is but another form of the egoistic idea that "I am the body." When the mind gets settled on the truth—'I am the Self,' then you go beyond merit and demerit, virtue and vice. Thakur used to say, "When the 'I' dies, all rubbish vanishes."

Disciple— Sir, this 'I' dies not even while almost dying. It is very difficult to kill it.

Swamiji— Yes, in one sense, it is very difficult, and again in another it is very easy. Can you make out where this thing 'I' exists? How can you say of something being alive or dead, when all the while that very thing is non-existent? Man only remains hypnotised with the false idea of an ego. When this ghost is off from us, all dreams vanish, and then it is found that one self only exists as the All from the highest being to the pettiest stump. This will have to be known, to be realised. All practice or worship is only for taking off this veil. When that will go, you will find that the Sun of Intelligence is shining in His own lustre. For,

the Self only is self-luminous and self-knowable. That which has to be experienced only by its own self, how can that be known with the help of any other thing? Hence the Sruti says, **विज्ञातारं अरे केन विजानीयात्** "Well, by whom is that to be known who is the Knower." Whatever you know, you know through the instrumentality of your mind. But mind is something material. Behind it there is the pure Self, and hence work is got done by it. So, how can you know that Self by your mind? But this only becomes known, after all, that mind cannot reach the pure Self, not even the intellect. Our knowing ends just here. Then, when the mind becomes still beyond all movement or functioning it vanishes and the Self is revealed. This state has been described by the commentator Sankara as **अपरोक्षानुभूतिः** or 'direct perception.'

Disciple— But Sir, the mind itself is the 'I.' If that mind is gone, then the 'I' also cannot remain.

Swamiji— Yes, the state that comes then, is the real nature of 'I-ness.' The 'I' that remains then, is omnipresent, all-pervading, universal. As if the *ghatâkâsha** being broken becomes the *mahâkâsh*,—and with the destruction of the pot can the ether within be also destroyed? The puny 'I' which you were thinking as confined in the body, becomes spread out and is thus realised in the form of the all-pervading 'I' or the 'Self.' Hence, what matters it to the real 'I' or the Self, whether the mind remains or be destroyed?

What I say will be duly realised in course of time.—**कालेनात्मनि विन्दते**, "It is realised

* Ghatâkâsha and Mahâkâsha are the technical terms used in Vedanta. They mean, the ether within the pot and the omnipresent sky. According to Vedanta, the two ethers are one and the same, only the ether in the pot is limited by the *Upadhi* (adjunct) of *Ghata* or the pot.

within oneself in due time." As you go on with *shravana* and *manana* (proper hearing and proper thinking), you will fully understand in due time and then you will go beyond mind. Then, there will be no room for any such question.

Hearing all this, the disciple remained quiet on his seat, and Swamiji quietly taking

his smoke continued: "How many Shastras have been written to explain this simple thing, and yet men fail to understand it! How are they wasting this dear-bought human life on the fleeting pleasures of some silver coins and the frail beauty of women! Wonderful is the sway of Mahâmâya! Mother, oh! Mother!"

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

JESUS Christ spoke of a kingdom of God, and all throughout the world to-day, shaken to its foundations by the cruelest war in history, the air is filled with talk about kingdoms of men. Involved in all this world-wide tangle amongst kingdoms of men, let us ask ourselves the question, during this year's Christmas, as to what has become of that kingdom of God, Jesus spoke about nineteen centuries ago.

"My kingdom is not of this world." (John xviii, 36). "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or There! for lo, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you." (Luke xvii, 20, 21). There is, thus, some difference between the kingdom of God and a kingdom of men. The kingdom of men has a geographical basis, and you can say, Lo, here! or There! in respect of it. But "the kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Saint Paul, Epistle to the Romans, xiv, 17). So it is a spiritual entity, and in the material plane of our life, both individual and collective, its rule over us becomes manifest in the assured practice of righteousness, peace and joy. But peace and joy follow righteousness as night follows day. No man or kingdom can be deprived of the inner peace and joy, if that man or kingdom is righteous. But has not the present war

deprived men and nations of this peace and joy?

There is no denying that it has. "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also." (Matt. vi, 20, 21.) And the hearts of men and nations have been on their treasures on earth. How can such hearts know the peace and joy of the kingdom of God? They have been so laying up for themselves treasures on earth that they fell off from that real righteousness that cannot but bring peace and joy in its wake. They have been enriching their collective life with the riches of the earth, forgetful of riches that have to be laid up in heaven. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." (Matt. vi, 24).

But what of national economics, national wealth? The nations ask, "saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" (Matt. vi, 31). Yes, "your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added

unto you" (Matt. vii, 32, 33). Did we make this seeking for the kingdom of God the foundation for our national life? Have we organised kingdoms of men on the basis of this seeking? Are the various political states of our world pledged by their very constitution and policy to seek "first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness"? Are those, who constitute the central power and guiding authority for wielding these states, *inalienably* consecrated to this spiritual seeking? What is the good of watering the plant when the axe has been laid at its root? What is the good of building churches, sending out church missions, erecting pulpits everywhere and preaching to individuals, if from the very pivot of our collective life, the very pulse of the whole machine, Christ's command to seek "first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" has been dislodged and swept away?

But "all these things shall be added unto you," if the whole nation is organised in the service of God and not of mammon,—*if every kingdom of men is made to evolve round the rallying centre of a seeking for the kingdom of God and His righteousness.* Organisation is a necessity of the modern age. But why must it be a political organisation, essentially jealous of rights over multiplying material riches, and not a spiritual organisation essentially jealous of duties respecting the laying up of heavenly riches? Men can surely group themselves together as much for serving their spiritual interests as for serving their material ends, and if the pursuit of spiritual ends brings about this nation-grouping, the pursuit of material ends falls naturally into its proper subordinate place, "all these things" being normally and peacefully "added unto" us. But our political nationalism has blindly reversed the process, starting with a central combination for material ends, that is, a combination pledged to the service of mammon, and then requiring

it to serve, as best as it would, another master, namely God.

This dereliction of the fundamental duty of human life, this failure to build collective life on the basis of an earnest seeking for the kingdom of God, has made the kingdoms of men go awfully astray from the proper peaceful path of their evolution. Nations have hurled themselves on along the path of covetousness, and this they glorify as a noble enthusiasm for life, for human effort, for human achievement. But man as he is created is bound to move towards achievement; there is nothing to feel proud of in this. Only there are lines of achievement to choose between; and one leads to laying up of treasures in heaven, while the other to laying up of earthly treasury. And Christ's kingdom of God leaves us in no doubt as to how the choice has to be made in our life, both individual and collective. "The kingdom of God is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." (Matt. xiii, 44). "The kingdom of God is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls: and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it." (Matt. xiii, 45, 46).

Are all the nations, come to grips with one another, minded to place heavenly treasures so much above their earthly ones that for the sake of the former they are ready to forego the latter? Behind all their hypocritical professions, they are really so minded as to do just the contrary. Yes, the hypocrisy of diplomatic blue-books is nauseating! As if everybody is going to be a martyr of apostolic righteousness! The issues of war are interpreted to the world in terms of righteousness and unrighteousness. But in these vast affairs of international life, immediate issues on the surface are no issues at

all. They are really valueless. The real issue lies far deeper in that foundation of covetousness which inspires and governs in each case all the vigorous pursuit of national life in the West. This covetousness is all along piling up mountain-loads of hostility like dry gunpowder on the frontiers of national life in every country, and it is of no moment whence the chance spark happens to fall. How can the kingdom of God work its way out in an atmosphere of collective life reeking with the destructive, all-powerful virus of this covetousness? Do not kingdoms of mammon constitute, on the contrary, the very best agency to keep out Christ's kingdom of God?

And yet in these kingdoms of mammon, we meet together to celebrate the happy Christmas. Divine patience on the cross which uttered, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii, 34), is strong enough, of course, to stand all this stupendous irony. It is strong enough to forgive all the bitter mockeries of our modern culture which seeks to kill the spirit of renunciation with its proud doctrines of human achievement. The young ruler who came to Christ saw much of human achievement in his life. Over and above, he had observed from his youth all the great commandments which should govern our domestic and social life. And he asked, "Master, all these things have I observed from my youth, what lack I yet? And Jesus looking upon him loved him, and said unto him, 'One thing thou lackest; go, sell whatever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.'" (Mark x, 19-21, Matt. xix, 20-21, Luke xviii, 21-22). And this renunciation, the crest-jewel of Christ's gospel, has been travestied and explained away by our modern culture.

And why? Because monasticism if allowed to flourish in its true authority, lives like a

constant protest and frown over the atmosphere of a collective life following, out and out, the insidious lead of covetousness. The final commandment, "Follow me," is palling to the frightened souls of the covetous, and therefore, as a set-off against a sense of unworthiness that makes our "countenance fall," dare-devil theories are vociferated to bring renunciation to discredit among men. Except as directed against Christ's gospel, these theories would be uncalled-for, since the natural clinging to life in the world would always characterise the utmost majority of men, and this clinging does not require any prop of such theories. But what is really aimed at is a transvaluation of the values Jesus Christ set on the ideals of life, for most decidedly he valued renunciation above all. "He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will the Father honour." (John xii, 25,26). As to where Christ *was*, his own words dispel any doubt: "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Matt. viii, 20; Luke ix, 58).

So modern nationalism has upset the whole diagram of life which the scheme of Christ described with renunciation as its apex. Christ preached a spiritual scheme of life, both individual and collective; and if we reject this scheme in the upbuilding of collective life, it is bound to fail also in our individual life, for reduced to a half-truth, it becomes more pernicious than a falsehood. The nation when once organised and enthroned becomes authoritative like the visible God over the individual, and the individual has no choice left to live by an ideal which the nation does not live by; for it would then be the most heinous crime for him to be unpatriotic in any impulse or sentiment of his life. Patriot-

ism becomes the highest and noblest virtue in national life. So when the ideal of individual life disagrees with that of collective life, the individual begins to interpret his Christ in accordance with the wishes of his nation. He conforms Christ's gospel to his patriotism. And what according to Christ himself is the consequence of such conduct inspired by patriotism? "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in his own glory, and in his Father's and of the holy angels" (Luke ix, 26).

So the half-truth of an individual spiritual life combined with political nationalism spells a greater danger for the real Christian than even the gallows of an outraged patriotism. "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark viii, 36). During this Christmas, therefore, let us direct our thoughts to the

precepts of Jesus to find out how the world is being led astray by politics or statecraft which must needs emphasize most of all the laying up of earthly treasures which constitute the source of its strength and justification. No political state can do duty for religion or the church in the upbuilding of our national life, and there must be a fundamental difference between a political type of nationalism and a spiritual type of the same, for a spiritual purpose organises and governs a nation in one way and a political purpose in another. The nation as a spiritual organisation would have even its statecraft governed and piloted by the representatives of its highest spirituality, while in the nation as a political organisation the state imposes its own policies on the spiritual pursuits of the nation. Let this difference come out during this year's Christmas, in all its important significance and value, from all the bleeding sacrifices in manhood that humanity is making on the battle-fields of Europe to-day.

THE REAL PROBLEM IN INDIA.

II.

LAST month we have seen that our history defines for us the real problem in India. It is a problem that is indissolubly bound up with that scheme of life to which Indian history, past, present and future, is irrevocably pledged. For this Indian scheme of life has all along been working itself out, there being a significant pause, only a century or two ago, in its operation just when the time drew nigh to undertake the task of creating a collective consciousness in the individual. The pause was significant because modern science was to come to help the process at this stage. The design chosen centuries ago had triumphed in the laying of the groundwork; the spiritual scheme of

life had worked out a fundamental unity in thought and life all over India; but how to ensure that closer uniformity in detailed thought and activity which would enable us to build simultaneously on the whole plinth already erected by our past history? For ours is a vast country, and even when the organisation of life here has proceeded beyond the stage of plinth-making, the question of proper co-ordination makes the rest of the work as difficult as ever. The vastness of the country operates as an irresistible force to confine the average mind in it within parochial limits; and the task which lay before the Indian scheme of life two centuries ago concerned itself essentially with this average

mind. For it was this average mind which was to be awakened to a new collective consciousness. So at this stage, the process of organisation seemed to wait for the advent of modern science which was then teaching the West the magic of controlling distance and time.

A subtle, mysterious law of demand and supply brought the West into India. But the West came not only with its science but also in the full strength of its political nationalism. It held its political sway over India with the wand of science in one hand and the lure of a new nationalism in the other. This new nationalism means a new scheme of life, and before the Indian scheme of life had time to claim our educated minds as its own, the Western scheme of life led them captive. Modern science has, of course, come to stay in India, but those who are to use this science to the service of the Indian scheme of life seemed for the while utterly lost to it. Such is the irony of fate which converted its long-looked-for opportunity into a terrible menace fatal to its fulfilment.

But still it lies in us to avert this danger. True to his name in a sense deeper than we imagine, Swami Vivekananda brought amongst us a spirit of discrimination as to what has to be adopted by us from the West and what not. He fervently called us all not only to the task of nation-building that lies before us, but pointed out also the ground-plan, the plinth and the whole design of the building we have inherited from our past, and for us now to try to reject or change them would be to court death. But from Western science we have to derive the method, the technique so to say, of the whole organisation work.

But if instead of borrowing only the organising method or trick we adopt also the organising design from the West, then the materials which have borne on themselves the operation of a different design for untold centuries are bound to prove clumsy and

intractable. You cannot alter the design in a process which has been shaping its materials for ages; you can only introduce a better or quicker method of working out the old design, and that is exactly the problem in India.

People with the scheme or design of a political nationalism in their mind approach all the materials for nation-building that lie before them in India, and they find the masses in India as inert and impervious to political ideals and responsibilities as savage races in a savage land. They travel in fancy to the Phillipines to seek an analogy, or say to African lands. In the former, the population is more compact and immensely smaller, submitting itself more unreservedly to the Westernising process. The task of arousing active political interest and unity in the vast millions of a vast country like India is apparently a task of centuries, and the many decades of Westernising influence have made no appreciable progress in it. The educated few on the surface, again, are far from being as politically keen and united as would enable them to drag behind themselves this inert mass of uneducated millions in all the hard-fought battles they must have to fight in future. A palsied leviathan cannot be said to move if only its ears prick up and its eyes ogle! Even every occasional stir and enthusiasm among the educated minority in political matters has a curious way of fizzling out like flashes from a wet matchbox. Delirious extremes of morbid enthusiasm and stolid apathy are phenomena all too frequent. In fact the real soul of the people in India refuses to come out in political enthusiasm, but nobody who studies it can say that it is dead to all forms of enthusiasm. The Indian people had their own process of historical evolution. They are not absolutely raw materials like savage races to be forced into the operation of a new political scheme of life different from what has already been shaping them for centuries. They may yet be unconscious of how they were being shaped so long, but make them

conscious of it once and they will proceed to build themselves up into a nation on their own lines far more easily and speedily than there is record in history.

So all the many hopeless problems about building up a political democracy in India are problems created by our false choice of a new political scheme of life for our country. In any practical work, where there is an impossibility, it betrays itself in an endless succession of difficulties, each of which carries us to a final stalemate of effort. Just for the sake of some little exercise, we may go on tackling these difficulties one by one, like walking aimlessly but vigorously along blind alleys. But a whole country like India can now ill-afford the pleasure of such a Sisyphean game. Our awful disorganisation in the face of a modern organised world is just going to spell our death through increasing poverty and insanitation. *Absolutely* no amount of tinkering will avail us now,—no industrial commissions, no Government aids, no medical theories, in one word no medicinal doses administered from outside. The only way back to life lies in *organisation*,—organisation that is the only reply that satisfies the Sphinx of the modern age. And this demand of organisation rings sharp and clear over our heads. We must now organise ourselves or else die. There is no room for dallying or shilly-shallying with this demand. There is no time for experimenting or prospecting for best imported schemes. Have you any scheme of organising life already operating in history? If you have, quick, go to work with improved implements modern science puts in your hand. If you have no scheme already at hand, just choose one and organise yourselves before you are sucked dry by a political covetousness that stalks abroad. So if there is no time to lose, if the urgency of the case is such as to leave us no leisure for experiments, should we not at once turn away from the wrong choice we are making and begin at once at that point in the process

of organisation where the Indian scheme of life just stopped in the expectation of help from modern science?

It may be some excuse that we did not know at first that we had in India our own form of nationalism, evolving in history and waiting to be carried to fruition by our efforts. But it would not be any excuse to say that we do not understand this nationalism, while we understand well the other form of nationalism that comes from the West, and so we must go to work with the latter. The fact is that those, who say or think like this, understand no theory of nationalism in a proper sense. But for these people too there is just time yet to pause and think and veer round. The question is: has India any scheme of life of her own, any type of nationalism that her history has been working out? If she has, then nobody professing to serve India has any right to set it aside and go in for any other scheme of life or form of nationalism. So let him stop and make a study of this Indian nationalism. Let him find out what sort of an organic system of the collective ends of life this nationalism implies,—what the governing end in this system is and how it regulates and co-ordinates all the other ends of life. For organisation of life means the organisation of the ends of life and their collective pursuits; and this organisation must start with the choice of some end as the immanent governing end in the whole system of ends. The pursuit of all the other ends must be made subservient to the pursuit of this governing end, which then evaluates and determines at every step as to how far and in what way each of the other ends should be pursued. Nationalism may be defined as the theory and practice of such an organic system of collective ends in the life of a country, and this nationalism may be termed political or spiritual according as the governing end in this theory and practice is political or spiritual.

Our initial misfortune in India is that we

do not understand this difference in the types of nationalism; and the next misfortune which is involving us in a wilderness of hopeless difficulties is that we are blindly trying to foist a political nationalism on the process which a spiritual nationalism is already undergoing for thousands of years. On the advent of the West into India we were not called upon to interfere in this silly way with this long-continued process; we were called upon simply to learn and adopt from the West the scientific method of organising thought and activity and to apply that method to the old design. Instead of this, we have brought upon ourselves a never-ending array of insuperable difficulties by importing both the Western method and the Western design of collective life.

And this endless mass of difficulties arise on both sides of our platform of work. We are at a loss not only how to re-adjust our relations with the whole country lying behind us, but also how to adjust our relations with the political government established on the very line of our advance. For this political line of advance we have chosen does not connect us on the one hand with the soul of the people or that point in the organising process which they have already reached, and on the other it leads us into an endless series of growing frictions with a well-established political power, *frictions that are most unnecessarily exaggerated*. We have already indicated the enormous difficulties on the former score; let us now indicate those which confront us from the latter direction, already proving insuperable enough to baffle all progress.

Political nationalism presupposes political autonomy, for every step in the development of a collective life on political lines requires to be taken by the people themselves or their leaders out of their own political initiative and authority, and the more these initiative and authority are acquired, the greater is the advance made towards political national-

ism. So when the amount of political initiative and authority earned and exercised in this way is quite sufficient for all the purposes of determining and regulating all the collective pursuits of a country, we have a full-fledged political nation established in that country.

Now in India, this requisite amount of political initiative and authority in the formation of a political nation has to be appropriated from the hands of the British government, and this line of transfer is historically abnormal, while in the case of a country like Australia or Canada, it is not. It is impossible to ignore the historical difference between a colony and a political dependency. One implies one and the same mother-country, the other implies two. History unites a mother-country and her colony by the bond of a common destiny, while history has not set an India and an England on the pursuit of the same destiny. So between these two, there may be the bond of common empire but not the bond of a common mother-country or of a common destiny. There may be a mutual alliance of collective destinies, but not a perfect unity; for such unity can never be the product of any mutual understanding at some stage of historical development, it can only be a self-created historical fact from the very beginning. Such being the case, it is idle to expect that England would feel the same security of political interests in the future self-development of India as she can feel in that of her colonies. England cannot naturally entrust India with the same amount of political autonomy as she as the mother-country can entrust any of her colonies with. The political relation between England and India can never be the same as between England and her colonies.

But it is exactly on this wrong presumption of possible political equality with the colonies that the Indian political leader builds his hope of a political nation in India. It is

not yet too late to understand the difference in England's natural attitude towards India and her colonies, and this difference ought to warn us now against committing ourselves to a wrong course of political struggles for the colonial self-government or the Irish Home Rule. And it is such false ideals that form the corner-stone of our scheme of a political nationalism for India. It is the contemplation of such ideals that inspires us with the hope that the British government will eventually concede to us all that requisite amount of political initiative and authority to form ourselves into a political nation.

And this false hope is a part and parcel of the false choice of a political nationalism for India. Directly you adopt this political ideal for your country, you cannot help hoping for that large amount of political power which you have to gradually wrest from the British government. And the British government clearly sees what you are driving at through your demands, and clearly sees likewise that it cannot forego that political authority and hold on India which it is possible for England to forego in the case of a colony, and so has to engage in a game of diplomacy in which anyhow it must win explicitly or implicitly in every instance. Really it is a sore problem for the government also to make out how it can best meet Indian political aspirations without at the same time compromising the real political authority in India which it must anyhow maintain for itself.

The plainest and the most open-minded view of the problem is that it is an impossibility. India aspiring after political nationalism and England resolved to keep to herself all the real political authority in India are facts just like two parallel straight lines that do not meet however far they are produced in either direction. The two lines of effort can never coalesce, neither in Lord Morley's five centuries nor in the Indian Home Ruler's five decades. It is really Lord Hardinge's

"not yet" repeated every time the question is asked. Had we a little less of the dreamy self-complacency of the beggar, we would have by this time found out the actual facts betraying this impossible conundrum which political worthies on both sides have set to themselves.

But history did not mean to carry India to this fatal stalemate,—fatal because it involves waste of energy on a fatal scale,—for history never meant to pledge India to a course of political nationalism. By our choice of this nationalism we are going against history and raising mountain-high obstacles in our relationship with the British government. But let us once veer round and accept that spiritual type of nationalism which our past history offers and our noble destiny in this world presupposes. The whole prospect of our transactions with the British government then changes, and no difficulty about the mutual connection and respective aspirations appears insurmountable any longer. Let us in a few words explain this happy possibility.

In spiritual nationalism, in the first place, the line of advance we have to take to form ourselves into a nation does not naturally run against that political authority which England wants to maintain in India, for this line of advance lies not through a growing political unity and political initiative to be wrested from the government, but through a growing religious unity and growing spiritual and social initiative which we have not to contest with anybody else. India has a spiritual mission to fulfil in this world, and this becomes our rallying cry to give us that unity which is at once spiritual and national. Then on the basis of this unity embodied in some central institution, we proceed to organise all the other collective pursuits and make them conducive and subservient to the pursuit of the central mission of our country, the governing spiritual end. Now in this second phase of our organisation work we come into direct touch with the government which

wields the authority to regulate such collective pursuits, for instance, as the economical, the educational or the sanitary. It would be our business to see that these collective pursuits are free to prosper in that way and to that extent which our central collective pursuit of our collective spiritual end requires of them. Our collective life in India must have an adequate physical and mental sustenance to follow and live for its spiritual destiny in the world. Our political activities and aspirations are therefore determined by the necessity of safeguarding this important condition regarding our collective pursuits and of providing for their general protection. Our nationalism does not necessitate our going beyond this limit of political efficiency and aspiring after all that political power on the acquisition of which the political form of nationalism pivots itself. To our nationalism, therefore, it does not so much matter as to who holds the supreme political authority in our country, provided we are admitted into that degree of participation in the deliberative and executive exercise of that authority which would safeguard and protect our collective spiritual interests so far as they are affected by and bound up with all other secular collective interests. This necessary amount of participation in the life of the state (or statecraft, *rajaniti*) defines the political sphere in the national life we have to build up in our country; and as this well-defined political sphere does not necessarily encroach upon the political sovereignty of England in India or her enjoyment of the real political initiative, her problem of satisfying our political claims and demands is thereby reduced to a quite practicable minimum, while we in India, on the other hand, are spared from all the insurmountable but unnecessary obstacles arising out of an unnecessary exaggeration of our political needs and aspirations. If this scheme of spiritual nationalism commends itself both to our political rulers and to our educated countrymen, then that

miserable element of suspicion which has poisoned their mutual relation will be easily eliminated and a sincere way will be found out to unite England and India in the strongest alliance of their future destinies. The former will have then the growing satisfaction of helping, from her seat of political authority, a self-organised India to fulfil her spiritual destiny, while India will rise from her present depth of poverty and disorganisation and coming into the fullest possession of her noble inheritance assert herself in the life of the world in all the glory of her spiritual beneficence.

So the real problem in India does not lie in the pursuit of dreamy political ambitions necessarily associated with our false choice of a political nationalism,—ambitions which neither the past history nor the future destiny of India postulates as *essential*, and which only serve therefore to enormously exaggerate our difficulties with the present government on the one hand and with a politically backward proletariat on the other. But this real problem for us lies in resuming at once the work of national organisation which our history has all along been doing for us on the lines of a spiritual scheme of collective life, and thereby rallying behind us with the help of modern organising tactics the vast mass of our countrymen, on the one hand, with their long-evolved adaptability to that spiritual scheme, and reducing, on the other hand, our political relations with the government established in our midst to a more practicable course of mutual adjustments characterised by mutual confidence and co-operation.

And the present leaders in the political sphere of our life will easily find out that their acceptance of this scheme of spiritual nationalism does not involve any retrograde step in any solid advance they may have already made in their work of organisation by their labours of decades. Let them toil on as before for the improvement of our political and economic condition. Only they have to modify the

perspective of their efforts, evaluating and interpreting political interests and needs in the light of our collective spiritual pursuits and organising all the national support and unity they count upon on the basis of our collective spiritual end and mission in this world. It is not at all any the slightest surrender of their organising activity that they have to make now, but only a change in the plan of organisation, in the centre of enthusiasm.

EPISTLES OF
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

CI.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

Baghbazar, Calcutta,
2nd Sept. 1889.

Dear Sir,

Some days ago I received your two kind letters. I am very much pleased to find in you a wonderful harmony of Jnana and Bhakti. Your advice to me of giving up arguing and disputing is very true indeed, and, that is really the goal of life for the individual,—“Sundered are the knots of the heart, torn off are all his doubts, and the seeds of his Karma wear off, when the sight of the supreme Transcendent one is gained.”* But then, as my Master used to say, when a pitcher is being filled (by immersion), it gurgles, but when full, it is noiseless; know my condition to be the same. Within two or three weeks perhaps, I shall be able to meet you,—may God fulfil that wish.

Yours etc.

Vivekananda.

CII.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

Baghbazar,
3rd Dec. 1889.

Dear Sir,

It is long I have not heard from you. Hope you are doing well in body and mind. Two

of my brother disciples are shortly leaving for Benares. One is R— by name, the other is S—. The first-named was beloved of my Master and used much to stay with him. Please to recommend them to some *satra* (house of alms) during their stay in the city, if you find it convenient. You will hear from them all my news. With my best regards and greetings,

Yours etc.

Vivekananda.

P. S. G— is now proceeding to Kailas. The Thibetans wanted to slash him up on the way taking him to be a spy of the foreigners. Eventually some Lamas kindly set him free. We obtain this news from some Thibet-going trader. G—'s blood won't cool down before seeing Lhassa. The gain is that his physical endurance has grown immensely,—one night he passed uncovered on a bed of snow, and that without much hardship.

Vivekananda.

CIII.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

Baranagore, Calcutta,
13th Dec. 1889.

Dear Sir,

I have all particulars from your letter, and from R—'s which followed I come to know of your meeting. I have received the pamphlet written by you. A kind of Advaitism is spreading in Europe ever since the theory of the conservation of energy was discovered, but all that is (Parinamavada) evolution by real modification. It is good, you have shown the difference between this and Sankara's Vivartavada (progressive manifestation by unreal superimposition). I can't appreciate your citing Spencer's parody on the German transcendentalists; he himself is fed much on their doles. It is doubtful whether your opponent Gough understands his Hegel sufficiently. Any way, your rejoinder is very pointed and thrashing.

Yours etc.

Vivekananda.

* Mundakopanishad, II-2-8.

CIV.

(Translated from Bengali.)

Baidyanath,
26th Dec. 1889.

Dear Sir,

After a long attempt for many days, I am able now to present myself before you. In a day or two I take myself to your feet at holy Kashi.

I have been putting up here for some days with a gentleman of Calcutta, but my mind is much longing for Benares.

My idea is to remain there for some time, and to watch how Vishvanath and Annapurna* deal it out to my lot. And my resolve is something like "either lay down my body or realise my ideal," †—so help me the Lord of Kashi.

Yours etc.

Vivekananda.

BRAHMOPANISHAT.

ब्रह्मोपनिषत्

(Concluded from page 215)

ऊर्णनाभिर्यथा तन्तून्सृजते सहरत्यपि ।
जाग्रत्स्वप्ने तथा जीवो गच्छत्यागच्छते पुनः ॥

As the spider weaves out the web and again withdraws it, so the *Jiva* comes out to and goes back again to the wakeful and dreaming states respectively.

[The text here reverts to the old simile with which the whole discussion in the treatise started.]

पद्मकोशप्रतीकाशं सुषिरं चाप्यधोमुखम् ।
हृदयं तद्विजानीयाद्विश्वस्याऽऽयतनं महत् ॥

* Shiva and His Divine Sponser as installed in Benares.

† " शरीरं वा पातयामि मन्त्रं वा साधयामि ".

The heart (i. e. the inner chamber of heart) resembles the calyx of a lotus, full of cavities and also with its face turned downwards. Know that to be the great habitat of the whole universe.

[Cf. Swami Vivekananda's lecture on Microcosm and Macrocosm in Jnana Yoga pp. 80—85.]

नेत्रस्थं जाग्रतं विद्यात्कण्ठे स्वप्नं विनिर्दिशेत् ।
सुषुप्तं हृदयस्थं तु तुरीयं मूर्ध्नि संस्थितम् ॥

Know the wakeful state to have for its centre the eyes (*a*); the dreaming state should be assigned to the throat; the state of dreamless sleep is in the heart and the transcendental state is in the crown of the head.

(*a*) This assignment of different centres in the body for different states of consciousness does not tally with the first specification of the centres as made just after the close of the first text in this Upanishad. We have already referred to this fact there and have pointed out how the later Yogic psychology developed this theory of the centres more fully and consistently.

यदात्मा प्रज्ञयाऽऽत्मानं संधत्ते परमात्मनि ।
तेन संध्या ध्यानमेव तस्मात्संध्याभिवन्दनम् ॥

From the fact of an individual *holding* (*a*) his self by means of *prajñā* or spiritual understanding in the Supreme Self, we have what is called Sandhya and Dhyana, as also the worshipping associated with Sandhya.

(*a*)—*Sandhatte* (holds), *Sandhya* (a form of worship in morning, noon and evening) and *Dhyana* (meditation) are derivatives from the same root, meaning "to hold," and hence the propriety of the above definition.

निरोदका ध्यानसंध्या वाक्कायक्लेशवर्जिता ।
संधिनी सर्वभूतानां सा संध्या ह्येकदण्डिनाम् ॥

The Sandhya by meditation is devoid of any offering of liquids and so also of any exertion of body and speech; it is the unifying principle for all creatures, and this is really the Sandhya for *Ekadandins*.

[The above two verses seek to show how the daily worship called Sandhya, compulsory for all, becomes transmuted into the worship of meditation in the case of Sannyasins. The root meaning of Sandhya is emphasized to the exclusion of its external form. This root means "holding together" as Sandhya is essentially that which holds together or unifies the human self and the Supreme Self. *Ekdandins* are one-staffed Sannyasins, the staff being the symbol of self-control. The triple-staffed Sannyasins have three sticks tied together, as symbolising control of mind, speech and body.]

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।
आनन्दमेतज्जीवस्य यं ज्ञात्वा मुच्यते बुधः ॥

From Which, without reaching It, the speech falls back with the mind, that is the transcendental Bliss of this embodied being, knowing which the wise one is released (from all bondage).

[The first line of this verse is also to be found in the Taittiriya Upanishad. Some are of opinion that the Brahman in His transcendental aspect is unknown and unknowable and is akin to the Spencerian Absolute. But the real import is that though He is beyond speech and mind, He can be known and realised by going beyond speech and mind.]

सर्वव्यापिनमात्मानं क्षीरे सर्पिरिवार्पितम् ।

(And this Bliss is verily) the Self which pervades the whole universe, as the butter diffused within the milk.

आत्मविद्यातपोमूलं तद्ब्रह्मोपनिषत्परम ।
सर्वात्मैकत्वरूपेण तद्ब्रह्मोपनिषत्परमिति ॥

This is the Brahmopanishad, or the supreme wisdom of Brahman, in the form of a unity of the Atman of all, founded on the spiritual discipline (tapas) which is (nothing but) the *vidya* or science of the Atman.

इत्यथर्ववेदे ब्रह्मोपनिषत्समाप्ता ॥

Here ends the Brahmopanishat belonging to the Atharva Veda.

RELIGION AND OUR NATIONAL LIFE.

[A lecture delivered by Mr. L. R. Ramachandra Aiyar M. A., Principal, Rameshwaram Devasthanam Patshala, Madura, on the occasion of the Navaratra celebration at the Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Trichinopoly.]

Gentlemen and young friends,

A word of explanation seems to be necessary for my venturing to address an audience consisting mostly of students,—specially on a subject which, I am not far wrong in saying, is not given a prominent place in modern discussions. Many of you might have been drawn here by curiosity, many in a state of indifference, many to hear with a critical mind and others to seek for literary merits in the lectures, if any such may be found.

First of all, I take a pleasure in addressing students, for with their minds open for receiving and examining the ideas put before them in an impartial manner and with their fresh enthusiasm for any cause which impresses them as just, and with the energy which they can put forth in the realisation of their ideals, they are best fitted to receive any original ideas which a thinker has to give. So, I have every confidence in the best results to be obtained by communicating my thoughts to the student population. Further, it must be conceded that students need guidance and training for developing their capabilities in a healthy way and making them fitted for their later life. It is in the students as the future citizens and leaders of the country, that the hope and exaltation of our country mainly lie, and no wonder, much importance everywhere is attached to the education and moral training of the students.

I feel great pleasure also in being asked to lecture under the auspices of the Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda-Vedanta Society. For I consider Swami Vivekananda as nothing less than the personification of the ideal which modern India has to follow. Is not the very name of that mighty personality enough to instil the spirit of enthusiasm into our hearts, that genius which rose like a sun amidst inferior luminaries in the Parliament of Religions at Chicago to dispel all religious hatred and animosities and diffuse a fervid inspiration in civilised

continents, which is indeed a marvel more glorious than military conquests and earthly acquisitions? And what tongue can sing adequate praise of his Guru when the disciple himself admitted that with all his preparation in the scientific learning and cultures of the world he was not able to comprehend a fraction of the dazzling spirit and genius of Sri Ramakrishna?

The fact that I have been called upon to lecture under the auspices of this society left me no option of refusing the request,—nay, I deem it a command, though I am conscious that I am quite unequal to the task. Nevertheless, I have every confidence that you will give me an indulgent hearing overlooking my shortcomings, and bestow your careful and calm reflection on the few thoughts that I desire to place before you during the course of this lecture.

Gentlemen, you may wonder, some of you at least, how the two things, Religion and our National life and ideals, can be connected together, and what may religion, which looks to the development and righteous training of individual citizens, have to do with the collective life of the nation which for its practical organisation is essentially dependent on politics. I shall explain to you in the course of my lecture how religion must not merely have a place in our national life but must occupy the foremost place round which all other pursuits of life must centre. For when constructing a programme of the course of its future activities, a nation has to survey the circumstances under which it is placed, its own past history that has made it what it is, and what its life among the surrounding nations is meant to signify in the orderly evolution of the Universe. The world is now confronted with a gigantic, devastating war and many master-minds have drawn their own opinions and conclusions from this war. To my mind, it seems that anything which appears for the present destructive and unwelcome to us is brought about by God for a healthy revival and the future stability of an evolving order of things. The fact that a man is suffering from fever is a warning that there is some disorder in his system which needs careful treatment; and the present war is also meant to serve a similar purpose in the life of the Universe. Western nations have been going on with their scientific and material improvement, eager compe-

tion and rivalry, multiplications of desires and also of the objects to satisfy those desires, and this to such an extent that materialism seemed to undermine a healthy spiritual growth of individuals and nations. This war is a symptom of this disease, and those who would avoid it must learn a lesson from this bitter experience, and fashion their future accordingly. Lamenting on the too much materialistic attitude of the Western nations Swami Vivekananda observed with a prophetic vision, "The whole of the Western world is on a volcano which may burst to-morrow, go to pieces to-morrow."

This phenomenon in the history of the Universe must set all men a-thinking, and we see that everywhere there are preparations going on for settling the relations of the different countries for their post-war history. The dominions of the Empire desire to come to a more prominent place and desire greater voice in the councils of the Empire than before and the mother-country England is expressing her utmost gratitude to the colonies and India for the enthusiastic rally made by them in the cause of liberty and justice. The question which must engage our attention now is: what part India is to play in the future of the world?

India has got a most glorious duty to discharge to the world and has at the same time a serious responsibility to fulfil as the most ancient nation, all the records of whose achievements and development from ancient times, history is baffled in its attempts to trace.

It may be that India, as a nation, disorganised by the waves of foreign conquest and political uncertainty, is now, under the benign protection of the British power, coming to feel a sense of unity, and the feeling of self-consciousness and liberty is throbbing in its veins, but it must be understood that this is only a superficial phase of its development and that the real inner springs of national unity and collective national life have yet to be enquired into and fostered and allowed to develop. For us to live as a nation, it is a necessity that there must be a sense of national unity and organisation, but the ideal and basis for that organisation must be derived from the previous life-history of the nation. It is a matter for serious reflection that India in the period of its contact with the West, allowing the growth of an attraction

for whatever possesses superficial and temporary charm, has come to possess a feverish desire for anything which originates from the West, and has begun to cultivate a sincere admiration for the Western scheme of life, based upon secular and material prosperity, relegating to religion the function of a timeserver in that scheme of life. All this is due to a neglect in studying and understanding the cause of India's past greatness, and the lack of a truly national system of training, over and above allowing ourselves to be carried away by whatever is charming and attractive. Where is to be found a true history of India—I don't mean the enumeration of dates and events—but a history from the national standpoint, with a synthetic view of the various events, an appreciation of the real significance and inner purpose to be carefully traced as the unifying background of the seemingly disconnected events and dates? In the light of such a view, the history as written by foreigners must be a conglomeration of haphazard events. What, then, is the use of studying the history of thousand other countries without knowing where we are and how to fashion our future from our own previous past history? It is no good allowing ourselves to drift into the policy and scheme of life of this or that nation, when we have no individual comprehension of the basis of our own national life.

In our history, we find that, through all social disruptions, political events and other things, it is religion that works out the real life, supplies the real force and struggles to express itself through all secular institutions. Study the reigns of Asoka, Chandragupta, the Maharattas, the Sikhs, the Empire of Akbar, the rise of Vizianagar and you find this fact illustrated; and the moment the real governing lead of religion is ignored and forgotten, we find the beginning of political decline. Further, we find in history, that whenever religious enthusiasm and fervour are on the wane, there arise great religious personages such as Buddha, a Sankara, a Ramanuja, a Chaitanya or a Ramakrishna as in the present day. Whatever may be the measure of success in other fields, India is very zealous of the religious treasures which it possesses and that is exactly the reason why series of conquerors found, at their cost, that any intrusion into the religious domain was disadvantageous and so had to leave religion alone. What is the thing,

which evokes a ready response from our illiterate masses and most advanced philosophers alike and also from men in different corners of our country? It is religion and nothing else.

When such is the course of our history, can we by any manner imaginable supplant that basis of our collective life by any other, however attractive it may be? You may try to banish that religious principle from life individual and collective, but it will never leave you. It is there running in your veins in spite of you, and you have to nourish it and turn it to good account. If India has achieved nothing at all great in other spheres in its life-history, this one achievement of religious development, from the Vedic Hymns of ancient days to the most sublime philosophy of the Upanishads and the Gita, in a truly synthetic and constructive way through all the vicissitudes of its political and social life, is worthy enough to inspire satisfaction and pride. Is it not our duty then, to appreciate the worth of the treasure bequeathed to us, so that we may live our lives in conformity with the national ideal and contribute our quota of help to the cause of humanity? Has not every nation been designed to contribute something to humanity, and what nobler and grander thing can be offered than the gift of spirituality, which is the only thing to cure the evils arising from greed, competition and excessive materialism into which the world is plunging itself headlong to-day? Shall we not be committing a great sin, not only to ourselves but towards humanity, if we fail to rise to a sense of our duty at the present crisis? Every page of our past history bears ample evidence of the fact that India has been designed to be the spiritual guide and teacher of the world; (here the lecturer quoted some illustrations.) Whenever this truth is forgotten, there arise in the field, mighty personalities as if on purpose to emphasise and illustrate the truth. At a critical period in the history of our country, when her favoured sons were immersed in complete admiration and adoration of materialistic ideals of the West and inebriated with the seemingly exhilarating cup of vanity and pleasure, mark how the mighty personality of Vivekananda appeared to rouse up the sons of the land from stupor and indifference, and carried the torch-light of Indian culture and philosophy, represented in all its real freshness and vigour, and raised in

other countries a wave of enthusiastic admiration and interest in India's spiritual treasures. Turn to the pages of our vast ancient literature which consists of almost endless volumes but which, I am sorry to say is treated with much indifference, to say the least, by our own countrymen, and then consider how the real trend of our life-history and national mission finds expression in that literature. Take any hero of our Puranas and Itihasas. Do we not find there the embodiment of the spiritual ideal and its authority? (The lecturer here quoted the illustration of Bhishma, Krishna etc. and the greatness of their life and teachings.) All great personages, be they statesmen, kings or sages, made that one ideal the governing principle of their lives; and the function and life of the different grades of society were so arranged and maintained as to further the interests of and reflect that one principle. Social, political and economical questions had their consideration at their hands, but only in such a light as to serve as a means for the smooth working towards the spiritual ideal. The farsighted sages of our ancient days recognised the importance of the spiritual ideal not merely for the individual life but also as the governing end in the whole collective life of their country. It is a question of vital importance whether we should preserve that ideal of the ancients, making religion the governing end in the various other pursuits of life or whether we should relegate religion to a subordinate place bringing other pursuits of life to a higher level of national importance. The whole point of view and ideal will be altered by making religion dance to the tune of other pursuits of life, and our national ideal will die. We have different Purusharthas such as Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha and each has its proper place and value, but only one is considered as the predominant purpose of life, the Paramapurushartha, organising and regulating all other interests and concerns of collective life.

I have briefly indicated the basis of our national unity as implanted from the remote past supplying us all the vitality and energy to preserve ourselves amidst various vicissitudes, and the mission which India is expected to fulfil in the advancement of humanity, especially at this critical moment of the world's history. Need it be further emphasised that our national life and organisation must be based on

that foundation, thus bringing forth in a wonderful way a national self-consciousness which is the essential requisite for the healthy growth of a nation? Is it not, therefore, essential for the sons of the country to equip themselves properly to discharge their national mission and mould their lives in accordance with their chosen ideal, working towards a national organisation for fulfilling that purpose? To do this, you have to consecrate yourselves to that ideal, giving importance to other interests only in so far as they help towards its realisation. Only then may we be able eventually to carry aloft the spiritual banner to other countries of the earth. Many of you may imagine that there are initial difficulties in the harmonisation of the religious beliefs and in bringing them up to a broad platform of spiritual unity. The obstacles are neither real nor insurmountable. Ours has been the land of religious harmony and liberty of different religious standpoints, and so various original philosophic thoughts on different lines have taken birth in this congenial soil. The idea of the existence of common basic principles amid the seemingly varied beliefs and opinions has been ingrained in the Hindu mind, and any appeal to this community and the fundamental unity of religion will meet with enthusiastic and ready response from the people to an astonishing degree.

The following is the noble behest of Swami Vivekananda, the prophet of Indian nationalism;—
 “In Europe, political ideas form the national unity. In Asia, religious ideals form the national unity. The unity in religion, therefore, is absolutely necessary as the first condition of the future of India. There must be the recognition of one religion throughout the length and breadth of this land. What do I mean by one religion? Not in the sense of one religion as held among the Christians or the Mahomedans or the Buddhists. We know that our religion has certain common grounds, common to all our sects, however varying their conclusions may be, however different their claims may be. So, there are certain common grounds, and within their limitation this religion of ours admits of a marvellous, and infinite amount of liberty to think and live our own lives. We all know that, at least those of us who have thought, and what we want is to bring about these life-giving common principles of our religion and let every man,

woman and child through the length and breadth of this country understand them, know them and try to bring them out in their lives. This is the first step and therefore it has to be taken. We see how in Asia, and specially in India race difficulties, linguistic difficulties, social difficulties and national difficulties all melt away before this unifying power of religion.....Therefore the first plank in the making up of a future India, the first step that is to be hewn out of the rock of ages is this unification of religion."

The fact is, no serious effort has been made in this direction. The establishment of that national principle of unity has not been seriously taken up by our present-day workers, who are no doubt sincere in their work of national upheaval but do not understand the best way of effecting it. If only sufficient efforts be made in the proper line, the whole country would feelingly accept the ideal held forward, for it is ingrained in their heart of hearts. It will carry conviction not merely in any particular stratum but in the whole body of our society.

Of late, there have been various movements in the land started for various purposes, some similar, some slightly at variance with one another, and many working at cross purposes. If the real history, the main purpose and the present needs of our country are carefully studied and understood,—there can never be any likelihood of frittering away our energies in unnecessarily manifold undertakings. There can then be a harmonious combination of forces for the one patriotic purpose of regenerating the country, all working convergently towards that one main purpose which India was all along pledged to fulfil in the orderly evolution of the world. First of all, understand your country, not from the secondhand knowledge offered in books by foreigners, but directly from her own past history and her ancient lore of literature; then carefully work out the line along which only you can proceed to lift her up from her present position by truly feeling and truly acting for her; and when once you have modelled your policy, have Sraddha, and strain every nerve to work along the line chalked out by you, of course, not unmindful of outward conditions, nor negligent of foreign sources of knowledge, for you have to constantly adjust yourselves to such conditions and

assimilate whatever knowledge you can gain from outside, all the while taking care not to lose sight of our true national individuality.

Thus and thus alone can we be able to make India stand forth as a nation and discharge her noble mission of a spiritual guide to the over-enthusiastic nations tortured by mammon in the exhuberence of youth, showing them the path to unassailable regions of peace, mutual good-will and harmony, and thus rendering everlasting service to humanity. India is turning her watchful and anxious eye towards you, who are her hope, to make it possible for her to fulfil her glorious mission, and may God grant you that enthusiasm for the cause of the motherland and a correct understanding of her real self, and still further inspire you with the burning spirit of self-sacrifice and patriotism so as to enable you to help the consummation of universal peace by opening up the unfailing fountains of spirituality throughout the length and breadth of the world.

THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE, BENARES.

(FIFTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING)

The Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Ramkrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares, was held on the 10th November 1916 on the new premises of the Home. G. B. Lambert Esq., I.C.S. Magistrate and Collector, was in the chair. More than 700 people of all classes and communities graced the meeting.

The proceedings began with the reading of the 15th Annual Report by Rai Ravi Nandan Prasad Bahadur, the Honorary Secretary of the Home, which was greatly appreciated by all. Then on the call from the chair Mr. P. Shesadri, Principal, Central Hindu College, Benares, Rai Saheb A. C. Mukherji, Executive Officer, Municipal Board, Benares, Rai Saheb Behari Lal Sircar, Editor, "Bangabasi," Calcutta, Pandit Madan Mohan Shastri of the Sanatan Dharma Vidyalaya, Pt. Sampurnananda of the Chiefs College, Indore and Babu Bhut Nath Chatterjee, delivered their speeches. All the speakers endorsed the good work carried on by the Home of Service, its growing usefulness

and activity year after year. The Chairman then rose and delivered the following speech :—

“Gentlemen, this is the third year in succession in which I have been privileged to attend your annual meeting; the first year as a visitor and the other two years, I have had the honour of presiding. The Home of Service continues to grow in usefulness and reputation. The report, to which we have just listened, is eloquent of your needs and activities. With such a fine record of achievement behind you, it is rather a sign of encouragement than the reverse, to find that you have so many urgent needs to provide for. Workers' quarters, resident medical officer, dysentery wards, operation room, out-houses and the rest are only required because you have made yourselves indispensable to the relief and well-being of so many of your fellow men and women. In this sense I may say that I hope the time will never come when all your needs will be provided. Year after year the record of your work expands and new forms of beneficent activity develop. Only recently I have had personal experience of the Mission's readiness to co-operate in the relief of distress. The exceptional flood at the end of August caused much damage both in the city and district. Amongst private agencies the Ramkrishna Mission Home of Service was one of the first to get to work. Not only in the city where the work to be done lay practically at your doors, but in the district at large (and I believe further afield also) your emissaries were soon busily engaged in distributing food, comforts and cash reaching hard cases which are liable to escape official notice. I take this opportunity of repeating how much the help there given was appreciated by Government. I always read with great interest the typical cases which form such an admirable feature in your annual report. The living facts on pages 7—10 added to the dry bones of the statistics on page 58, should open many purse-strings in the immediate future. I hope the 1916 record will show a still further advance in every department of your work, and I can assure you that no good wishes go out to you more heartily than my own.”

Five new segregation wards were then opened by Mr. Lambert, which will enable the Home to afford relief to some of the cases it was unable to accommodate hitherto.

His Highness the Maharaja of Benares has been pleased to grant a monthly contribution of Rs. 25 to the Home for the present, and Babu Mathura Nath Mitra M. A., B. L., Attorney-at-Law, Calcutta, promised a sum of Rs. 500 for endowment in memory of his revered mother.

With a hearty vote of thanks to the chair the meeting terminated.

THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION FLOOD RELIEF WORK.

BENARES AND BALIA.

Since the publication of our last report, the relief work from our centres at Mokalpur and Balua (Dist. Benares) increased in scope, and included as the inspection was complete 20 and 28 villages respectively. Owing to the insufficiency of funds at our disposal, we had to content ourselves with supplying food grains (barley, millet &c.) to the most needy families. Below is appended a short summary of 6 weekly distributions from the two centres, including temporary help also :—

MOKALPUR CENTRE				
No. of Villages	No. of Recipients	Quantity of grains		
		Mds.	Srs.	
14	322	22		
19	464	31	20	
19	378	25	10	
19	328	21		
19	350	22	20	
20	330	21	9	
BALUA CENTRE				
13	332	22		
25	408	29		
27	277	18		
26	262	16	30	
28	231	15		
28	225	14	10	

Fortunately the condition of the people served by the above two centres is now somewhat better than before as cultivation has begun and able-bodied men are getting wages as labourers in their neighbours' fields. For this reason, since the beginning of November only one centre viz. that at Balua, has been kept, making the other a distributing centre merely.

But the condition of people in the flood-washed areas in the District of Balua is still quite miserable,

as our workers sent to inspect it report. This district being situated at a lower level than Benares, suffered much more heavily. Our workers inspected some 28 villages in the most affected area, and found not only an enormous number of huts pulled down, but in many places fields rendered useless for cultivation by the torrents digging cavities in them in some parts, and heaping mounds of sand in others. Considering relief more than necessary here, we have decided to open a centre at a village named Baria, which will relieve some 25 villages. Our work will necessarily be on a very small scale, as our funds are quite insufficient for the purpose.

But we must struggle and help as far as in us lies these hundreds of suffering men, women and children. We earnestly look forward to a hearty co-operation from our kind-hearted countrymen. India is a country where no beggar is allowed to starve as long as there is a morsel of food any where. We are confident that the piteous cries for help from these hungry, homeless fellow-beings will move all hearts to compassion throughout the length and breadth of the land, and that every one will send his mite to alleviate their sufferings. All contributions will be gratefully received and acknowledged by (1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur, Dist. Howrah; or (2) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta; or (3) The Assistant Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares City.

Saradananda

2nd Nov. '16

Secy., R. K. Mission.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES.

SWAMI Vivekananda's Tithipuja in 1917 comes off on the 15th January and that of Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna on the 23rd February; and so the public Sunday celebrations fall respectively on the 21st January and the 25th February. Reports of these celebrations should be kindly sent to the Prabuddha Bharata office as early as possible after those dates.

THE Ramkrishna Mission Sevashrama at Brindaban reports 37 indoor cases, inclusive of 10 old cases, for the month of October, 1916. Out of

these, 25 were discharged cured, 2 left treatment, 1 was sent to the Kankhal Sevashrama and 9 were still under treatment. There were 2977 entries in the outdoor register, of which 595 were new cases for the month. One helpless patient was treated in his own quarters in the city during the month. The construction of the new building is going on, the expenses for the purpose during the month being Rs. 563-11-0, while earnest appeal for funds to make up deficit in the estimated cost is still continued.

SILCHAR RAMAKRISHNA HOME

AN APPEAL.

THE districts of Sylhet and Cachar have now been deluged by disastrous floods for the last three years. Last year, the town of Silchar and nearly the whole of the Cachar district was submerged, there being several feet of water on the town roads. Even Railway girder bridges could not stand the current and were washed away with innumerable houses. But this year's flood which visited the district in October last has beaten all previous records, being much higher than the last year's flood. The people, fortunately, were able to run away with their lives to the hills and hillocks near their dwellings, leaving their belongings behind, which all, even with the houses, were washed away. Innumerable cattle and even an elephant (and two tigers were also seen floating down the current) were carried away by the flood. The entire paddy crop of the plains portion of the District was submerged and ruined. It was found possible last year to replant paddy and other crops but it would not be possible to do so at this time of the year.

In order to alleviate, to some extent, the distress of the people, the Ramakrishna Home of Service has opened a flood relief centre at Silchar. We earnestly look forward for help from the generous and kind-hearted public. Ours is a land where even not a beggar is allowed to starve as long as there is a morsel of food anywhere. We are confident that the piteous cries for help from the hungry and homeless fellow-beings will move all hearts to compassion and that everyone will send his mite to alleviate their sufferings. All contributions, however small, will be received and gratefully acknowledged by the Secretary, Ramakrishna Home of Service, Silchar (Assam).

Silchar, }
1st Nov '16 } KAMINI KUMAR CHANDA,
(Member, Viceroy's Legs. Council),
President, R-k. Home of Service.