

Prabuddha Bharata

इच्छित जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

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CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

IV.

[Place: *The house of the late Babu Nabagopal Ghose, Ramkrishnapur, Howrah.*

Year: *1897 (January and February).*

Subjects: *Consecration of the symbol of worship at the house of Nabagopal Babu.—Swamiji's humility—the deep self-devotion of all members of the family of Nabagopal Babu to Sri Ramakrishna—the holy Mantram for prostrating before Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna.]*

Babu Nabagopal Ghose, a great devotee of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna had built a new house for residence at Ramkrishnapur, in Howrah, on the western side of the Ganges. At the time of his buying the land for that house, he was very glad to learn that the name of the place was 'Ramkrishnapur,' for that name whenever uttered would remind him of his *Ishta-deva* (the chosen object of spiritual self-consecration). A few days after the house had been built, Swamiji returned to Calcutta from the West for the first time. Hence Mr. Ghose and his wife cherished the keenest desire that the image of Sri Ramakrishna should be installed in their house by Swamiji. Mr. Ghose had come to the Math and made that suggestion a few days ago, and Swamiji had agreed to this proposal.

To-day the festival was to come off at the residence of Nabagopal Babu on that occasion and the Sannyasins of the Math and the householder devotees of Thakur had all been warmly invited there. So the house was decorated to-day with flags and banners and at the front gate were placed the auspicious jars and plantain trees, an ornamental gateway of Deodar leaves and festoons in rows of mango leaves and of flowers. Ramkrishnapur was echoing to-day with the shouts of "Jai Ramakrishna" (Victory to Ramakrishna).

Hiring three small boats from the Math all the Sannyasins and young Brahmacharins living there accompanied by Swamiji reached the bathing-ghat at Ramkrishnapur. Swamiji was dressed in the simplest garb of ochre with turban on his head and barefooted. On

both sides of the road through which he was to walk to the house of Nabagopal Babu from the bathing ghat at Ramkrishnapur, were standing multitudes of people to see him. Directly he got down at the *ghât*, Swamiji commenced singing the famous hymn—"who art Thou laid on the lap of a poor Brahmin mother shedding lustre all around; oh, who art Thou that hast come naked into the room of the hut" etc.—and walked on, himself playing on the *khol* (a kind of Indian drum elongated and narrowed at both ends.) Two or three more of these *kholes* or *mridangas* were also thrummed on in accompaniment, and all the devotees assembled there followed singing in a chorus. The whole road and riverside resounded with the sound of their drums and their ecstatic dance. While moving thus on, the party stood for a short while at the door of Dr. Ramlal Ghose. Ramlal Babu also came out in great haste and agitation from the house and joined the moving party. People had thought that Swamiji would move along the street to-day with pomp and display befitting his fame. But when he was found walking like the other Sadhus of the Math indifferently dressed and barefooted and beating the drum swung round his body, many could not even recognise him at first, and when able to identify him after queries to others, they exclaimed, "Oh, is he the world-conqueror Swami Vivekananda!" Struck at his uncommon humility they praised him unanimously and made their way resound with the shouts of "Jai Ramakrishna!"

The heart of Nabagopal Babu, the ideal householder, was filled with joy to-day. Making the most elaborate preparations for the service of the Lord, his favoured devotees and the chosen associates of his life-drama on earth, he was rushing hither and thither in eager supervision and breaking forth at intervals with joyous shouts of "Jai Ram, Jai Ram."

By and by when the party just reached the gate of the house there was at once a flourish of conch-shells and bells from within the house. Releasing himself from the *mridanga* and taking rest for a short while in the parlour, Swamiji went upstairs to see the chapel. The chapel was floored with marble stones. In the centre was the throne and upon it was the porcelain image of Thakur. There was not the least defect in any respect in the arrangement of materials and adjuncts required for a Hindu's image-worship. Swamiji was much pleased by their inspection.

The wife of Nabagopal Babu prostrated herself before Swamiji with the other female members of the house and then took to fanning him.

Hearing Swamiji speaking highly of every arrangement the respected house-wife addressed him and said, "What have we got ourselves to entitle us to the privilege of worshipping Thakur?—A poor home and poor means! Do bless us please by installing Thakur here out of your own kindness!"

In reply to this, Swamiji jocosely said, "Your Thakur, never had in his fourteen generations such a marble-inlaid house to live in! He had his birth in that rural hay-thatched cottage and lived his days on indifferent means. And if he does not live here so excellently served, where else should he live?" Swamiji's words made everybody laugh out.

Now, with his body painted in ashes and gracing the seat of the priest like Shiva's self revealed to sight, Swamiji commenced invocation of Thakur. Swami Prakashananda sat near him and began to prompt from the formal texts. The various functions of the worship thus gradually finished, conches were blown and bells rung for the concluding adoration in which Swami Prakashananda officiated.

After this *Nirâjana* (i. e. *âratrî* or adoration of the image by means of waving lights,

etc. in accompaniment with auspicious music, practised in the Hindu worship after all other functions have been finished), Swamiji while still sitting in the worship-room composed extempore this *mantram* for prostration before Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna:

स्थापकाय च धर्मस्य सर्वधर्मस्वरूपिणे
अवतारवरिष्ठाय रामकृष्णाय ते नमः ।

“ I bow down to Ramakrishna, who established *the* religion, embodying in himself the reality of all religions and being thus the foremost of all divine Incarnations.”

All having prostrated before Thakur with this *mantram*, the disciple read out a *stava* (prayer in Sanskrit verse) of Thakur. In this way the special worship came to a close. The devotees, then, assembled downstairs after partaking of some refreshments and joined in a *kirtana* (singing in chorus the praise of

the Lord). Swamiji remained upstairs. The female members of the house saluting Swamiji asked him various questions about religious practice and accepted his blessings.

The disciple stood amazed at the whole-hearted devotion for Ramakrishna that characterised the members of this family and considered himself blessed in this life to be in such company.

The devotees present then took *prosad* (food consecrated by being first offered to God) and after the usual ablutions repaired downstairs to rest there awhile. Then as the evening approached the assembly of devotees broke up in small parties to return homeward. The disciple also left in the same carriage with Swamiji and taking a boat near the ghat at Ramkrishnapur and talking with him blissfully on various subjects proceeded towards Baghbazar.



OCCASIONAL NOTES.

TRADITION of marine commerce combined with spiritual romanticism in mediæval Bengal has bequeathed to us of India the beautiful story of an adventurous young merchant, Srimanta, who was caught with his cargo ships in a terrible tempest on the sea, when, by dint of his deep simple faith, he was vouchsafed the vision divine of the Mother in Her wondrous lotus-seated form riding the waves and bringing the furious elements into sudden submission. How sorely in need of this Srimanta's vision stands the storm-tossed vessel of our national progress in India!!

For the whole surface of our collective life presents now the aspect of a tempestuous ocean on which waves lash against one another in endless confusion. Thoughts, sentiments and activities flow out and commingle on all

sides only to create confusion within confusion, for they refuse to recognise any one main-current along which they must all rally. This tempest of disorganisation is ceaselessly hurling the waters of our collective life into the fatal form of conflicting waves that threaten to engulf the nation at no distant date in inevitable ruin; and absolutely no other remedy will avail us now except that vision of the Mother which the miracle of Srimanta's life embodies for us.

For when the Indian mind went out abroad into the world outside to find out the secret of those world-forces which had given it the shock of a rude awakening, it was soon rewarded in its search by the discovery of that wonderful principle of organisation which was welding large groups of individuals into powerful nations. It saw with bated breath how each

country as an abstract aggregate was being concretised by the new miracle of an ardent patriotism into a supreme god or goddess, and flushed with hope and confidence it turned back to its own home to work out the same miracle. But the voice of its own history uttered through the oracle of Western research spoke to it in discordant notes, and the great quest for the Mother whom patriotism was to enthrone and crown as the divine genius of the country and its history remains still unaccomplished. But the limit of patience has been easily exceeded in the case of many sons of India, duped by the glare of political nationalism, and they are rushing forward with a clay idol of the Mother curved out with the borrowed scalpel of political ambition.

The issue has consequently become very much confused. The bias of politics has engendered a faithless attitude in our mind, for we would demand credentials of political promise from any vision of the Mother that may be granted to us over the horizon of our past history. We have thus only a vacillating faith in our Mother's gift of religion, the gift which has nourished for all time both the body and the soul of her sons and the cultures of a whole world. We doubt the self-sufficiency of her spiritual bounty, and want to give a political turn to her motherly dispensations. Aping Western methods has blinded us to the truth that the religion of which our Mother is the sole dispenser in this world is strong not only to save our souls but also to build a nation, for it is collective purpose which unites and organises, and this purpose may be spiritual instead of political. We have sold ourselves, mind and soul, to the creed of a political ideal governing all other pursuits, while the divine form of our Mother embodies the spiritual ideal governing all other pursuits. Naturally therefore we are wilfully depriving ourselves of the only salvation preordained for us as a nation,—aye, that

vision of the Mother which is to lead the storm-tossed vessel of our progress through the troublous waters of life.

And still, from the very depths of our heart, we are yearning for this vision, for in every sphere of life and thought, our gropings and strivings betray this yearning, and repeated reverses and rebuffs fail to kill it. Though we are shutting out the vision by thousand mistakes we are making on all sides, there is no question that we are dying for a glimpse of the Mother at the touch of whose feet the devouring waves would yield and bear us onwards to national life and success! No, we are not wanting in this yearning of patriotism; what we only lack is Srimanta's faith,—unquestioning faith in the Mother, faith in her spiritual bounty wherein she holds the threads of our destiny, faith in her own peculiar ways of organising life for us, ways that lead to deathlessness both individual and collective. This want of faith makes all the keen but undefined longings of our patriotism evaporate in sporadic and uncorrelated outbursts. For so long as the real form of our Mother is not installed on the throne of our hearts, our offerings of patriotism are sure to miscarry.

Our patriotism burns but sheds no light. We have just enough of warmth, but very little illumination. So we have to see things in the borrowed light of Western patriotism and set our compass towards a political goal, which we hope to spiritualise eventually in amusing deference to a vague mentality that we claim as our national heritage! Our patriots have raised the cry of "spiritualising politics," as if the process is as mechanical as that of sugar-coating! Great potentates in the West also manage to spiritualise their wars of aggression by pious proclamations! Even the most bloodthirsty politics feigns to dilute itself with liberal doses of religion. It is almost the fashion for diplomacy to strut

forth in the long robe of religion. All this masquerading is like hush-money which politics offers to pay to religion for that place in the scheme of human life which it has usurped! And unfortunately it seems as if in the West religion has really been bought off; for there we find in national life the spectacle of a wonderful religion of the accommodating species which instead of governing all other ends of life by its self-created values and self-evolved necessities, mutely surrenders all its organising and governing rights and lends itself to perpetual exploitation by the political end!

And Indian patriotism has unconsciously and naturally imbibed these exploiting tactics, for here also our patriots are expecting religion to burn its incense of inspiration before the high altar of politics! And that is unmistakably the sense meant to be conveyed by the catching phrase—"spiritualising politics"! Live for politics, but let the inspiration, the enthusiasm, the madness of self-sacrifice, come from the brewery of religion! Hold up the banner of politics, sure,—but not with the grip of lust but of religion! It is the new god of the Political End that is installed in the centre of our heart, and religion is asked to consecrate it, watch it, fortify it and defend it to the last! But pray, why should religion do all this for your politics? True religion kneels only before an altar which it has itself raised; but is your politics a creature, in this sense, of your religion? Is the political end in your life created and governed by religion? Did you allow the spiritual end in your life to define and organise according to its own supreme needs the whole system of your ends in life? For that is exactly what *spiritualising* all life's ends really means.

water, but it implies the absolute subserviency of politics to the spiritual end. In this process of spiritualising, it is not politics which forms the base and reacts on religion to adapt it to its own needs, for that is exactly what we should call the 'politicalising' of religion, but it is rather religion which forms the base and reacts on politics to mould and use it according to its own intrinsic necessities and requirements. Politics can never be said to have been spiritualised so long as it claims to define and pursue its ends on its own initiative and account, and not as issues imposed upon it by the pursuit of the spiritual end. We really spiritualise our politics only when our religion *creates* for us our politics, and not when any self-constituted politics merely succeeds in establishing the spiritual utility of its pursuit. In spiritualised politics, not only the results and methods of pursuit are submitted to spiritual valuation but also the motives, for religion determines the system of values with which politics is then pursued, and no political aspiration can overreach the limit of our spiritual needs. In politics, then, we politically work for, and achieve also, what is spiritually first a necessity. Politics, thus, becomes only a particular means and method of pursuing the spiritual end in that aspect of our collective life which represents our dealings with the political state.

And in the Indian type of nationalism, this political aspect of collective life has never been and will never be the central, governing aspect therein. Indian nationalism as bequeathed to us by our history and therefore predestined beyond all modification recognises only the sovereignty of the spiritual end of human life, by which the pursuit of every other end has to be defined, determined and directed. Indian nationalism will never recognise the absolute value of any political ideal such as self-government, home rule and the like, for it shapes our political aims

Spiritualised politics does not mean something like sugar-coated medicine or ærated

and ideals out of practical needs that *actually* arise from the collective pursuit of the spiritual end. No political hope therefore can ever form the pivot of Indian nationalism and our patriots are throwing this nationalism overboard by seeking to rally their countrymen round their political cries and shibboleths. They can never spiritualise their politics, however loudly they may profess to do so, if they accept politics, instead of religion, as the organising principle of national unity. They are now in a confounded pre-

dicament no doubt; their patriotism is exasperated by the gulf of disorganisation yawning under their feet on all sides and they are impatiently knocking at the door of politics for that secret of organisation which has made history in the West. But that door is closed against them *by the hand of Providence*, for in the hour of dark despair, they may turn back with a flash of self-recollection and the real form of the Mother may burst forth on their vision to rally her sons for ever round her lotus-seat of Indian nationalism.



SHAKTI AND MAYA.

THE redoubtable Advaitist and sturdy ascetic, Totapuri, strongly maintained that a Vedantist could not believe in Shakti or Power. If causality itself is an illusion, what is the use of admitting any power to cause? If the Becoming is unreal, the power to become is a false hypothesis of the intellect. If Brahman is the only reality and everything else is Maya, it is Maya as well to apply the principle of causation and say that everything comes from Shakti or Power.

We understand clearly the argument of this great Sannyasin to whom it was given to act as the Guru of Sri Ramakrishna in the Advaita phase of his spiritual realisations. But the disciple lived, moved and had his being in his Mother, and for all that, outstripped all traditions by his speedy success and perfection in the practice and realisation of the Advaita. And in the playing of his role of the Guru, the hour struck for Totapuri to accept from the disciple before leaving him the wonderful *Guru-dakshinā** of a new factor of belief and practice, and by virtue of

this parting offering which the Mother gave him on behalf of Her Ramakrishna, Totapuri found his Vedanta enriched and perfected for ever.

The Mahâtma was suffering from dysentery. From small beginnings and negligible symptoms, the disease was developing into an acute chronic form. He had already thought of leaving the place, where he had allowed himself to be detained longer than his calculations and his usual practice. It was a mystery he could not unravel as to what kept him rivetted to this place and to the company of Sri Ramakrishna. Time and again as his illness had progressed, he had been on the point of broaching his intention to leave, but every time the impulse had failed him at the right moment,—how he could not make out. But the gravity of the disease increased as days went by, and all the treatment arranged for by Sri Ramakrishna proved of very little avail.

One night the pangs of illness increased beyond the physical endurance of even an ascetic like Totapuri, and he found that even his mental concentration which used to waft him beyond all physical sufferings into the peace of Samadhi was beginning to fail him

* The formal offering or gift which a disciple has to make to his Guru at the close of his period of tuition.

at last. He repeatedly tried in vain to detach his consciousness from the body, and then thwarted in his wonted achievement, he resolved in a huff to give up this rotten body, this ricketty cage of flesh and bones, that dared to withhold him from self-realisation! With this strong resolve and the clear sense of bodily nothingness working on his mind, the great Sadhu proceeded towards the Ganges to drown himself in her waters. Swiftly he waded through the noisy cackling ripples and rushed on and on; but, ah, what is this! Still no reaching beyond his depth? Is the Ganges denuded of her waters to-day? Half the bed of the river has been walked over; the other bank is closing upon his view in the darkness of the night; and yet the waters fall short of his own depth! Wonderful Maya indeed, wonderful miracle! In a flash, the scales dropped off from his mind's eye! And he cried out in spite of himself, "Oh, Mother of inscrutable power,"—the Mother absorbing into Her presence all land and water, all illness and health, all knowledge and ignorance, all life and death, aye, everything that he saw, heard, thought or imagined! She who transformed all non-being into being, all being into non-being, who not willing, none of embodied existence was freed from Her control, was even free to die! And yet beyond and beyond, the same Mother existed as the supreme realisation, as Brahman. This vision of the Mother burst upon Totapuri's mind to-day, and lost in overwhelming love and with the Mother's name exclaimed unremittingly from his lips, the doughty Vedantist retraced his steps towards that bank of the river from which he had descended.

A new Samadhi had quenched all the ailments of body to-night, and the transfigured Sannyasin spent the whole night by the side of his fire in the ecstasy of a new vision. There early in the morning Sri Ramakrishna met him, and with an overflowing exultation the events of the night were recounted to

him. A whole life's ignorance had vanished in a moment and with it all the illness. "I see now," he concluded, "that it was to impart this priceless lesson of my life that the mother has been keeping me tied down to this place. And now, do, oh, beg of your Mother leave for me to go!" In smiling accent the reply came, "Well, well, what of your erelong denying the Mother, what of all your disputes about Shakti being false? Now do you see, how the truth is brought home to you? The Mother had already made me understand before that Brahman and Shakti are one, even as fire and its *shakti* to burn are not different from each other."

This interesting anecdote of Sri Ramakrishna's life settles for ever the question of Vedanta *versus* Tantra. In fact, the old attitude of Totapuri represented only a limited phase of Vedanta, just as the iconoclastic spirit which inspires some Vedantists to run amuck against all forms of dualistic worship is quite an irregular development of Advaitism.

In India, every doctrine embodies not only theory but practice as well. It is not merely what we have to think but also what we have to live. So nobody should allow his Vedanta to run away with his intellect leaving his actual life to lag behind. Our Vedanta to be practical must take cognizance not merely of the real that we want to be but also of the unreal that we happen to be. This unreal is not merely intellectual, it is vital, it is life; so, it is not merely by denying it through intellect but by denying it through life, not merely by *affirming beyond* it but by *living beyond* it, that the unreal can be made to yield place to the real. So the practice of the Vedanta is not simply a process of intellection but a process of life, and very exceptional indeed is the case of a man whose concrete life proceeds perfectly abreast of his abstract intellect,—a man who at once becomes in life what he seeks in thought to be.

The theory of Vedanta, therefore, has never ignored the necessary conditions and exigencies of practice. Its doctrine of the *Vyavaharik*, or the phenomenal, affords room enough for our admitting in practice the concreteness of life as far as necessary. Even in the most advanced wing of Vedantic discipline, we find the standpoint of concrete subjectivity recognised as the starting-point in practice. There it is the "I," the concrete selfhood, which forms the provisional reality to be gradually resolved into absolute consciousness. For instance, out and out Vedantists like Totapuri would not object to duality of ultimate terms in the actual process of such resolution, be it in the form of a *Tat* and a *Twam* or of a *Sah* and an *Aham* and so on. And so also in all other forms of discipline accepted by Vedanta as interpreted by Sankaracharya in his commentary on the Brahmasutras, we find the starting-point in practice has been planted more or less afield within the realm of Maya. Vedantic practice, therefore, has never tended to fight shy of the concrete actualities of life. Its Mayavada has never obliged it to lose itself in the endless inanities of intellectual abstraction.

While always affirming in thought that it is all Maya, Vedanta boldly takes the world for all it is worth and seeks to work out the same affirmation through the life it chooses to live in that world. Or in other words, the negation implied in Mayavada has to establish itself not only through the intellect but also through life, and in order to do so, life is first allowed what measure of commonsense reality it may happen to claim in any case, and then it is steadily submitted to the progressive assertion of its unreality. This progressive self-assertion of Mayavada is the principle which formulates every phase of Vedantic practice, or for the matter of that, every form of Hindu worship and belief. No Hindu sect can deny that it recognises Mayavada as a part and parcel of its doctrines in some form or other, however vague or feeble.

In this way, by allowing itself different degrees of self-assertion, Mayavada finds it possible to be reconciled to various symbolistic views of life and the world. It accepts them as mediating stages of belief necessary for spiritual practice. The Shaktivada of Tantra with all its richness and perfection of development constitutes one such symbolistic view of life and the world, and that Vedantist must have missed the central secret and method of Vedantic practice who insists on regarding the Shaktivada of Tantra as antagonistic or alien to the Mayavada of Vedanta. Totapuri's Vedanta was defective only in this respect. Not that his Mayavada was impatient of every allowance made in favour of accepting intellectual symbols for facility of practice, for then he would have deprecated even the use of the highest Vedantic formulæ such as the *Tattwamasi* as media for practice; but what really struck him as alien to what he regarded as Vedantic traditions was the acceptance of the intellectual category or symbol of Shakti or power. It was this limitedness of his Vedanta which he was enabled to outgrow by coming into personal contact with the living embodiment of all the phases of Hindu spiritual consciousness.

The Shaktivada of Tantra is not an improvement on the Mayavada of Vedanta, but only its symbolisation through the chromatics of sentiment and concept. Analysis proves that the function which gives human intellect its definition is that of relating percepts or concepts in time, space and causation. But of these three modes of relating, causation or the relation of causality is the most fundamental one, for we find the intellect asking the 'reason why' in respect of even relations of space and time, and in the 'why' of a fact, the 'where' and 'when' of it are supposed to be necessarily accounted for, but not the *vice versa*. So this asking why, this relating of cause to effect, is the most comprehensive and fundamental category of the intellect.

Now one of the earliest problems for Vedanta was that if the intellect is allowed to differentiate reality into cause and effect, what relation of time should be supposed to obtain between this cause and its effect: is it a relation of co-existence or a relation of sequence? And true to its fundamental doctrine that all differentiation in absolute reality through intellectual relation is unreal, Vedanta concluded that just as oneness of reality is comparatively truer than its duality as cause and effect, so the co-existence beyond time of cause and effect is comparatively truer than their sequence in time. When, thus, Vedanta takes for granted the application to reality of the intellectual category of causality, it comes to admit a new scale or order of truth placed below its highest philosophy of the Absolute. This lower order of truth is embodied in the Vedantic Karya-karana-vada and the higher order in the Vedantic Mayavada. The latter denies all differentiations in the Absolute, characterising such intellectual differentiations as Maya which cannot be explained, for every explanation begs the question, while the former theory of a lower order of truth, represented by Karya-karana-vada, provisionally sanctions certain differentiations in the Absolute in the interest of practical spirituality. It is in these permissible differentiations, through which the Vedantic Absolute was sought to be intellectually conceived for the sake of practical spiritual discipline and worship, that the Shaktivada of Tantra had its source and origin.

When we differentiate reality into cause and effect, we imply in the cause a power or Shakti to produce the effect, and we affirm that this Shakti co-exists and is one with the cause. This intellectual postulate of Shakti is the first and one-half constituent of Tantrik Shaktivada, the second half being the identity of Shakti and effect, that is, the fact of Shakti *becoming* the effect. The Vedantic theory of cause and effect (Karya-karana-vada)

embodies exactly the same truth. It maintains that what we call the effect was, before its production as effect, co-existent and identical with what we call the cause, and explains that this real non-difference between the cause and the effect *appears* to play the role of sequence on the stage of time (मूलकारणमेवान्त्यात्कार्यात्तेन तेन कार्याकारेण नटवत्सर्वव्यवहारास्पदत्वं प्रतिपद्यते, Sankara's commentary, Brahmasutra, II--I--18). Only the Tantrik Shaktivada takes advantage of a further middle term Shakti, and instead of directly identifying the cause and the effect identifies this middle term with the cause on the one hand and with the effect on the other. But this conception of the link of Shakti is not new to Vedanta, for it was in vogue even in the earliest Vedantic literature. So Sankara in his commentary requires that if this conception of Shakti is to be imported into the Vedantic theory of cause and effect, we must not omit to declare that this Shakti is one with both the cause and the effect,—शक्तिश्च कारणस्य कार्यनियमार्थं कल्प्यमाना नान्याऽस्ती वा कार्यं नियच्छेत् । असत्त्वाविशेषादन्यत्त्वाविशेषाच्च । तस्मात्कारणस्यात्मभूता शक्तिः शक्तेश्चात्मभूतं कार्यं । And as the Tantrik Shaktivada fulfils this important condition to the letter, it would be simply purile for any advocate of Tantra to assert that the Shaktivada of Tantra adds any new laurels to Hinduism which Vedanta philosophy with its Mayavada failed to earn for it.

And then again this Shaktivada, which constituted the most important basis for the Tantrik restatement of Vedic or Vedantic culture, did not set up any opposition to another central doctrine involved in the Vedantic Mayavada. It is of the very essence of Mayavada to view the Becoming or the creation as a Vivartta or an unreal superimposition and not as a Parinama or actual modification. In this respect also, we find in Vedanta, however, the acceptance of two

standpoints and orders of truth. When for the sake of practical spirituality, differentiations are provisionally taken for granted in the Absolute, the *Upādhis* or the unreal superimpositions are conceded the hue and garb of reality, representing more or less, therefore, actual modifications in the Unmodified Absolute. In this way, Parinamavada is provisionally admitted into the practice of Vedanta, though overshadowed, as it were, all the while by the superior theory of Vivarttavada. In fact, Vedanta always allows us to profit by lower standpoints for contemplating truth, provided we bear in mind at the same time that such contemplation is only provisional. Exactly the same sort of freedom is allowed to us by Tantra in the interest of our spiritual practice. From any treatise on Tantrik philosophy and ritual, we can easily prove that Tantra recognises the Vedantic Vivarttavada, never admitting that the modifications of Supreme Shakti are absolutely real, or real in the sense of actual Parinama, and yet at the same time, there is ungrudging sanction for our regarding all the impersonations of Shakti as real in so far as our practical worship and culture of sentiment are concerned. This readiness to harmonise and provide for all disparity in spiritual temperament, capacity or mood is an important characteristic of Vedanta which Tantra evidently inherited to all possible extent. In fact, it is the peculiar glory of the Indian religious consciousness to have recognised from the remotest past the sterling truth that the human mind which goes on working out various systems of belief and practice does not really travel from error to truth but from lower truth to higher truth. Whether it be the Upanishad declaring that all systems of philosophy and their commentaries come out as breath from the same Supreme One or whether it be the Tantra describing the body of Shiva as composed of the six systems of philosophy, we find always the same conception of truth allowing

itself to be pursued through a gradation of beliefs and practices that would ultimately lead men of varying temperament and capacity to where all human symbols are absorbed in the intrinsic richness of realisation.

So if a Vedantist in some special mood of mind or in some special stage of his spiritual practice repudiates Tantra or other systems of philosophy, the exclusiveness of his attitude should not be regarded as detracting from that universality of Vedanta by virtue of which it is entitled to give its name to the whole system of ancient culture evolved by the Vedic spiritual consciousness. Even when Sankaracharya carried his polemical warfare against dualistic philosophies and sects in the name of Vedanta, his idea evidently was not to kill out all dualism and ritualism from religious life in his country, but to prove that they could not justify their validity by argument if they refused to recognise the Vedantic doctrine of the Absolute as their ultimate background and goal. What he really combated throughout his life was this refusal, this blind sectarianism, this undue obstinate emphasis on points of divergence that were provisional and circumstantial; and he combated all these more in the interests of a harmonious, organic system of Vedic culture than in the interests of any particular Advaitist sect of his own. For instance, we all know how vehemently he returned again and again to his attack on the Sankhya doctrine of the Pradhana; but was he blind or irreconcilably opposed to all the useful contributions appropriated to the ancient culture and literature of Vedanta from Sankhyan sources of thought? No; he says, **येन त्वंशेन न विरुध्यते तेनेष्टमेव सांख्ययोग-स्मृत्योः सावकाशत्वम् ।** He admits that there are elements of Sankhyan thought which are not opposed to the peculiar trend and genius of Vedic culture. These elements are absorbable, but he never neglected to protest strongly against the Sankhyan conception of

Prakriti as an independent entity or that of the manifoldness of Atman or Purusha.

Vedanta, therefore, has always professed to stand for an organic harmony in the evolution of our spiritual culture in India, and it was this Vedanta which strove to restate itself as Tantra when peculiar circumstances demanded such restatement from a particular period of that evolution. In none of its essential features, therefore, Tantra can seek to join issue or try conclusions with Vedanta, and self-deluded must be the champion of Tantra who is blinded by his sectarian zeal to take up cudgels against any Vedantic doctrine on behalf of any such Tantric theory as that of Shaktivada! We propose to take up in future some other features of Tantrik belief and practice and discuss how they also represent like Shaktivada only new practical developments of Vedantic truths.

EPISTLES OF
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

[Here begins a series of translated extracts from letters written to Babu Pramadas Mitra of Benares, an orthodox Hindu the memory of whose profound erudition and piety lives embalmed in our traditions. These letters reflect an interesting period of Swamiji's life, when the pervading gloom of his Master's disappearance from earth and the magnitude of the divine trust imposed by him on his life were weighing heavily on his soul, and in deep uncertainty and suspense about the great opening from within and without which was to lead him to the fulfilment of that trust, his mighty mind, in a faithful attitude of waiting and self-preparation, moved with a powerful swing, that gathered strength with repeated obstructions, towards the life, so listless but concentrated, of the wandering monk.]

XCIII.

(Translated from Bengali.)

Vrindaban,
12th Aug. 1888.

Dear Sir,*

Leaving Sri Ajodhya † I have reached the holy Vrindaban, and am putting up at Kala Babu's Kunja. In city the mind feels contracted. Places like Radhakund, I have heard, are delightful; but they are at some distance from the town. I have a mind to proceed very shortly to Hardwar. In case you have any acquaintance there, it would be doing me much favour if you kindly write him an introduction for me. What about your visiting this place? Please reply early and oblige. * *

Yours etc.

Vivekananda.

XCIV

(Translated from Bengali.)

Vrindaban,
20th Aug. 1888.

Dear Sir,

An aged brother-disciple of mine who has just come back to Vrindaban after visiting Kedarnath and Badrinath, met G—. Twice did G— ascend up to Thibet and Bhotan. He is in great happiness, and felt overwhelmed and wept at the meeting. He spent the winter at Kankhal. The *Karua* (water-pot) you gave him he still keeps with himself. He is coming back and is expected at Vrindaban this very month. So in the hope of meeting him, I postpone my going to Hardwar for some days. Please convey my deepest respects to the Brahmin devotee of Shiva

* The words with which Babu Pramadas Mitra is addressed in these letters are not literally translated here. The form invariably argues high regard on the part of Swamiji for a person looked upon as a well-wisher and patron of his cause.

† The names of holy places are often prefixed with a "Sri" in Indian vernaculars.

who keeps you company and accept the same yourself. * * †

Yours etc.

Vivekananda.

—
XCV.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

Om, salutation to Bhagavan Ramakrishna!

The Baranagore Math,
19th Nov. 1888.

Respected Sir,

I have received the two books sent by you and am filled with joy to read your wonderfully affectionate letter which betokens your broad, generous heart. No doubt, it is due to good merit of my previous births that you show, sir, so much kindness to a mendicant like me who lives on begging. By sending your gift of the Vedanta, you have laid under lifelong obligation not only myself but the whole group of Sri Ramakrishna's Saunyasins. They all bow down to you in respect. It is not for my own sake alone that I asked of you the copy of Panini's grammer; a good deal of study, in fact, is given to Sanskrit scriptures in this Math. The Vedas may well be said to have fallen quite out of vogue in Bengal. Many here in this Math are conversant with Sanskrit and they have a mind to master the Sambhita portions of the Vedas. They are of opinion that what has to be done must be done to a finish. So, believing that a full measure of proficiency in the Vedic language is impossible without mastering first Panini's grammer, which is the best available for the purpose, a copy of the latter was felt to be a necessity. The grammatical work, Mugdhabodha, we studied in our boyhood, is superior in many respects to Laghukaumudi. You are yourself, however, a deeply learned man and, therefore, the best judge

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† Many of these Bengali letters close with a Sanskrit ejaculation meaning "more is needless" and the subscription is "at your service, Vivekananda."

we can have in this matter. So if you consider the Ashtadhyayi (Panini's) to be the most suitable in our case, you will lay us under a debt of lifelong gratitude by sending the same (provided you feel it convenient and so inclined). This Math is not wanting in men of perseverance, talent and penetrative intellect. I may hope that by the grace of our Master, they will acquire in a short time Panini's system and then succeed in restoring the Vedas to Bengal. I beg to send you two photographs of my revered Master and two parts of some of his teachings as given in his homely style, compiled and published by a certain gentleman,— hoping you will give us the pleasure of your acceptance. My health is now much improved and I expect the blessings of meeting you within two or three months. * *

Yours etc.

Vivekananda.

—
XCVI.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

"Victory to God!"

Baranagore,
4th Feb. 1889.

Dear Sir,

For some reasons, I have been feeling to-day agitated and cramped in my mind, when your letter to me of invitation to the heavenly city of Benares reached. I accept it as the call of Vishweshwara (Lord of the Universe). I am going now on a pilgrimage to the place of my Master's nativity, and after sojourn of a few days there, I shall present myself to you. He must be made of stone whose mind does not melt at the sight of Kâshi and its Lord! I feel now much improved in health. My regards to Jnanananda. I am reaching over there as soon as I can. It all depends ultimately on Vishweshwara's will. * * More when we meet.

Yours etc.

Vivekananda.

BRAHMOPANISHAT.

ब्रह्मोपनिषत्

(Continued from page 133)

अथास्य पुरुषस्य चत्वारि स्थानानि भवन्ति
नाभिर्हृदयं कण्ठं मूर्ध्नि। तत्र चतुष्पादं ब्रह्म
विभाति। जागरितं स्वप्नं सुषुप्तं तुरीयमिति
जागरिते ब्रह्मा स्वप्ने विष्णुः सुषुप्ते रुद्रस्तु-
रीयं परमाक्षरं स आदित्यश्च विष्णुश्चेश्वरश्च
स पुरुषः स प्राणः स जीवः सोऽग्निः से-
श्वरश्च जाग्रत्तेषां मध्ये यत्परं ब्रह्म विभाति।
स्वयममनस्कमश्रोत्रमपाणिपादं ज्योतिर्वजितं न
तत्र लोका न लोका वेदा न वेदा देवा न देवा
यज्ञा न यज्ञा माता न माता पिता न पिता
स्नुषा न स्नुषा चाण्डालो न चाण्डालः पौल्क-
सां न पौल्कसः श्रमणो न श्रमणः पशवो न पशव-
स्तापसो न तापस इत्येकमेव परं ब्रह्म विभाति।
हृद्याकाशे यद्विज्ञानमाकाशं तत्सुषिरमाकाशं तद्वे-
द्यं हृद्याकाशं यस्मिन्निदं संचरति विचरति यस्मि-
न्निदं सर्वमोतं प्रोतं। सं विभोः प्रजा ज्ञायेरन्।
न तत्र देवा ऋषयः पितर ईशते प्रतिबुद्धः सर्व-
विदिति ॥२॥

Now this Purusha (*a*) has four seats (*b*), the navel, the heart, the throat and the head. In these shines forth the Brahman with four aspects: the state of wakefulness, of dream, of dreamless sleep, and the fourth or transcendental state. In the wakeful state, He is Brahmá (*c*); in the dreaming state, He is Vishnu (*d*); in dreamless sleep, He is Rudra (*e*); and the fourth state is the Supreme Indestructible One (*f*), and He again (*g*) is the Sun, the Vishnu, the Ishwara, He the Purusha, He the Prana, He the Jiva or the animate being, He the fire, the Ishwara, and He is the wakeful state; (yea) the Brahman which shines transcendent within all these! In Itself (*h*), It is devoid of mind, of ears,

of hands and feet, of light. There neither are the worlds existing nor non-existing (*i*), neither are the Vedas or the Devas or the sacrifices existing nor non-existing, neither is the mother or father or daughter-in-law existing nor non-existing, neither is Chandála's son or Pulkasa's son existing nor non-existing, neither is the mendicant existing nor non-existing, so neither all the creatures or the ascetics; and thus only the One Highest Brahman shines there. Within the recess of the heart (*j*) is that Akâsha of consciousness,—that Akâsha with many openings (*k*), the aim of knowledge, within the space of the heart—in which all this (universe outside) evolves and moves about, in which all this is warped and woofed (*l*) (as it were). (Who knows this,) knows fully all creations. There the Devas, the Rishis, the Pitris, have no control, for being fully awakened, one becomes the knower of all truth (*m*).

(*a*) *This Purusha.*—That is, this central being or entity who as Prana projects the web of sense-functions and intellectual relations and who proceeds like the leech from one state of consciousness to another.

(*b*) *Four seats etc.*—It is noteworthy that already in some of the Upanishads we find mention made of special centres or seats of consciousness in the body forming stages of spiritual realisation for the process of Yoga or mental concentration. Patanjali spoke of seven planes in the ascent of mind towards perfection in concentration. But specification of centres and nerves in the human body in connection with the process of Yoga had been going on since the Upanishadic ages, till this scheme of localisation matured into the Tantrik *Shatchakra* [i. e. the six centres, Muladhara (somewhere in the sexual plexus), Swadhishtar (about half-way above the last centre), Manipura (navel), Anâhata (heart), Vishuddhi (throat), Ajnâ (junction of eyebrows), penetrating beyond which the mind loses itself in the supreme centre of Sahasrara in the crown of the head.] Here we find only four seats or centres mentioned, of which the navel is substituted by the eye in one of the concluding verses later on. In that verse, the

eye is associated with the waking state, the throat with the dreaming state, the heart with the state of dreamless sleep and the head with the fourth or transcendental state. This order of correspondence apparently differs in significance from what we find maintained in the science of mental concentration. But the four states of consciousness are treated here not as they belong to individual man but as they belong to his universal self. It is the Purusha in His undifferentiated being who is said to manifest Himself in these four centres, and man has to concentrate on His manifestations in these centres in order to experience the four states of consciousness corresponding to them in all their reality.

(c) *In the wakeful.....Brahmā.*—Because in this state the objects of desire become kinetic or actual in the sense of imposing their own law on the desiring agents. Brahmā is, here, the Divinity in man as the creator; in our wakeful state, this Divinity *creates*, or has all objects of desire realised, so that the force of desire becomes transmuted into the force inherent in created objects.

(d) *In the dreaming.....Vishnu.*—Because in this state the objects of desire are still potential in the sense of being acted upon by the desiring agents instead of being completely free to act upon them; in other words, the objects of desire are being preserved in this state in view of their being realised as experiences of the wakeful state. This function of preserving them belongs to Vishnu, who is the Divinity in man in its aspect of the Preserver of the creative process.

(e) *In dreamless sleep.....Rudra:* Because in this state all objects of desire vanish into dissolution, and we have here the Divinity in man manifesting itself as Rudra, the God of dissolution.

(f) The Indestructible One or Aksharam is the fourth state. It is the Reality beyond all states of consciousness—immutable, undecaying; and so the term Aksharam is appropriate.

(g) *He again* etc.—After relating the manifestations of the Purusha in the three planes of consciousness as Rudra, Vishnu and Brahma (which manifestations, by the bye, are differently conceived of in latter Vedanta philosophy as Virāta in the ordinary gross plane, Hiranyagarva in the

subtle plane and Ishwara in the causal plane), other well-known manifestations within the sphere of Maya are being enumerated. The name, Ishwara or Lord, has been twice mentioned in this enumeration. (In Sankarananda's version it is used once). The second mention may be taken with Jāgrat or "waking," referring to the Virāta aspect. In a Vedic sense, the Sun and Vishnu are synonymous. The term Purusha used here may refer to the Sankhyan conception.

(h) *In Itself etc.*—The text here takes us again beyond the plane of manifestation.

(i) *There neither.....non-existing.*—The mode of expression is peculiar, and amounts to declaring that neither any affirmations nor any negations of the human intellect serve to describe what the state of Brahman is. We even do not express it when we proceed with the negative method of "स एव नेति नेत्यात्मा" (Brihadaranyaka, 3-9-26) "He is the 'not this not this' Atman," or when we proceed with the positive method of "सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म" "All this indeed is Brahman." They are only methods of attaining to that state and not its descriptions. Just as we cannot say of our mind or consciousness that it is extended, that it measures so many feet or so many inches, so neither can we say that it is not extended seeing that it holds all extension in itself; just as this consciousness implies another order of reality, to which the units or standards of physical reality do not apply; so Brahman is the Reality beyond all intellectual relations or standards which give us our Vedas, their gods or their rewards, or give us our domestic relationships and social distinctions. It is clear that these religious functions, domestic relations and social distinctions do not exist in the state of Brahman, but neither can we say that they do not exist there *so long as we have to affirm their existence anywhere.*

(j) *Within the recess.....consciousness.*—The idea of some State, realisable within the recess of the heart and having the characteristic of Akāsha (ether or space) in that it holds the whole universe of evolving and evolved objects, receives ample treatment in Chbandogya, 8th Propāthaka. The expression, *Tatvijñanamaksham*, stands for the *chidākāsham* of more modern literature.

(k) *With many openings.*—This conception is amplified in Chhandogya, 3rd Prapāthaka, 13th part. The openings or points of access into the Akasha or supreme state are represented by the gods or objects of worship,—being, in the texts referred to, the five *prānās*.

(l) *Is warped and woofed.* This is, supported as threads in a cloth. Both the idea and symbolism occur more explicitly in Brihadaranyaka, 3rd Chap. 8th Brahmaṇa.

(m) *There the Devas.....of all truth.*—The Devas, the Rishis and the Pitris comprise the threefold objects of Vedic sacrificial worship. But though they have control over the destinies of the Vedic worshipper owing to the limitedness of his desire and knowledge of truth, they have none over one who transcends all desires by his knowledge of the whole truth as in Brahman “by knowing which all things are known.”

UNITY OF EAST AND WEST.

BY SWAMI PARAMANANDA

[Extract of an Address delivered before the Convention of Cosmopolitan Clubs, U. S. A., December 28, 1915.]

THE significant fact of the present day is the coming together of different peoples of the earth. The light of science has through many wonderful discoveries and inventions diminished to a great extent the vastness of space; or in other words, science has destroyed the feeling of isolation and distance. To-day we can travel from one end of the world to the other in a comparatively short time; we can transmit messages to the most distant points of the globe; we can even converse through the untiring aid of physical science over miles and miles of land and sea: Marvels of science have been wrought especially in the direction of electricity and locomotion. The meeting here this afternoon, the very existence of Cosmopolitan Clubs throughout the country, bears testimony to the growing tendency of all the different branches of the human family to draw closer together.

But we may ask: What is the practical value of

this intermingling of races and nations? First of all, it breaks down all the fictitious barriers which divide mankind into separate groups. In the second place, as we gain first-hand knowledge of one another, our ignorance, prejudice and fear vanish. And in the third place, it enriches both our inner and outer life by giving us a larger point of view. The more we know of one another, the more we learn to appreciate the standards and ideals of others, and a new feeling of tolerance is born within us—not a more condescending forbearance, but a feeling based on true sympathy and love. Exclusiveness is always a great impoverisher and hence a great drawback to progress. The spirit of the present age is to destroy self-centredness both in the individual and in the nation. To-day none but a very ignorant and hide-bound person can shun another on the ground that he is alien or foreign. There was a time when Occident and Orient seemed like two different worlds with totally different ideals and aspirations. There was apparently no hope of union between them. The general feeling was, as Mr. Rudyard Kipling expressed it,

“East is East and West is West

And never the twain shall meet”

But to-day, as each beholds the other at closer range, the gulf is disappearing. This, however, is not due to the fact that the Orient is becoming more and more occidentalised, but because the West is gaining a truer understanding of the East, as the East is of the West. I am happy to say that the discovery of the Ancient Literature of the Orient, or what is known as the Sacred Books of the East, has contributed largely towards this end. Nothing indeed has been more effective in destroying the prejudice between the East and the West than bringing to light once more the Sacred Literature of Ancient Egypt, China, Persia, Arabia and India; and both Orient and Occident owe a great debt to the late Prof. Max Muller for his tireless labors in this direction. Through the comparative study of the different Bibles of the world, we are more and more led to the conviction that the words “heathen” and “unbeliever” cannot be applied to the followers of any faith. Also we are shown that the difference between the Christian and non-Christian world does not lie in the fundamental and vital principles but only in

the outer names and forms. The same ideals of purity, charity, truthfulness, selflessness, which are strikingly set forth in the Christian Bible, are taught with equal insistence in all the Bibles of the world, even those which existed thousands of years before the Christian era. This does not lessen the value of one or the other, but it reveals to us that there must be an underlying cord of unity among all peoples and only as we discover that will the human race be knit into one family. Mere coming together outwardly through greater facilities of travel could never create true unity. Our intellectual and spiritual comprehension of one another must increase if lasting unity is to be established.

We must never forget that we are all members of one vast cosmic family; that each individual forms a part of the great whole and consciously or unconsciously he must contribute his share towards the world's civilisation and progress. Learning to give this share consciously and intelligently should be the chief study and supreme duty of every human being. As a man's life is not complete until he has full and harmonious use of his hands, feet, senses, mind and intellect, so is it with the cosmic universe. Its life also is complete only when every nation, every race, every individual is working freely and harmoniously with every other.

Each nation has produced great souls and each has something to contribute towards the welfare of the world at large. The Occident has been the centre of wonderful material achievement, while the Orient has for ages been the main spring of spiritual culture. Many mighty rivers have risen there to carry the water of spiritual life Westward. Yet this does not mean that the Occident must give up her own peculiar line of activity and try to imitate Oriental ideals; or that the Orient should abandon her spiritual birthright and try to pursue the external glamor of Western civilisation. Both have their peculiar sphere and purpose. Each race and people must possess something distinctive. Why should all be alike? It is rather as each fulfils its own special ideal, that we can hope to realise unity and brotherhood. True brotherhood does not consist in merging one ideal in another. Nor should we regard material achievement and spiritual achievement as alien to each other. Material blessing and spiritual blessing are both

necessary. These two streams have risen from the same source and only when they mingle their waters and flow in united current will a complete civilisation be attained.

Superstition, prejudice and ignorance have held us apart long enough. Now the time has arrived when the two children of the same father, the East and the West, must join hands and look upon each other as members of the same family. Once a man was travelling in the desert and, looking out through the mist, he beheld a figure approaching him. He thought at first it must be some evil spirit and great fear seized his heart. But as it drew nearer he saw that it was an earthly form; then gradually it assumed the appearance of a human being and his fear diminished. At last as it came face to face with him, he discovered that it was none other than his own brother from whom he had been separated long before. In place of fear, love and joy rose in his heart. So will it be with East and West when they come together and recognise each other as brothers. Unbiased and increased knowledge of Orient and Occident will dispel all mistrust and misapprehension from our minds and will help us to realise the truth that "Above all nations is humanity" and the soul of the East and the West is one.—*The Cosmopolitan Student.*

FAMINE RELIEF WORK OF THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION IN BANKURA AND TIPPERAIL.

(1st July, 1916.)

Since the publication of our last report, dated the 26th May, the condition of the famine-stricken people of the Bankura District has improved a little owing to the rains which have helped at least the farmers to begin their cultivation, and the scarcity of drinking water is also mitigated thereby. But they have become so poor and helpless that it is simply impossible for them to go on with their work of cultivation, unless the public come forward to help them with money and seeds and we have to continue helping in this way till their cultivation is finished. So we have distributed 200 mds. of rice

seeds up to this time, besides distribution of rice to the destitute.

The excavation of the Nodna Canal and nine ponds, and also 6 wells, is finished. Two other feeder canals are being excavated which will help some neighbouring villages with water. These three canals will supply water for cultivation every year to three thousand bighas of land.

From our centres in the Bankura District about 400 people suffering from cholera, malaria and other diseases have been helped with medicine and nursing.

The condition of the people of Tipperah district is growing worse. The working classes are suffering terribly; most of the poor people were left destitute by the famine that broke out last year and they all joined the working classes. As a result, working men have increased in number though the amount of work available in the locality is the same and their income has come down to two annas a day. Even a single man cannot live on such a small pittance and they have to support their families! Again, the prospect of *Aus* crops is very gloomy. The plants have dried up owing to the draught lasting for about a month. We have opened a new centre at Talsahr village near the Ashugang Station.

We append below a brief table of weekly rice distribution from the 21st of May to the 15th June. Temporary doles of help are also included therein.

BANKURA

Names of Centres	No. of Villages	No. of Recipients	Amount of Rice	
			Mds.	Srs.
Bankura ...	49	374	19	0
Do. (next week)	50	397	20	0
Do. ...	54	422	23	24
Do. ...	58	449	24	0
Sonamukhi ...	62	828	41	20
Do. (next week)	71	760	39	0
Do. ...	71	765	40	0
Do. ...	69	760	40	0
Chaharabad ...	34	345	17	20
Do. (next week)	34	332	16	30
Do. ...	34	347	17	20
Do. ...	34	343	17	6
Birdra ...	30	594	31	0
Do. (next week)	30	644	33	0
Do. ...	31	667	34	0
Do. ...	32	649	34	0

Indpur ...	62	762	39	20
Do. (next week)	67	794	42	0
Do. ...	68	804	41	0
Do. ...	70	813	41	20
Koalpara ...	18	79	1	31
Do. (next week)	29	202	9	16
Do. ...	12	109	3	4
Do. ...	31	175	8	18
Khatra ...	37	387	20	0
Do. (next week)	40	486	24	12
Do. ...	45	532	26	24
Do. ...	44	545	28	28

TIPPERAH

Bitghar ...	21	784	40	0
Do. (next week)	21	713	36	0
Do. ...	21	713	36	0
Do. ...	42	1657	82	34

Clothes were also distributed from all the centres in Bankura.

Sincere gratitude is expressed to the Bombay Famine Relief Fund (female div.) for sending us Rs. 550 in two instalments.

From the above report it will be evident that our scope of work has much increased; and to carry on our present task, it requires the enthusiastic co-operation of the public. We therefore hope and trust that we shall continue to receive that generous co-operation and help so long as there are still the starving distressed hundreds to save.

Any contributions, however small, will be thankfully received at either of the following addresses and will be acknowledged:—

(1) Swami Brahmananda, President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur, P. O., Dist. Howrah, (Bengal).

(2) Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar P. O., Calcutta.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[In this section we beg to invite discussion in the form of correspondence on all topics of special interest to readers of the Prabuddha Bharata.—Ed. P. B.]

THE FIVE KINDS OF MUKTI.

Mention is made in the Bhagavata of five different kinds of Mukti, *Salokya* (residence in the

same *Loka* as God); *Sârsti* (having the same powers as God), *Sâmiṣya* (nearness to God), *Sârūpya* (having the same form as God) and *Ēkatwa* or *Sâyujya* (union with God).^{*} In the Vaishnava literature all these five different conceptions of Mukti are met with very often and with some writers the terms "सालोक्यादि मुक्ति" or "पञ्चविध मुक्ति," are invariably used wherever there is any reference to the conception of Mukti. Thus it is narrated in the *Chaitanya Charitamrita* that the High Priest of Tattvabâd (Mâdhwa-cult) when asked about the ideal of spiritual life and the means of realising it by Bhagavan Chaitanya during his travels in Southern India, replied—

पञ्चविध मुक्ति पाप्मा वैकुण्ठे गमम ।

साध्यश्रेष्ठ ह्य इहा शास्त्रनिरूपण ॥

मध्यम परिच्छेद २५० ।

"Going to Vaikuntha after attainment of five kinds of Mukti—this has been declared by the Shastras to be the best Ideal."

It is noticeable, however, that the five different states of Mukti are not all recognised in the Mâdhwa philosophy. The words "पञ्चविध मुक्ति" in the quoted passage are evidently used loosely for Mukti in general.

The state of Mukti or freedom is differently conceived in different religious philosophies of India. Of the five kinds of Mukti, only one i. e. Sâyujya is well-known and is recognised by various sects as the Ideal. But are the other four actually recognised in any philosophy?

Some months ago I chanced to turn over the pages of a pamphlet named *Siva Bhakti* issued by the Christian Literary Society for India which contains a criticism and an 'examination' (unfortunately, very uncharitable) of the Saiva Siddhanta Philosophy. It contains the following passage under the sub-heading "Four Stages of Union":—

"There is very much to admire in the stages which have been named; *Sâlōkya*, dwelling in the

same abode with God; *Sâmiṣya*, nearness to Him; *Sâyujya*, assimilation to his likeness; *Sârūpya*, union with Him. While the Saiva methods of realising them have been shown to be inadequate as applied to our heavenly Father they may express great truths."

It gave me the clue that Saiva philosophy recognises those four stages of union and in order to verify it, I looked into the account of Saiva philosophy in Madhabacharya's *Sarva-Darshan-Sangraha* but could not find any reference to them in the text. In the translation of *Sarva-Darsan-Sangraha* by Cowell and Gough, however, there occurs a passage in the foot-note which has been quoted from Foulke's translation of *Siva-prakâsa-patalai*.

"After these the three stages of heavenly happiness are developed, to be enjoyed by the souls that have a favourable balance of meritorious deeds; or have devoted themselves to the service of God or the abstract contemplation of the Deity. (1) the enjoyment of the abode of Siva; (2) that of near approach to Him; (3) that of union with Him."

Here we have only *Sâlōkya*, *Sâmiṣya* and *Sâyujya*. It left me no doubt that some at least of the five kinds of Mukti have a place in the Saiva system. But in order to definitely ascertain the matter I wrote to Mr. J. M. Nallaswamy Pillai B.A., B.L., editor of the now defunct *Siddhanta Dipika* or the *Light of Truth*, the organ of the Saiva Siddhanta Mahasamaj of Southern India. He has written to me to say that the Saiva philosophy recognises four stages of union above referred to but does not recognise any stage corresponding to *Sârsti*.

So, at least four of the five kinds of Mukti mentioned in the Bhagabata and Vaishnava literature are not mere useless creations of imagination but are recognised and believed in by an important religious sect as spiritual verities. I have not yet found out if *Sârsti* Mukti is recognised in any philosophy. It is worthy of note in this connection that certain Vaishnava writers mention only four kinds of Mukti to the exclusion of *Sârsti*.

—Ambujaksha Sarkar, Purulia.

* अहेतुक्यव्यवहिता या भक्तिः पुरुषोत्तमे ।

सालोक्य-सार्ष्टि-सामिष्य-सारूप्यैकत्वमप्युत ॥

दीयमानं न गृह्णन्ति विना मत्सेवनं जनाः ।

स एव भक्तियोगाद्द्वय आत्यन्तिक उदाहृतः ॥

REVIEWS.

A Gist of the Gita-Rahasya or Karmayoga-Shastra (the Hindu Philosophy of Life, Ethics and Religion). By V. M. Joshi, M. A., (230 Tambe Wada, Shaniwar Peth, Poona City, where copies for purchase are to be had). Price 8 annas.

It is well-known that the "Gita-Rahasya or Karma-yoga-Shastra" was written by Srijiut Bal-Gangadhar Tilak during his seclusion as a deportee at Mandalay from 1908 to 1914. The booklet under review is an appreciation of this *Magnus Opus* of Mr. Tilak in Marathi, as the author says, "consisting of a summary of Mr. Tilak's views, with only a remark or two by the writer by way of indicating where Mr. Tilak's views differ from those of Shankaracharya and others and where they are likely to meet with opposition from existing thinkers."

The publishers of this book (Dugvekar Bros. Bibibatia, Benares City) have appended thereto "a short life and character sketch of Mr. Tilak," written in a pleasant racy style and enhancing not a little the interest and the value of the book. We are also told by the publishers: "We are indebted to Mr. Joshi and the Editor of the Mahratta for permitting us to extract and place these articles, contributed already in the said paper, before the public."

More than this, we are hardly in a position to say about this book under review, except it be an insignificant word or two about only superficial features of it; for to give an opinion about the "Gist of Gita-Rahasya" would be presumptuous for one who cannot even take any step towards forming an opinion on the Gita-Rahasya itself. But "its English version," we are informed by the publishers of Benares, "is to be made at no very distant date, and it is already in process of being translated into all the provincial languages of India." Mr. Joshi's information is that "the first edition of six-thousand copies of the Gita-Rahasya was almost sold out on the very first week of its publication." His "Gist of the Gita-Rahasya" will be critically read and examined only by many of these six-thousand purchasers of the Marathi edition, and also by readers of the Hindi edition which has been in the market since some time past, for aught we know.

We may however touch on just one or two points that strike us as noteworthy in this small well-written book, which very creditably sheds its reflected light on us, as yet uneclipsed by the advent of the original orb. Mr. Joshi does not in his philosophical views see eye to eye with Mr. Tilak who is an Advaitist while the chronicler of his arguments seems to be an advocate of the brand-new pragmatism which captures the fancy of not a few of our hopefuls by the prudish air of practicality it gives itself. And it means no small credit to the writer of this Gist that in spite of this circumstance he has ably maintained throughout his presentation of Mr. Tilak's arguments the proper attitude that his task demands of him, an attitude which he takes the liberty to define as 'benevolent impartiality or sympathetic neutrality.'

Though, as we have said, we are not in a position to judge as to how Mr. Joshi has succeeded in representing Mr. Tilak the author of the Gita-Rahasya through these articles or "rays," as he calls them, in the Gist, we have been given some peculiar opportunities to get at Mr. Tilak's views on Sri Sankara's interpretation of the Gita, because these latter seem to be brought out into a fairly transparent relief through the discussion to which Mr. Tilak's references to Sankaracharya have been subjected by some critics of "the Shastri or Pundit class" and to which Mr. Joshi mainly devotes the "Eleventh Ray" of his Gist. These references of Mr. Tilak to Sankaracharya seem to indicate that the author of the Gita-Rahasya deprecates Sankaracharya's attempts at improperly reading into the texts of the Gita some doctrines which he preached in his life with the greatest emphasis. In this view, we are at one with Mr. Tilak, but we would point out also that these attempts—few and far between—rather serve now as marks or evidences of that exceptional necessity which Sankaracharya felt of remedying on one hand the growing intellectual confusion and ferment in his age by forcing thought to converge from all sides on the broad synthetic basis of Vedic Advaitavada, and remedying on the other hand the growing insecurity of social and political seats of authority in our collective life by the exaltation of the life of Sannyasa as the only rallying-point of all that is best and highest in our national inheritance.

And in this connection, we cannot help express-

ing our deep regret,—provided, of course, the book under review correctly reflects in this matter Mr. Tilak's spirit,—that, with all his practical insight into Indian ideals, Mr. Tilak unfortunately allowed himself to foment or fan a conflict between the life of Sannyasa and the life of Karma-yoga. It cannot be said that the responsibility rests primarily on Sankaracharya himself, as being one who first insisted on extolling quietism at the expense of Karma. In dealing with the term Karma Sankaracharya scarcely had in his mind the same import of the word on which Mr. Tilak bases his own theory of Karma-yoga. By Karma the great commentator meant the observances ordained for the householder in the Shastras, while Mr. Tilak means all the duties of life in the modern sense. It is presuming too much to say that Sankara really preached quietism while his own life and the history of his order form no insignificant chapter in the history of our country. Which of our modern patriots, we ask, is less quietistic in life than Sankaracharya? It is the verdict of Indian history as well as Indian culture that, leaving aside the case of Avatāras, with the life of the Samyasin more than with anything else is associated the highest fruition of all the Yogas not excepting Mr. Tilak's Karma-yoga.

Guru-Shishya-Satsang: The Hindi translation of the Bengali book, Swami-Shishya-Samvada. Published by the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Luxa, Benares; pages about 250; price 12 annas. [Vide advertisement on page vii].

The translator, who is an ardent follower of Swami Vivekananda and his Master, has earned the gratitude of the Hindi-knowing public in our country by his faithful rendering into that language one of the most popular publications of the Belur Math, near Calcutta, the head-quarters of the Ramakrishna Mission. His book embodies many vivid and interesting sketches of Swamiji's life and conversations, from which Hindi readers will derive great benefit, such as the persual of a very few publications of modern times is expected to give them. It bespeaks sincere devotion on the part of the translator, to the ideals sought to be disseminated, as also his fitness and worthiness for the task, that the profits of this book are to be made over to the Benares Ashrama, and to the Rama-

krishna Archanalaya, Sadar, Meerut. We hope Babu Sri-Ramakrishna-saran, as the translator, calls himself, will not rest on his oars before he will have placed before Hindi readers other important translations.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES.

THE Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, (Dt. Saharanpur, U. P.) makes an earnest appeal to the generous public to make good a deficit of Rs. 3000 in its building funds for the urgently needed General Ward it has undertaken to build for all classes of poor patients, the already existing one being exclusively meant for Sadhus. Out of the estimated cost of Rs. 5000, donations received and promised have accounted for Rs. 2000, with which the work of construction has been commenced just now on the acquired land, and unless contributions begin to reach promptly, the Sevashrama will suffer loss not only in this work for which land has been kindly acquired by the Government, but also in its Seva (service) for the helpless victims of disease who have to be turned away every day for want of accommodation. We hope this earnest appeal will move every charitably disposed soul to make some contribution, however small, to the building funds of the Sevashrama.

DURING the month of June, 1916, the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Briudaban had in its indoor department 17 old cases and 21 newly admitted ones, of which 18 were discharged cured, 1 sent to the Muttra Government Hospital, and 19 were still under treatment at the end of the month. There were 3400 outdoor cases registered of which 625 were new and 2775 repeated entries. Subscriptions and donations during the month amounted to Rs. 100-8-0, and the expenses incurred for the Sevashrama were Rs. 268-2-0 and the same for building works Rs. 732-2-0.

THE Swami Prakashananda of the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, retired for a month (15th May to 15th June) with fourteen earnest students of Vedanta to the peaceful solitude of the Shanti Ashrama, a lovely retreat and hermitage on the hills enriched with the best associations of spiritual endeavour and uplift. During this short sojourn, among other ways of making most of this spiritual opportunity, the party used to meet every morning, noon and evening, for one hour, in classes to have readings from Vivekachuramani, the Upanishads and the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna respectively. They had one all-night service on the Siddhagiri, a hillock in the Ashrama.