

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

Awakened India



वसिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वराशिवोद्यत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.

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इच्छित जाग्रत



प्राप्य वराभिबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XXII]

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[No. 253

UNPUBLISHED NOTES OF CLASS-TALKS BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

The idea that nature in all her orderly arrangements shows design in the Creator of the universe is good as a kindergarten teaching to show the beauty, power and glory of God, in order to lead children in religion up to a philosophical conception of God, but aside from that, it is not good, and perfectly illogical. As a philosophical idea it is entirely without foundation, if God is taken to be omnipotent.

If nature shows the power of God in creating the universe, to have a design in so doing also shows His weakness. If God is omnipotent, He needs no design, no scheme, to do anything. He has but to will it, and it is done. No question, no scheme, no plan, of God in nature.

The material universe is the result of the limited consciousness of man. When man becomes conscious of his divinity, all matter, all nature, *as we know it*, will cease to exist.

The material world, as such, has no place in the consciousness of the All-Presence as a necessity to any end. If it had, God would be limited by the universe. To say that nature exists by His permission, is not to say that it exists as a necessity for Him to make man perfect, or for any other reason.

It is a creation for man's necessity, not God's.

There is no scheme of God in the plan of the universe. How could there be any if He is omnipotent? Why should He have need of a plan, or a scheme, or a reason to do anything? To say that He has is to limit Him and to rob Him of His character of omnipotence.

For instance, if you come to a very wide river, so wide that you could not get across it except that you built a bridge, the very fact that you would have to build the bridge to get across the river would show your limitation, would show your weakness, even if the ability to build the bridge did show your strength. If you were not limited but could just fly or jump across, you would not be under the necessity of building the bridge; and to build the bridge just to exhibit your power to do so would show your weakness again by showing your vanity more than it would show anything else.

Monism and dualism are essentially the same. The difference consists in the expression. As the dualists hold the Father and Son to be two, the monists hold them to be really one. Dualism is in nature, in manifestation, and monism is pure spirituality in the essence.

The idea of renunciation and sacrifice is in all religions as a means to reach God.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

ABSOLUTELY without any feeling of tickling self-pride, we find, the truth is daily gaining upon our mind that the future of humanity hinges very much on the Indian problem. All things on the world's arena of life plainly appear to have played themselves out, excepting that great Spiritual Truth which India *still* lives to deliver to mankind. That she still lives is a wonder of wonders. No historian has yet been able to explain the mystery, and no history of India is worth the name which fails or neglects to explain it. It is easy to say that she lives because she has yet to give. But how could she live at all? And in view of the thickening shadows of death that seem to be closing over her from some apparent directions, have we to conclude, alas, that she is only going to make her last dying gift to humanity?

The world has made of herself an arid desert of despotic intellectualism. Everything that pertains to the real soul of man, the Atman, has been cried down and stifled as a relic of mysticism. The beyond of intellect has been forcibly shut out as having nothing to do with life, and men, both individually and collectively, have feverishly aspired to live absolutely on the resources of the intellect. Even their God and their religion, the little that they care or claim to possess, have been manufactured out of these resources, and the old lingering claims of life to organise and regulate itself by the supra-intellectual experiences of man have been persistently crushed out of existence. All this has resulted in a terrible tyranny exercised by the world of intellect over the minds of men, drugging and driving them on with the wine of an ambition to forge out of its treacherous vanities piles and hordes of wealth and power. This madness to pursue and

multiply the means of life to an Xnth degree has evolved the modern creed of human effort and achievement, and poets rush into raptures over it and philosophers argue out its glories.

But this world of intellect has at last come out with its cloven hoofs. For it is a world which by its very constitution interweaves life with the coils of death, with unsuspected fuses of destruction. It kindles to white flame a passion for enriched life on earth, but the materials it supplies for the purpose are latent explosives. It maddens man by the beauty of its promises, by the lure of its hopes, but from beneath the human grasp as it tightens fast on its grim reality it divulges itself "red in tooth and claw." The blood of forty-five millions of men and untold millions of wealth shot out as curling fumes could not appease its bloodthirst, its fire-hunger, for the last three years! Such is the world-god our intellect has conjured up to receive the worship of modern human efforts and achievements! Science has been invoking it, philosophy singing its praises and religion burning incense at its altar,—the intellectual world-god who shut out from us the reality of life as in the Atman to make us dance and dash along the endless round of its evolving means.

This feverish pursuit of life's means and their enrichment may give us only a distant, a vague, suggestion of the reality, but never its actual possession. And the inevitable danger is that the unreal suggestion allied to the reality of the world of means supersedes for the human mind the need of delving beyond to the reality of life. The demand of all true religion is to keep the means of life subordinate and fit for this purpose of reaching towards the reality. The West has lately succeeded

in whittling away this demand till it has been practically hushed altogether. The India of yore enthroned this demand as the governing idea at the very centre of her scheme of life, but her life has happened to decline with the decline of her organising consciousness, while the West has appeared to prosper outwardly with the prosperity of her means of life. The remedy for the world thus going wrong lies, therefore, in reviving first the organising consciousness of India so that her own scheme of life may again be fulfilled under modern conditions of life, and then in calling back the West to the reality of life from its blind pursuit of the means thereof. India still lives on to sound forth through the world the solemn peals of this recall, but how is she going to live at all for even a few decades to come, if she cannot stand now re-organised on the basis of her own scheme of life?

This is how on the Indian problem hinges the future welfare of all mankind. But in India the question has not yet been settled as to what really is the Indian problem. Roughly there are two parties on the field who claim to be tackling this Indian problem,—the Government officials and the educated men,—and both of these parties worship at the same shrine, swearing by the same creed of political life. Both go in for importing into India the Western method of political life, and the inevitable consequence is the waging of a prolonged strife over what constitutes the eternal *casus belli* within the politics of every Western country, namely, the enjoyment of state-power. The modern political creed of the West provides that the people must exercise this state-power in every country. The educated men in India appeal to this primary article in the creed and the Government party admit the force of this appeal, but while the latter are loth to surrender the state-power on the alleged ground of the people being yet unfit to exercise it, the former clamour and agitate for it on the

ground that fitness never really comes before the assumption of responsibilities. So the noisy current of controversy flows on and on, and every man available for the service of the country is plunging into the stream.

But the grounding assumption which both parties make in this all-engrossing controversy is that state-power constitutes the central, the pivotal, issue in the Indian problem and both are too much pre-occupied with Western conceptions of political life to turn round and examine whether this fundamental assumption is right or wrong. It seems almost a hopeless task to invite their attention to this vital point, their Western way of thinking has made them so impervious to such appeals. Why should India make it the central issue of her problem to strive to possess the power of the state? Is it because other countries in the West started in history by making the same object the central issue in their struggles? But India has also her own history, and is therefore bound to have developed a politics of her own. Did anybody take the trouble to enquire as to what system of political life India has all along striven to evolve for herself, before going most atrociously to force upon her a foreign system of political life? Because a foreign nation has come to rule over India to-day, does it necessarily follow that the whole past history of the people must be revoked and blotted out, and a new foreign system of political life must be crammed down their throat? And this is what the Government on one side and our educated political workers on the other are vying with each other to do!

While the common aim of all political systems is to enable the people to live their own life free and unhindered, the political methods evolved in one country may quite naturally differ from those evolved in another. In the political systems of the West, for

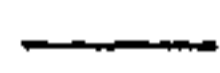
example, the state constitutes the heart from which emerge all the veins and arteries of political effort and initiative, creating and vitalising the whole system. In India, the fortunes and struggles of scores of centuries conspired to evolve a political system in which the simple polity of village life constituted the heart, spiritual leadership the brain-centre and the state the protecting arms of the whole system. Such a system was best suited to the Indian scheme of life, simply because India never chose for herself an ambitious political role on the world-stage of earthly riches and powers. Her sole aim has always been to train and equip herself to play her own part on the arena of world's thought and religion, the only arena on which the lasting good and unity of all mankind must strive to realise and establish themselves. For it is in the very nature of politics as being essentially centred round the material good and the material basis of life to invite nations to enter the lists of competition and unless a higher arena is provided for mankind by religion and culture to exercise supreme authority, the world-stage of politics is bound to remain a bloody cockpit for ambitious nations.

And is it a wrong, undignified choice that India made at the very dawn of her history in that she refused to make any worldly ambition the motive force in her own system of political life? In the first place, the real aim and justification of all politics is in keeping the material basis of life efficient, but "efficiency to what end?" is the question over which politics splits itself into different systems. The Indian ideal has always been to take the material efficiency of life as a means to be so regulated as to subserve the end of spiritual efficiency, whereas in the modern West, material efficiency is the end, and the pursuit of other interests in life is considered efficient only in so far as it leads to this material efficiency. Every conception

of life's all-round efficiency involves a necessary reference to some ultimate, governing end of life, and according as this governing end is material or spiritual, the standard of material efficiency is bound to vary: Europe has chosen material efficiency to be the governing end in life and so there is nothing to limit the scope and intensity of its pursuit, the inevitable result being that the standard of material efficiency is going up higher and higher to the point of cataclysmic reactions. But India never meant to leave a free scope to this standard of material efficiency, as the widely prevalent doctrine of *bhubhâra*—the material incubus on earth—bears clear testimony. And her traditions point out that far from inspiring the people to appropriate state-power as a basis to build their national life on, they were taught even to expect the special incarnation of divine heroes for the purpose of remedying excess of state-power (i.e. Kshatriya or kingly power) in the country!

For directly the life of a people builds itself upon the power of the state, competition in material efficiency becomes an indispensable necessity; for then the longevity of the people depends absolutely on the longevity of the state, and so the highest concern of the state rests on maintaining its material power against the competing material power of other ambitious states. Inevitably therefore the standard of material efficiency has to be raised to the level which prevails among the political states of the world, and history shows that this level always tends to rise. It is evident, therefore, that if the Indian people choose to live their life to-day from the basis of a state-power fully appropriated to themselves, they cannot help accepting material efficiency as the governing end of their life, or in other words, they cannot but give up the old system of political life that their past history has been striving to evolve and with it the whole scheme of national life to which they have been irrevocably pledged for long cen-

turies, the deep-rooted forces of spiritual culture which go to make up their distinct life-principle. But it is impossible now to make this fatal choice. For as Swami Vivekananda, in and through whom the real India of the past as well as of the future announced herself, repeatedly pointed out: "A stream is taking its rise, away beyond where time began, flowing through millions of ages of human history; do you mean to get hold of that stream, and push it back to its source, to a Himalayan glacier? Even if that were possible, it would not be possible for you to be Europeanised. If you find it is impossible for the European to throw off the few centuries of culture which there is in the West, do you think it possible for you to throw off the culture of shining scores of centuries? It cannot be."



And the way the people in India are being led by their educated *confreres* to-day to make a blind bid for the state-power in their country as the basis for upbuilding a new political life, conclusively proves that our country is going to be most foolishly committed to the fatal step of Westernising its

politics. Far from being a step towards any solution of the Indian problem, it is sure to lead to death-dealing confusion on all sides. Nobody denies that the keenest need of India to-day is a sound system of politics that will impart efficiency to the material basis of her life, protecting it from the cruel competition of greedy nations outside. This crying need is no doubt an essential part and parcel of the larger Indian problem of raising India to the height of her spiritual mission in the modern world. But when all the needs of this Indian problem positively admit of the best possible solution if the Indian scheme of life is revived and developed along with the Indian system of politics, to throw all the nascent enthusiasm and energy in the country into an agitation for a foreign system of political life essentially charged with forces that are bound to upset and destroy what India has been building up for centuries, is something worse than selling our birthright for a mess of pottage. We reserve for the next month a consideration of the question as to how the Indian system of political life is best calculated to solve the Indian problem with special reference to its material aspect.



GLIMPSES OF THE WAY.

(*Swami Madhavananda.*)

"**W**HAT is the way?"—कः पन्थाः—was the question the Yaksha put to Yudhishthira beside the fatal lake where his beloved wife and all his mighty brothers lay dead before him. And he had to answer the question before he could dare to touch a drop of the water for which he was almost dying. But the same question is being asked by man since the dawn of his intellect and answers more or less satisfactory are being arrived at now and then. We shall discuss in brief two aspects of the solution of this very old problem.

The very first thing that a child comes to learn imperceptibly as he advances in life is the distinction between Self and Not-self, between the subject and the object. He sees that he is an individual placed in a world where everything that he perceives is something other than what he is, and naturally enough he develops this notion that his own claims should have the paramount consideration from him. At first a slender plant, this egoism gradually develops into a huge tree with capacity to act either as an instrument of good bringing comforts to thousands of living

beings, or as an evil agency taking away the lives of all that come under its poisonous influence. If this egoism be directed to the well-being of mankind at large it is a solace to the world, but if, on the contrary, it seeks to place itself before all others thrusting them relentlessly aside it is a curse on humanity as long as it lives.

Commonly it is the body with which we identify ourselves, and all that affects the body we take to be affecting us also. But we also speak of "my" body, and use it as we do an instrument. Hence a little analysis will convince us that *we* cannot be this body of flesh and bones. Pushing the analysis farther we can see that nothing that is perishable can be our real Self, for, try however we will, we cannot set aside the firm-rooted notion that we are immortal. But all this we forget in our dealings in actual life and whatever we may be *in essence*, we identify ourselves with that little Ego which thinks itself at times the possessor of this body, and at moments of greater darkness thinks it is this physical body. And so long as we identify our true Self with this Ego, we are bound to think of us as limited, and all our vain struggles are spent in making the best of the situation with this finite Ego: the best attempt to think of it as something extraneous to and an imposition on, our real Self is repulsive to us. We do not want to have this unpleasant truth brought home to us, that behind the totality of individuals there is but One Self and all these diversities are but the outward appearances of that unity. What will be left to us if we give up our chief possession as we erroneously deem this Ego to be? Will not all our efforts in life be fruitless if there is no sharply distinguished and not-to-be-confused Ego in each of us to bless himself with all our earthly acquisitions? But, in spite of our being afraid of the very idea of the existence of but One Self in the hole of the universe, we shall see that each of us cherishes, knowingly or other-

wise, the idea of infinity within him.

It requires no great observation to find out this broad fact that no one likes to die, nay, not even the most wretched of men. Look at that blind man, who palsied with age and deprived by fortune of the last bit of comfort wishes himself hourly dead. Do you think he will welcome death if it comes to him in response to his wishes? Far from it. You can notice that as soon as his staff feels that there is anything dangerous, say water, in front, he will start and remove himself with the utmost concern to a safe distance. Then again, is not there to be traced in our desire to leave posterity behind us to inherit our property, that same aversion to death and desire for immortality? Thus we see that one thing which all men want is infinite existence.

Next let us observe a child when it has just begun to feel its own joys and comforts. Does it not breathlessly ask of us informations about things it sees and hears, even without giving us an opportunity to answer its numerous queries? And we all see how this insatiable thirst for knowledge in grown-up men accompanies them to the very grave. How striking are Goethe's words, "Light! More light!" even on his deathbed! Thus we see that besides infinite existence, man wants infinite knowledge too.

Then finally, that we are votaries of Happiness nobody will ever doubt. He would be thought insane who courts misery. Only, some may want physical, others intellectual and moral, while a handful of others, spiritual comforts. That is all the difference. All of us know, moreover, that there is no limit to our expectation of happiness, in whatever form it may be derived. As soon as we achieve after endless troubles something which we supposed would make us happy, our minds will look wistfully to something else, which, we are confident, will fill our vessel of bliss to the brim; but alas, it is not to be so. For from desire to desire we are driven till in the

heat of the chase we consume our brief sojourn here. This idea is well expressed by the poet Sahlana Misra in his Hundred Verses on Peace :

निःस्वो वष्टि शतं शती दशशतं लक्षं सहस्राधिपो
लक्षेशः क्षितिपालतां क्षितिपतिश्चक्रेश्वरत्वं पुनः ।
चक्रेशः पुनरिन्द्रतां सुरपतिर्ब्रह्मास्पदं वाञ्छति
ब्रह्मा विष्णुपदं पुनःपुनरहो आशावधि को गतः ॥

“The indigent man asks for a hundred rupees, he who has a hundred wants a thousand, the owner of a thousand wants to be the master of a lakh, the possessor of a lakh covets kingship, the king wants to be an Emperor, the Emperor wants to be Indra, the ruler of the Gods wants the position of Brahmá, who again wants the place of Vishnu! Who is it that has seen the end of desires?”

This is almost universally the case. The whole of human life on earth is at the bottom of it one long quest for a self of infinite existence, infinite knowledge and infinite happiness, and no two selves of such infinite attributes can exist. But our very starting with the idea of many selves keeps up the quest instead of ending it. And moreover, can the summing up of the finites of existence, knowledge and happiness give us the Infinite thereof? But the life we all seek to live means setting to ourselves this impossible conundrum. Otherwise we would see if we gave up our hold on the finite ego and finite objects that the very essence of man himself is Existence (Sat), Knowledge (Chit), and Bliss (Ananda); and the Vedanta mentions these three as the reality of Brahman.

Hence however in everyday life man may think of himself as an insignificant creature, at the mercy of chance, he is in reality not only great but greater than the great—**महतो महीयान्**—he himself is the Sat-Chit-Ananda, always and everywhere. There is no line of demarcation between man and man. On the contrary there is the One Self of which they are so many manifestations. When

a man comes to realise this he is above the reach of fear, and the whole universe wears a different aspect in his illumined vision from what it used to do before.

But the influence of this body of ours to create delusion is unlimited. Whoever enters into this Castle of Despair is sure to get entangled in its intricate labyrinth of nerves, and finally to confound his identity. He no longer thinks of himself as the same being who entered it, but somehow or other stumbles upon the notion that he is the body, and begins to partake of its pleasure and pain. In the Puranas we are told how Lord Vishnu incarnated Himself as a Sow to save the universe from the Deluge that had overcome it. He accomplished the work but would not think of returning to His celestial abode. The Divine Sow even went the length of getting a small family and mortally terrified the Devas, who came to solicit the Lord's return, by charging them furiously. The story concludes by saying that Lord Shiva Himself had to come with His Trident and it was not before He destroyed the Sow's body, that Lord Vishnu emerged laughing, and accompanied the Gods. Stripped of its allegorical trappings, the story embodies the strongest hint at the baneful hypnotic power the body exerts over the omniscient Self, making Him see all sorts of curious visions and connect Himself with everyone of them.

From the above we can see that this ensconcing ourselves within the limits of the physical body, this alienating ourselves in thought from the rest of the universe, has been at the root of all our misery. If in reality there is but One Self of which all of us are but partial representations like so many facets in a piece of diamond,—none of them individually conveying the whole idea of the diamond,—then it will not do to ignore the inseparable relation between man and man and to expect perfection in each as a separate entity. Existence is a luminous globe which has an infinite number of radii branching

from the one light centre, each of which may be thought of individually with an existence of its own, but we know that it is the whole that makes up a perfect sphere, which none of the radii by themselves can do. Thus comes the Hindu conception of the Hiranyagarbha—the Infinite Self having as it were a Body which is the aggregate of all the finite bodies in the universe, and a Mind which is the sum total of all finite minds. It may be noted here that in Indian Psychology Manas (the objectifying mind) is subtle *matter*, hence finite. There is no break therefore anywhere; our bodies and our minds are bits of the Cosmic Body and the Cosmic mind. When we are convinced of this, we shall live so long as one being in the world is alive, shall retain consciousness as long as there is but one conscious mind, and our happiness will not end so long as there is one being in the universe to feel himself happy. But there can be no limit to the manifestation of the Self, hence this Cosmic Body and the Cosmic Mind are not the whole, but only imperfect expressions of the Self as He is. They cannot exhaust His capacity of manifestation. If, therefore, this visible universe were even entirely blotted out, that Self will remain as unchanged as He always is. Thus to realise our identity with the Real Self which is behind us all and of which we are but partial renderings, is one way of putting an end to the miseries we undergo in our ignorance. Of a man in this state it can be said,

हृत्वापि स इमाँल्लोकान् न हन्ति न निबध्यते ।

“Even killing these people he does not kill nor is he bound (by the action).”

In fact, this is the way of Jnana, the path of Analysis, which has been advocated in India since the Vedic Age.

The same truth viewed under a slightly different perspective will give us another solution of the problem under consideration. Psychology tells us that every object is made up of two parts, the Substance—the thing-in-itself—and its attributes. In

fact it is these latter that we can directly cognise. Abstracted from its shell of attributes, Substance is what It is; we cannot form a picture of It with the mind as it is. For it is That of which the Sruti says,

यतो वाचो निवर्तते अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।

“Whence speech returns baffled together with the mind.”

This is Brahman, the Absolute, and the sum total of its manifestations we call Mâyâ. Brahman is beyond the domain of the finite, and cannot therefore be comprehended positively by us, but only negatively—by the ‘Not this,’ ‘Not this’ of the Jnanin. But Mâyâ is tangible as the Mother of all Energy, potential or kinetic. Hence She it is who is ultimately responsible for every change that takes place in the universe. This Mâyâ, this manifesting aspect of Brahman, the Substance differentiating Itself into infinite attributes, is called Ishwara (God) by one class of people. Hence to realise the agency of God in actions that we erroneously thought as proceeding from us, is also a safe way out of this trouble. So long as we retain our individuality, our Egoism, we are responsible for all we do, but when we come to the firm conclusion that there is no power but of God which can cause the slightest change in the system of the universe, that all beings that live and move and have their being are completely swayed by His Will,—so that it is He who is acting through so many channels,—when we realise that we are but the tools which He wields as He pleases, then all misery ceases on our part, and we are troubled neither by joy nor its counterpart, sorrow. We grow calm and let the body act as He wills it. In fact our egoism has then become so attenuated as to become practically a shadow. We think of ourselves as God’s own, and wait till the body will fall of itself like a dried leaf. Nothing evil can come out of a man who has reached this state, whatever he does is for others, whom he sees as God playing in different guises, and thinks it His worship to

serve these images of God. He sees no inequality, his heart feels for all, not excepting the animal and vegetable creation. This is the old path of Bhakti, so adapted to the ordinary man. India has had its exponents too, by thousands, from very ancient times.

Both are effective ways to reach the goal: The one consists in making the Ego large enough, till it embraces as it were the Infinite; the other is to minimise it till it dwindles, so to speak, into nothing. The real perfection has been attained when the person knows himself as the Absolute, as in the former case, or knows God Himself to be the only agent, as in the latter. Either way, the axle which all the while connected the wheel of this body with the great wheel of Karma is snapped in two, and there is no more bondage, no more rotation of births and deaths for him who has realised that he never was moved to action, in the one case, or that he was merely the passive instrument of God Himself, in the other. The Jnanin sees but one Existence without a second and all relativity therefore ceases with him. The Bhakta too sees God's hand in everything and gets rid of merit or demerit on his own account, for must he be hampered with the fruits of actions not done by him? His also is therefore the peaceful state which no wind of egoism can ruffle. The momentum of the accumulated energies of past lives of both the Jnani and the Bhakta—their Prárabdha—spends itself in time and they watch this body to slip away from them like a worn-off garment, and become what they all along were in reality—the Self immersed in His own glory.

The Ego is non-eternal. It has a birth and dies also. The Self alone is real and unchangeable. The Ego it was that felt itself miserable or happy and caused waves that played in varying dimensions on the infinite ocean of Self. The cause being absent, the waves all merge themselves in the ocean, and there is perfect homogeneity.

तेर्कोऽप्रतिष्ठः श्रुतयो विभिन्ना
नैक ऋषिर्यस्य मतं प्रमाणं ।
धर्मस्य तत्त्वं निहितं गुहायां
महाजनो येन गतः स पन्थाः ॥

“Argument leads to no certain conclusion; the Smritis are different from one another; there is not even one Rishi whose opinion can be accepted as infallible; the secret of religion is hid in the heart; that alone is *the* path along which the great have trod.”

(Mahabharata, Vanaparva)

—This was the concise reply that restored to Yudhisthira the precious lives that were the nearest and dearest to his heart. There are not wanting great men like Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Mohammed, Christ, Sankara, Ramanuja, Sri Chaitanya, who have appeared from time to time whenever they were wanted, to show us the *way* out of the world's meshes. And all of them, by their life and teachings, presented the eternal truths in those special lights which were best suited to the need of the times. We also had in our midst such a one, in whom the ancient truths have got the newest interpretation. Sri Ramakrishna has given out before the world what he himself realised. He has struck the chord of harmony which sings that the Goal is attainable by innumerable paths, that there is no room for wrangling anywhere, as *all* these paths as such are true, that Jnanam and Bhakti are destined to meet in the long run.

The requisites of successful action have been enumerated by Bhagavan Sri Krishna thus—

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणांच पृथग्विधम् ।
विविधाश्च पृथक् चेष्टा दैवंचैवात्र पंचमम् ॥

“The body, the agent, the various nerve centres, repeated efforts of a manifold kind and the resultant of all his past actions being the fifth of these.” (Gita, xviii. 14)

If the body be strong and healthy, the agent hopeful, resolute and intelligent—

आशिष्ठो, द्रष्टिष्ठो, मेधावी—if the nerve centres are intact, if he tries again and again with new and suitable efforts, and to crown all, if there is a glorious store of Samskâras (past impressions), what is there that can stand in the way of his success in realisation? त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानशुः—“Some attained immortality through renunciation alone.” And does not the height of renunciation lie in replacing this little Ego of ours by the universal Ego? Without sacrifice no sacred undertaking is complete. Let us therefore fearlessly sacrifice our Egos to attain the life immortal. Let us, like Jesus Christ, die to live again.

EPISTLES OF
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

CXXIII.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

Dear—

Thanks for all that I come to know from your letter. I had no news of the telegram in question having appeared in the 'Tribune.' It is six months since I left Chicago, and have not yet been free to return. So I could not keep myself well-posted. You have taken great pains indeed, and for this how can I thank you adequately? You have all evinced a wonderful capacity for work. And how can Thakur's* words prove false?—You have got wonderful spirit in you. About — I have already written. Nothing remains undetected, through the grace of Sri Ramakrishna. But let him found a sect or whatever he will, what harm? शिवा वः सन्तु पन्थानः— 'May blessings attend your path!' Secondly, I could not catch the drift of your letter. I shall collect my own funds to build a monastery for ourselves, and if people criticise me

for it, I see nothing in this to affect us either way. You have your minds pitched high and steady, it will do you no harm. May you have exceeding love for one another among yourselves, and it would be enough to have an attitude of indifference towards public criticisms. K— Babu has deep love for the cause and is a great man. Please convey my special love to him. So long as there is no feeling of disunion amongst you, through the grace of the Lord, I assure, there is no danger for you, रणे वने पर्वतमस्तके वा —“be it in battle, in the forest or on the top of mountains.' श्रेयांसि बहुविघ्नानि— 'All noble undertakings are fraught with obstacles.' It is quite in the nature of things. Keep up the deepest mental poise. Take not even the slightest notice of what puerile creatures may be saying against you. Indifference, indifference, indifference! I have already written to — in detail. Please do not send newspapers and tracts any more. "Take the husking hammer to heaven and there it will do its husking," as the Bengali saying goes. The same trudging about here as it was in India, only with the carrying of other's loads added! How can I procure customers for people's books in this land? I am only one amongst the many here and nothing more. Whatever the papers and things of that sort in this country write about me, I make an offering of to the Fire-God. You also do the same. That is the proper course.

A bit of public demonstration was necessary for Guru Maharaja's work. It is done and so far so good. Now you must on no account pay any heed to what the rabble may be prattling about us. Whether I make my pile or do whatever else I am reported to, shall the opinions of the riff-raff stand in the way of HIS WORK? My dear brother, you are yet a boy, while I am growing gray. What regard I have for the pronouncements and opinions of such people, you should guess from this. So long as you gird up your

* Sri Ramakrishna's.

joins and rally behind me, there is no fear even if the whole world combined against us. This much I understand that I shall have to take up a very lofty attitude. I should not, I think, write to any one except to you. By the bye, where is — ? Try to find him out and bring him to the Math with all kindness. He is a very sincere man and highly learned. You must try your best to secure two plots of land, let people say what they will. Let anyone write anything for or against me in the papers; you shouldn't take the slightest notice. And my dear brother, I beseech you repeatedly not to send me any more newspapers by the basketful. How can you talk of rest now? We shall have rest awhile only when we give up this body. Just do once get up the celebration, brother, in that spirit, so that all the country around may seethe with enthusiasm. Bravo! Capital indeed! The whole band of scoffers will be swept away by the tidal wave of love. You are elephants, forsooth, what do you fear from an ant-bite?

The address you sent reached me long ago and the reply to it has also been despatched to — Babu.

Bear in mind—the eyes are two in number and so the ears, but the mouth is but one! Indifference, indifference, indifference! न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति—“The doer of good deeds never comes to grief, my brother.” Ah! To fear! and whom are we going to fear, brother? Here the Missionaries and their ilk have howled themselves on to silence—and the whole world will but do likewise.

निन्दन्तु नीतिनिपुणा यदि वा स्तुवन्तु

लक्ष्मीः समाविशन्तु गच्छन्तु वा यथेष्टम् ।

अथैव वा मरणमस्तु शतान्तरे वा

न्याय्यात्पथः प्रविचलन्ति पदं न धीराः ॥

—“Whether people skilled in policy praise or blame, whether the Goddess of Fortune favours or goes her way, whether death be

falls to-day or after hundreds of years,—persons of steady mind never swerve from the path of righteousness.”

You need not even mix with the humdrum people, nor beg of them either. The Lord is supplying everything and will do so in future. What fear, my brother? All great undertakings are achieved through mighty obstacles. हे वीर, कुरु पौरुषमात्मनः, उपेक्षितव्या जनाः सुकृपणाः कामकाञ्चनवशगाः— You valiant one, put forth your manly efforts; wretched people under the grip of lust and gold deserve to be looked upon with indifference. Now I have got a firm footing in this country, and therefore need no assistance. But my one prayer to you all is that you should apply to the service of the Lord that active impulse of manliness which your eagerness to help me through brotherly love has brought out in you. Do not open out your mind, unless you feel it will be positively beneficial. Use agreeable and wholesome language towards even the greatest enemy. The desire for fame, for riches, for enjoyment is quite natural to every mortal, dear brother, and if that agrees well with serving both ways (i. e. serving both God and Mammon), why, all men would exhibit great zeal! It is only the great saint who can work, making a mountain of an atom of virtue in others and cherishing no desire but that of the good of the world—परगुणपरमाणुं पर्वतीकृत्य, अपिच, त्रिभुवनोपकारमात्रं etc. Therefore let dullards whose intellect is steeped in ignorance and who look upon the non-self as all in all, play out their boyish pranks. They will of themselves leave off the moment they find it too hot! Let them try to spit upon the moon—it will but recoil upon themselves. शुभं भवतु तेषाम्—Godspeed to them! If they have got anything substantial in them, who can bar their success? But if it be only empty swagger due to jealousy, then all will be in vain. H— has sent rosaries. All right. But you should know that religion of the type

that obtains in our country has no go here. You must suit it to the taste of the people. If you ask them to become Hindus, they will all give you the wide berth and hate you, as we do the Christian missionaries. They like some of the ideas of the Hindu scriptures—that is all. Nothing more than that, you should know. The men, most of them, do not trouble about religion and all that. The women are a little interested.—that is all and no large doses of it. A few thousands of people have faith in the Advaita doctrine. But they will give you the go-by if you talk obscure mannerisms about sacred writings, caste or women. Everything proceeds slowly, by degrees. Patience, purity, perseverance.

Yours &c.

Vivekananda.

CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

IX.

[Place—*Calcutta.*

Time—*1897, March and April.*

Subjects—*The views of Swamiji on the problem of women's education.—A visit to the Mahakali Pathshala and Swamiji's great appreciation for the institution.—The special characteristics of Indian womanhood as compared with those of women in other countries.—No constructive custom in society need be pulled down by force, the influence of education will make men spontaneously shake off a bad custom.]*

After his return from America Swamiji had been staying for some time in the town of Calcutta. While taking up his abode at the house of the late Baloram Bose, Baghbazar, Swamiji had been paying a round of visits to several houses of his acquaintances. To-day when the disciple came to meet Swamiji at Baghbazar, he found him ready for some such visiting engagement. "Well, come

along with me" were the words with which Swamiji accosted the disciple making for downstairs, and the disciple followed. They then put themselves into a hired cab, which proceeded southwards.

Disciple.— Sir, where are we going to visit, please?

Swamiji.— Well, come with me and you will see.

Thus keeping back the destination from the disciple, Swamiji opened conversation as the carriage reached the Beadon Street in the following strain: "One does not find any real endeavour in your country to get the women educated. You, the men, are educating yourselves to develop your manhood, but what are you all doing to educate those who share all your happiness and misery, who lay down their lives to serve you in your homes?"

Disciple.— Why, sir, just see how many schools and colleges have sprung up now-a-days for our women, and how many of them are getting degrees of B. A. and M. A.

Swamiji.— But all that is on the Western style. How many schools have been started on your own national lines in the spirit of your own religious ordinances? But alas, such a system does not obtain even among the males of your country, what to speak of females! It is seen from the official statistics that about ten to twelve per cent. of the people in India are educated, and not perhaps one per cent. of the females are so.

Otherwise, how has the country come to such a fallen condition? How can there be any progress of the country without any spread of education, any dawning of knowledge. Even no real effort or exertion in the cause is visible among the few of your country, its promise of the future, who have received the blessings of education. But know for certain that absolutely nothing can be done to improve the state of things unless there is spread of education first among the women and the masses. And so I have it in my mind to train up some Brahmacharis and Brahmacharinis, the former of whom will eventually take the vow of Sannyasa and try to carry the light of true education among the village masses, while the latter will do the same among women. But the whole work must be done in the style of our own

country. Just as centres have to be started for men, so special centres have to be started for teaching women. Brahmacharinis of education and character should take up the task of teaching at these different centres. History and the Puranas, housekeeping and the arts, the duties of home-life and ideals of character, have to be taught with the help of modern science, and the female students must be trained up in ethical and spiritual life. We must see to their growing up to be the ideal matrons of home in time. The children of such mothers will make further progress in the virtues that distinguish themselves. It is only in the homes of educated and pious mothers that great men are born. And you have reduced your women to something like manufacturing machines; alas, for heaven's sake, is this the outcome of your education? The upliftment of the women, the awakening of the masses, must come first, and then only any real good may come about for the whole country, for India.

Just now finding the cab driving past by the prayer-hall of the Brahma Samaj, Swamiji called out to the cabman to take the Chorebagan way. When the turn was made, it was given out to the disciple that the founder of the Mahakali Pathshala, the Tapaswini Mâtâji (ascetic mother) had written to Swamiji to invite him to see her institution. It was then located in a rented, two-storied house, a little to the east of the residence of the late Rajendranath Mullick at Chorebagan. When our carriage stopped there three or four gentlemen greeted Swamiji and showed him up to the first floor. There the Tapaswini mother received him standing. Presently she escorted him into one of the classes, where all the maidens stood up in greeting. At a word from Mâtâji all of them commenced reciting the Sanskrit meditation of God Shiva with proper intonation. Then they demonstrated at the instance of the mother how they were taught the ceremonies of worship in their school. After watching all this with much delight and interest, Swamiji proceeded on to visit other classes. The old Mâtâji out of her inability to go about herself with Swamiji through all the classes called to some of the teachers and asked them to give him a thorough round of inspection. When Swamiji returned after it all to the mother, she sent for some particular girl and asked her to explain the

first verse of the third canto of Kalidasa's Raghuvansa. The girl explained in Sanskrit before Swamiji the verse in question. He expressed much satisfaction, and his great appreciation of this measure of success Mâtâji had attained by her perseverance and application in the cause of diffusing education among women. In reply, she said with much humility, "In my service to my students, I look upon them as the Divine Mother, otherwise in starting the school I have neither fame nor any other object in view."

When after finishing this talk about the school, Swamiji was about to leave, Mâtâji asked him to record his opinion about the institution in the Visitors' Book. Swamiji did so in a very clear language and the last line of the writing still lives in the memory of the disciple. It was: "The movement is in the right direction."

After respectful greetings, Swamiji went back to his carriage, which then proceeded towards Bagh-bazar while an interesting conversation continued between Swamiji and the disciple on the topic of female education. Only some points of this colloquy are recorded below.

Swamiji.— Where may be the birthplace of this venerable lady! She has renounced everything of her worldly life, and yet how diligent in the service of men! Had she not been a woman, could she ever undertake the teaching of women in the way she is doing? What I saw here is all good, but that some male householders should be pitchforked as teachers is a thing I cannot approve of. The duty of teaching in the school ought to devolve in every way on educated widows and Brahmacharinis. It is good to avoid in this country any association of men with women's schools.

Disciple.— But, sir, how would you get now in this country women of learning and virtue like Gargi, Khanâ or Lilavati?

Swamiji.— Do you think women of the type don't exist now in the country? Still on this sacred soil of India, this land of Sita and Savitri, among women may be found such character, such spirit of service, such affection, compassion, contentment and reverence, as I could not see, I have to confess, anywhere else in this world! In the West, the women did not very often seem to

me to be women at all, they appeared to be quite the replicas of men! Driving vehicles, drudging in offices, attending schools, doing professorial duties! In India alone the sight of feminine modesty and reserve soothes the eye! With such materials of great competence left in your hands, you could not, alas, work out their upliftment! You do not try to infuse the light of knowledge in them! For if they get the right sort of education, they may well turn out to be the ideal women in the world.

Disciple.— Do you think, sir, the same consummation would be reached through the way Mâtâji is imparting knowledge to her students? These students would soon grow to get married and would presently shade into the likeness of all other women of the common run. So I think, if these girls may be made to adopt Brahmacharya, then only they may devote their lives to the cause of the country's progress and attain to the high ideals preached in our sacred books.

Swamiji.— Yes, everything will come about in time. Such educated men are not yet born in this country, who can keep their girls unmarried without fear of social punishment. Just see how before the girls exceed the age of twelve or thirteen people hasten to give them away in marriage out of this fear of their social equals. Only the other day when the Age of Consent Bill was being passed the leaders of society massed together millions of men to send up the cry, "We don't want the Bill";—had it all been in any other country, what to speak of getting up meetings to send forth a cry like that, people would have hidden their heads under their roofs in shame to feel the pity of it that such a calumny could yet stain their society.

Disciple.— But, sir, I don't think the ancient lawgivers could support this custom of early marriage without having in view any rhyme or reason to justify it. There must be some implied secret in this attitude of theirs.

Swamiji.— Well, what may be this secret, please?

Disciple.— Take it for instance in the first place that if the girls are married in an early age, they may come over to their husbands' home to

learn the peculiar ways and usages of the family from the very early years of their life. They may acquire adequate skill in the duties of the household under the guidance of their parents-in-law. In the homes of their own parents on the other hand there is the likelihood of grown-up daughters going wrong from proper discipline. But married early, they have no chance of thus going wrong, and over and above this, such feminine virtues as modesty, reserve, fortitude and diligence are apt to develop in them.

Swamiji.— In favour of the other side of the question again, it may be argued that early marriage leads to premature child-bearing, which accounts for most of our women dying early; their progeny being of low vitality go to swell the ranks of our country's beggars! For if the physique of the parents be not strong and healthy, how can strong and healthy sons be born at all? Married when a little grown up in age and bred up in culture, our mothers will give birth to children who would be able to achieve real good of the country. The reason why you have such plenty of widows in every household lies here in this custom of early marriage. If the number of early marriages decline, that of widows is bound to follow suit.

Disciple.— But, sir, it seems to me, if our women are married late in life they are apt to be less mindful of their household duties. For aught I have heard, the mothers-in-law in many cases in Calcutta do all the cooking while the educated brides of the home sit idle with red paint round their feet! But in our East Bengal such a thing cannot happen.

Swamiji.— But everywhere under the sun you find the same blending of the good and the bad. In my opinion society in every country shapes itself out of its own initiative. So we need not trouble our heads prematurely about such reforms as the abolition of early marriage, the remarriage of widows and so on. Our part of the duty lies in imparting true education to all men and women in society; as an outcome of that education, they will of themselves be able to know what is good for them from what is bad and will eschew the latter. It will not be then necessary to pull down or set up anything in society by coercion.

Disciple.— What sort of education is suited, you think, to our women ?

Swamiji.— Religion, arts, science, housekeeping, cooking, sewing, hygiene—the simple essential points in these subjects ought to be taught to our women. It is not good to let them touch novels and fictions. The Mahakali Pathsala is to a great extent moving in the right direction. But only teaching rites of worship won't do ; their education must be an eye-opener in all matters. Ideal characters must be presented before the view of the girl students to imbue them with a devotion for lofty principles of selflessness. The high examples of Sita, Savitri, Damayanti, Lilavati, Khana, Mira should be brought home to their minds and they should be inspired to mould their own lives in their light.

Our cab now reached the house of the late Babu Balarain Bose at Baghbazar. Swamiji alighted from it and went upstairs. There he recounted the whole of his experience at the Mahakali Pathsala to those who had assembled there to see him.

Then while discussing what the members of the newly formed Ramkrishna Mission should do, Swamiji proceeded to establish by various arguments the supreme importance of the “gift of learning” and the “gift of knowledge.”* Turning to the disciple he said, “Educate, educate,—‘than this there is no other way.’” And referring in banter to the party who do not favour educational propaganda, he said, “Well, don't go into the party of Prahladas !” Asked as to the meaning of the expression, he replied, “Ah, haven't you heard ? Tears rushed out of the eyes of Prahlada at the very sight of the first letter ‘Ka’ of the alphabet, so how could any studies be proceeded with ? But then the tears in Prahlada's eyes were tears of love, while your fools affect tears in fright ! Many of the devotees are like that.” All of those present broke out in laughter on hearing this, and Swami Yogananda said to Swamiji, “And you ? Once you have the urge within towards anything to be done, why, you don't have any peace until you see to the utmost about it. Now what you have a mind to have done shall be done no doubt.”

THE ARUNEYI UPANISHAD

(Concluded from page 136)

खल्वहं ब्रह्म सूत्रं सूचनात्सूत्रं ब्रह्म सूत्रमहमेव
विद्वांस्त्रिवृत्सूत्रं त्यजेद्विद्वान्य एवं वेद । संन्यस्तं
मया संन्यस्तं मया संन्यस्तं मयेति त्रिः कृत्वाऽ-
भयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते । सखा मा
गोपायौजः सखा योऽसीन्द्रस्य वज्रोऽसीत्यनेन
मन्त्रेण कृत्वोर्ध्वं वैष्णवं दण्डं कौपीनं परिग्रहे-
दौषधवदशनमाचरेदौषधवदशनमाचरेद्ब्रह्मचर्यम-
हिंसां चापरिग्रहं च सत्यं च यत्नेन हे रक्षतो हे
रक्षतो हे रक्षत इति ॥३॥

3. Verily I am Brahman, the Sutram (a) ; The Sutram is Brahman for It originates (the cosmos) ; I myself am the Sutram because I am a man of realisation,—the wise one who has realised this should give up his triple holy thread. ‘I have renounced, I have renounced, I have renounced’—uttering this thrice he should declare—‘From me there is is no fear to any being, for from me everything has proceeded.’ Uttering the Mantram— ‘Thou art my friend, so protect me, thou art strength and my friend, thou art the Thunder of the Lord of the Universe, etc.’ (b), he should hold up high the bamboo staff and put on the loin-cloth. He should take food as if it were medicine (c), aye, as if it were medicine. Carefully guard (oh, ye all who are concerned) your chastity (in thought, word and deed), non-injury, non-acceptance of (superfluous) gifts, (non-thieving) and truthfulness,—guard them by all means, yes, do guard !

(a) *Sutram*—Lit. that which originates something. The word commonly means thread, as it is thread that forming the material cause of a fabric gives the idea of a new thing being made, which really is not the case. So Brahman also appears as this universe, which in reality is nothing distinct from it. Hence the term is applied to Brahman also.

* The allusion is to the classification of various gifts, mentioned by Manu.

(b) *The Thunder etc.*—i. e., something which strikes terror into the heart of the enemies. The Mantram has been quoted in part only.

(c) *As if.....medicine*—i. e., he should eat merely to live, and not hanker after the delicacies of taste.

(d) The omission of this word is to be supplied from the word च in the text.

अथातः परमहंसपरिव्राजकानामासनशयनाभ्यां भूमौ ब्रह्मचारिणां मृत्पात्रं वाऽलावुपात्रं दारुपात्रं वा कामक्रोधलोभमोहदम्भदर्पासूयाममत्वाहंकारानृतादीनपि त्यजेद्वर्षासु ध्रुवशीलोऽष्टौ मासानेकाकी यतिश्चरेद्द्रावेव वा चरेद्द्रावेव वा चरेत् ॥४॥

4. Now then the duties of the highest class of itinerant monks—the *Paramahansa Parivrajakas* (are as follows):—They must sit and lie down (a) on the ground. Those having already taken the vow of chastity etc. should use an earthen bowl or one made of gourd, or a wooden bowl; they should give up lust, anger, avarice, infatuation, ostentation, haughtiness, jealousy, attachment to objects, egotism, falsehood (b) and the like. The Sannyasin should stay at one place during the four months of the rainy season (c), and during the remaining eight months wander alone, or with a single companion, aye, a single companion.

(a) *Sit and lie down.*—These two words also suggest mindfulness of the Self and taking no thought for sense-objects respectively. For without these, mere giving up of luxuries will not entitle him to be a true wandering monk.

(b) *Falsehood*—This word has not been mentioned in the text and must be supplied from the word च in it.

(c) *Four months etc.*—beginning from the month of Ashádha (or June-July).

खलु वेदार्थे यो विद्वान्सोपनयनादूर्ध्वं स तानि प्राग्वा त्यजेत्पितरं पुत्रमग्न्युपवीतं कर्म कलत्रं चान्यदपीह यतयो भित्तार्थं ग्रामं प्रविशन्ति ।

पाणिपात्रमुदरपात्रं वा । ॐ हि ॐ हि ॐ हीत्येतदुपनिषदं विन्यसेद्विद्वान्य एवं वेद । पालाशं वैल्वमौदुम्बरं दण्डमजिनं मेखलां यज्ञोपवीतं च त्यक्त्वा शूरो य एवं वेद । तद्विष्णोः परमं पदं सदा पश्यन्ति सूरयः । दिवीव चक्षुराततम । तद्विप्रासो विपन्यवो जागृवांसः समिन्धते । विष्णोर्यत्परमं पदमित्येवं निर्वाणानुशासनं वेदानुशासनं वेदानुशासनमिति ॥५॥

5. Verily one who has realised the (true) import of the Vedas may give up those things (previously enumerated) after the investiture with the holy thread, or he may do so even before that ceremony—(give up) his father, son, his sacrificial fires and the holy thread, his works, his wife, and all else he may possess. ‘Sannyasins enter a village for begging purposes only, with their palms or their stomach as the receptacle for food. Uttering ‘Om’ ‘Om’ ‘Om,’ they should mentally place this Mantram of the Upanishad in the different parts of their body (a). He who realises the Truth in this manner is really the wise one. (In the case of Brahmacharins taking on the monastic vow) they should give up the staff made of the wood of the Palâsa (Dhak), Bilwa (Marmelos) or Udumbara (Fig) trees, their skin and girdle, and the holy thread etc. He who knows this is a (real) hero. “That supreme state of the all-pervading Deity the sages realise (b) for all time—like the eye pervading from one end of the sky to the other. Sages purged of all impurities like anger etc., who have awakened from the sleep (of ignorance), kindle that Truth (in the minds of the enquirers), that supreme state of the all-pervading Deity. Such indeed is the injunction of the Scriptures leading to liberation—the injunction of the Vedas, aye, of the Vedas (d).

(a) *Place this Mantram.....body*—according to the instructions of the Guru. In making *nyâsa* he may use only this Mantram, the most sacred of all Mantrams, and use none other.

(b) *Realise*—as their own innermost Self. “*Surah*” is literally “the spiritual heroes.”

(c) *Like the eye pervading etc.*—Here the term “eye” stands for self-revealed vision. Just as such vision conterminous with the whole bright sky above is unobstructed by space, time or limiting objects, so is the Supreme State of Vishnu realised by sages as brooding over all consciousness.

(d) The repetition marks the close of the Upanishad.

इत्यथर्ववेदान्तर्गतारुण्युपनिषत्समाप्ता ॥

Here ends the Aruneyi Upanishad, included in the Atharva Veda.

ON THE CONNING TOWER.

Two stalwarts of English journalism among the Bengalees were just on the point of falling out on a vital issue bearing on the Home Rule and the Social problem. Home Rule propaganda so widely advocated at present by educated India. But unfortunately they seem now to be manœuvring themselves out of the controversy, so as to put off the most desirable prospect of having the whole question properly threshed out. Does not the Western ideal of Home Rule necessarily impose on us a Western ideal of social efficiency? If we Europeanise our politics are we not bound to Europeanise, more or less, our society?

One morning last month the *Bengalee* pointed out very cogently indeed that political life is inextricably bound up with social life; so before we can secure Home Rule politics for ourselves we must have to put our society in proper alignment with such politics; at least, our efforts in both directions must go hand in hand. The thought is, indeed, challenging enough for the Home Rule propagandists, for they cannot argue that they mean to lock up their politics and their society in separate water-tight compartments, nor can they deny the fact that the social life of the masses in India is far from being characterised by that Western spirit of political initiative and self-assertion which a veneer of foreign culture has

infused into their educated compatriots. Home Rule in politics for the people in India presupposes therefore a social reconstruction of an extensive and profound character, and this may very well form a very strong argument for delaying the gift of Home Rule to Indian agitators.

And the party opposed to an early Home Rule for India has not been slow to seize this argument, whereas some sincere sympathisers among them have already come forward to point out, evidently on the implied basis of a comparison between the people in India and those in Western countries, that in view of the social backwardness of the former, the question of first deserving Western political institutions such as Home Rule can never be improperly shelved in any stage of the present controversy. So the Home Rulers of India are already being called upon to submit to the social test. It would not do for them in reply to say that the mass of people in India have already some sort of training in the art of self-government, seeing that they could evolve in the past their wonderful system of village communities, for, granting the validity of this historical fact, the social life of the people in India is not found to have been affected by it in the same way as that of people in the West has been affected by their past training in political aspirations and responsibilities. The truth of the matter is that in the West people for long centuries have learnt to regard themselves as participators in the power of the state and have consequently developed in the light of such self-consciousness a peculiar political temperament and a sense of social equality, while in India the people in spite of their proved capacity to govern themselves in their villages have never claimed for themselves the power of the political state and have therefore never meant to build up their social unity on the basis of any common participation in such power. But although state-politics or *rāja-dharma* never formed the rallying point in the past evolution of their political and social life, the Indian people had surely their own line of development in both these spheres according to their own scheme of life and it is highly preposterous to judge them now in both these respects by Western standards of social and political life.

But if educated men in India to-day demand for their country Western institutions of political life, it is quite proper and natural that they should be asked to satisfy Western tests and standards of social and political efficiency. If we want to be judged by our own standards, why, let us press forward along our own lines of advance. But if we want to Westernise our politics, we must also strive to Westernise our society. There cannot be any partial, "patchy" choice in the matter. Either adopt Western institutions both political and social, or revert to your own national lines of advance in both these spheres of life. And only the latter choice is opened to us if we want to avoid death. Political advance along our own national lines is the only possible solution of the Indian problem*. It is too late now to adopt a new rallying centre of state-politics to rebuild and recast the whole of Indian life. So let us all rally round the old centre of village life and build upwards from there with the old motive force of our sense of duty or *swadharma* instead of the new Western one of state-compulsion, and as we succeed in this work of upbuilding, all the politics of the state (*râja-dharma*) will naturally fall into line with the rising politics of the people (*prajâ-dharma*).

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES.

WE beg to invite the attention of all our readers to the earnest appeal printed prominently on the cover-page of the P. B. The institution on behalf of which this appeal is being made embodies those definite ideals about female education in India which the Swami Vivekananda worked out in his mind and which were clearly foreshadowed to a great extent in his dialogues with a disciple as published in the present issue of our journal. It is the duty of every follower and admirer of the great Swamiji, to try his best to assure to this women's movement the pecuniary help without which it cannot establish itself on a permanent footing.

WE are glad to go through the contents of the Report of the newly-started Ramakrishna Seva-shrama, Lahore, for 9 months up to December, 1916. The Ashrama is situated at a rented house at Sutarmandi, and has treated with success 16 indôor patients, and not less than 4113 new outdoor cases with 16942 repetitions of the same. It has also helped a widow with two orphans with a monthly allowance of Rs. 5. The total receipts during the period have amounted to Rs. 945-8-3, and the total expenditure Rs. 734-3-9. The work of service is carried on, as it should be, irrespective of caste, creed or colour. The Ashrama, being still in its infancy, has to face thousand and one difficulties and looks forward to a hearty co-operation on the part of the sympathising public, on whose charity the success of all such undertakings depends.

WE are glad to note the varied activities of the Sri Ramakrishna Society, Rangoon, from its report for the period from July 1915 to March 1917. The amalgamation of the two sister societies previously existing in Rangoon, viz., the Ramakrishna Society, and the Ramakrishna Sevak Samiti under this new name is a welcome news. This was achieved through the intervention of Swami Sharvananda, President Ramakrishna Home, Madras, who visited the city in April 1916. The Society, to mention only some of its activities, holds moral, religious and educational classes, organises public lectures, and conducts a night school, besides celebrating the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, and carrying on philanthropic work on a small scale. During his brief visit Swami Sharvananda gave four public lectures and held several class-talks which were highly appreciated. The Society has acquired a plot of land and intends to build a house of its own. The Anniversary of the Society as well as the 82nd Birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna took place on the 27th May last at the Bengal Academy, the programme for the latter being Bhajan and the usual feeding of the poor in the morning and lectures in the evening presided over by Dr. P. J. Mehta M. D., Bar-at-Law. We wish the Society every success.

* This will form the subject of a separate article in the P. B. of September, 1917.

WE welcome the report of the Ramakrishna Students' Home, Madras, for the year 1916. This Home for unmarried poor students has been carrying on its labour of love for the last twelve years with conspicuous success. The total number of boarders on the rolls in December 1916 was 30 as against 25 of the previous year. The inmates were of different sects and hailed from different districts. The results achieved by the students in the different examinations were good. Religious and moral instruction formed a special feature of the Home, which is under the supervision of the President of the Ramakrishna Home, Madras. Technical education is also encouraged, and three of the boarders appeared successfully at the Shorthand Examination. Typewriting also finds favour with most of the boarders. The total receipts of the year amounted to Rs. 6208-12-5 and the total expenditure Rs. 3608-5-6. The balance at the end of the year was Rs. 7384-0-2. The Home is in need of a building of its own, and appeals for funds for this as well as for its general upkeep.

THE report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, for the month of June, 1917, is as follows:—

Indoor patients: there were 6 old cases, and 19 newly admitted, of which 16 were discharged cured, 2 died and 7 were still under treatment. Outdoor patients: there were 2582 cases of which 1259 were new ones and 1323 their repetitions. The receipts of the month amounted to Rs. 154-3-0 and the expenditure Rs. 171-0-9. The following gifts were received with thanks:—Babu Mathuradass, Ghang,—one silver ring; Through Messrs. V. G. Dastur & Co., Bombay,—1 lb. of Quinine, worth Rs. 36; Babu Bhajan Lall Lohia, Calcutta,—Allopathic medicines worth Rs. 769-15-6.

THE 33rd annual report of the Srinivasa Mandiram and Charities, Bangalore (1915—'16) is a noble record of the disinterested labour of a single generous soul, Mr. A. Gopalacharlu of Bangalore. The Mandiram has a temple for daily worship, an orphanage, which maintained and educated 41 inmates during the year under review, a free library and reading room, and a ladies' section for securing the co-operation of educated ladies for

mutual help and service. Among the inmates of the orphanage are both Brahmins and non-Brahmins of various ages, and the Mandiram looks after their technical education as well. The present needs of this useful institution are certain additions to the orphanage, which, we hope, the kind-hearted public will shortly provide.

THE President, Ramkrishna Home of Service, Silchar, writes to the following effect:—This Home was opened in September 1915, and shortly after, a Night School for teaching the boys of coolies and of other depressed classes was established. This now has an enrolment of 30 boys who are being regularly taught. A free Library has also been started. Nursing of the sick has been taken in hand and the members have up to now helped in nursing 60 cases and have also assisted in the cremation of the dead in certain cases. The Home has equipped itself for fire-relief as well.

Ever since the disastrous flood of October 1916, the members have been rendering forth their humble services in the alleviation of distress. Three centres, two in Sub-divisions Sadar and Hailakandi in Cachar district and one in Sub-division Karimganj in Sylhet district were opened for distributing rice. Of these, the relief work at Silchar and Karimganj is still going on in full swing with help from the Government, some charitable bodies and the generous public.

It is now felt that the workers can materially extend their usefulness if they can secure a real "home" where they can receive and support disabled and sick persons and nurse them. It is proposed to build a house where there will be a Monastery for the accommodation of Sannyasins of the Rk. Mission and where the Home of Service will be located with a Dispensary. For this purpose arrangements have been made for purchasing 22 bighas of land over a very beautiful hillock in Ramkrishnapur, 3 miles from Silchar, where the necessary buildings will be erected. The Night School and the Library, however, will remain in the town. It is estimated that about Rs. 5000 will be required. The humble workers of the Home of Service appeal to the philanthropy of the generous public for contributions to this service of humanity.

WE are glad to go through the eighth annual

report (Oct. 1915—Sept. 1916) of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bharukati, Barisal. The objects of the Ashrama are to build up a religious life on the broad principles taught by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda; to minister to the sick and the needy irrespective of caste, creed or colour; to give the boys education and help to form their character. For the furtherance of these, the Ashrama performs daily worship, conducts a charitable dispensary and a free school, holds Sunday classes for study and Bhajana, and feeds the poor four times in the year during the annual celebrations. During the year under review the Ashrama treated and nursed 55 outdoor patients, maintained 30 needy families of all castes, besides giving temporary help to 4 orphans and 9 invalid youths. The newly started free school has got 64 students on the rolls, of whom 26 are Mahomedans, and the rest Hindus. It teaches the boys up to the upper primary standard. It has further managed to look after the education of 6 poor students and distributed Rs. 19/3 among indigent persons. During the summer season it distributed drinking water, on a section of the Barisal-Banaripara Road where water is altogether scarce, to an average of 300 passers-by daily, and also on other occasions. The Ashrama was visited by two Sadhus of the Ramakrishna Math, Belur, and another old monk of the Nath Sect. The total receipts of the Ashrama during the year were Rs. 661-15-3 and the total expenses amounted to Rs. 527-7 as. The Ashrama in its humble way is a glowing example of what efficient village organisations can do towards alleviating the sufferings of the needy village people. True service should not be stereotyped in nature, but must be ever ready to meet *all* sorts of wants according to the circumstances. We congratulate the Bharukati Ashrama on its doing the pioneer work in this direction, and invite the generous public to encourage its unselfish work.

A perusal of the sixth annual report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Muthigunge, Allahabad, (from January 1916 to December 1916) shows that during the year under review no less than 11,845 sick poor people were treated in the outdoor dispensary, of which 5,504 were new cases. Of the latter 4,707 were Hindus, 793 Mahomedans, 36 Christians and 28 belonged to other denomi-

nations. Compared with the previous year, there was a falling off in the number of patients owing to the fact that sufficient medicines could not be procured. The total receipts of the year amounted to Rs. 887-12-3 and the total expenditure Rs. 827-2-3. The Mission has been trying with extremely inadequate means at its disposal to cope with an ever-increasing amount of disease and suffering amongst the poor in the city, and it has to depend solely on the benevolence of the generous public to carry on its work of relief. The institution is serving the diseased poor without distinction of creed, caste or colour, and deserves sympathy and support from every nationality.

Allahabad is one of the holiest places of pilgrimage in India, where pilgrims from every part congregate on all occasions. With the advance in population, disease and suffering are also on the increase. So an indoor hospital for the diseased poor has become an urgent necessity. The Sevashrama has to send away many who seek its protection and is unable to help many a destitute poor who are left uncared for in the city. A hospital of six beds with a small surgical ward attached and a separate room for infectious cases might serve for the present requirements. The Mission charitable dispensary is at present situated in a small plot of land of its own purchased from the Allahabad Math. But it has not got as yet separate quarters for the workers to live in, though these have become very necessary for the efficient working of the institution and should be built close to the outdoor dispensary. We trust that the benevolent public will come forward to give a permanent footing to the institution which is trying to serve poor humanity in its humble way.

THE Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban, treated during June last 57 indoor patients, of which 12 were old cases and 45 newly admitted. Of these 38 were discharged on recovery, 3 died, 1 left treatment, and 15 were still under treatment. It treated 3775 outdoor cases of which 749 are new entries and 3026 repetitions of the same. Besides two persons were helped with medicine and free doctor's visit in their own homes. The total receipts of the month were Rs. 98-12-6 and the total expenses including those for the building-work were Rs. 472-13-6.