

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राण्य वरान्निबोधत ।

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

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UNPUBLISHED NOTES OF CLASS-TALKS BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

Religion is the realisation of Spirit as Spirit ; not Spirit as matter.

Religion is a growth. Each one must experience it himself. The Christians believe that Jesus Christ died to save man. With you it is belief in a doctrine, and this belief constitutes your salvation. With us doctrine has nothing whatever to do with salvation. Each one may believe in whatever doctrine he likes ; or in no doctrine. What difference does it make to you whether Jesus Christ lived at a certain time? What has it to do with you that Moses saw God in the burning bush? The fact that Moses saw God in the burning bush does not constitute your seeing Him, does it? If it does, then the fact that Moses ate is enough for you ; you ought to stop eating. One is just as sensible as the other. Records of great spiritual men of the past do us no good whatever except that they urge us onward to do the same, to experience religion ourselves. Whatever Christ or Moses or anybody else did does not help us in the least, except to urge us on.

Each one has a special nature peculiar to himself, which he must follow and through

which he will find his way to freedom. Your teacher should be able to tell you what your particular path in nature is and to put you in it. He should know by your face where you belong and should be able to indicate it to you. We should never try to follow another's path, for that is his way, not yours. When that path is found you have nothing to do but fold your arms and the tide will carry you to freedom. Therefore when you find it, never swerve from it. Your way is the best for you, but that is no sign that it is the best for others.

The truly spiritual see Spirit as Spirit, not as matter. It is Spirit that makes nature move, it is the Reality in nature, so action is in nature, not in the Spirit. Spirit is always the same, changeless, eternal. Spirit and matter are in reality the same, but Spirit, as such, never becomes matter, and matter as such, never becomes Spirit, as such.

The Spirit never acts. Why should it? It merely is and that is sufficient. It is pure existence absolute and has no need of action.

You are not bound by law. That is in your nature. The mind is in nature and is bound by law. All nature is bound by law,

the law of its own action; and this law can never be broken. If you could break a law of nature, all nature would come to an end in an instant. There would be no more nature. He who attains freedom, breaks the law of nature and for him nature fades away and has no more power over him. Each one will break the law but once and forever and that will end his trouble with nature.

Governments, societies, etc. are comparative evils. All societies are based on bad generalisation. The moment you form yourselves into an organisation, you begin to hate everybody outside of that organisation. When you join an organisation you are putting bounds upon yourself, you are limiting your own freedom. The greatest goodness is the highest freedom; our aim should be to allow the individual to move towards this freedom. More of goodness, less of artificial laws. Such laws are not laws at all. If it were a law it could not be broken. The fact that these so-called laws are broken, shows clearly that they are not

laws. A law is that which can not be broken.

Whenever you suppress a thought, you simply press it down, out of sight, in a coil like a spring, only to spring out again at a moment's notice, with all the pent-up force as the result of the suppression and do in a few moments what it would have done in a much longer period.

Every ounce of pleasure brings its pound of pain. It is the same energy that at one time manifests itself as pleasure, at another time as pain. As soon as one set of sensations stops another begins. But in some cases, in more advanced persons, one may have two, yes, even a hundred different thoughts enter into active operation at the same time.

Mind is of its own nature. Mind activity means creation. The thought is followed by the word, and the word by the form. All of this creating will have to stop, both mental and physical, before the mind can reflect the soul.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

IN the melting-pot of modern thought, the old doctrine of Divine Incarnation has fared rather wonderfully well, and the protests of the unbelieving section,—the retiring foot-prints of a lingering Deism in thought,—served very little in arresting the modern spread of the doctrine. Much is due, no doubt, to its vigorous advocacy in theosophical teachings. On the other hand, in Vedantic thought the doctrine gains an unquestioning acceptance on the strength of the important text, ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति, "the knower of Brahman becomes verily Brahman." But besides this inevitable Vedantic implication, the doctrine of the descent of God as man has become ingrained in Hindu modes of thought and life. It is the natural, un-

suspecting expectation of a solemn covenant between God and man being fulfilled from age to age, and however man may seem to vacillate in his faith, his weakness can never affect the inexorable fact of God being found to abide by His covenant whenever it is high time for His revelation.

Abraham's covenant was but a feeble echo, a partial extradition, of the Vedic truth of this covenant*; and the Christian dogma of a single Incarnation still carries within itself this defect. But the general expectancy of a timely revelation in each crisis of history

* Vide Occasional Notes, P. B., April, 1915.

is found to overreach itself in many respects. In the first place, Divine Incarnations are not as plentiful as gourds! And scripture (Bhagavatam) speaking of such Incarnation rightly calls attention to a gradation in the degree of divine revelation. If we accept such gradation, then the manifestation of Divinity in man is found to be almost a constant phenomenon in history. High or low, the wave of manifestation is rising here and there and everywhere. But these waves are ripples, really speaking, in comparison with the great ocean-swell that comes but once in centuries. These latter can never come oftner, for the flood of their inspiration takes ages to rise and ages to fall. And the perfection which their Divinity manifests rends the veil of distinct personalities and shows them to be one in being. The *persona* or mask cannot detain us any longer and they illustrate, according to Sri Ramakrishna, the flower-pot in fireworks which keeps shooting up in our charmed view fiery flowers of different form and colour at intervals.

Another great miscalculation of men looking forward to the coming of an Avatara is the preconceived form which they fondly want their expected One to assume in their midst. History proves that such a preconception is a vanity of vanities. The coming of a God-man has ever been like "the wind bloweth where it listeth!" And all man's wisdom in this connection is so much foolishness. For if you exactly know the nature of the remedy the times stand in need of, it must be granted that you know also the exact nature of the disease, and if you could be led by God so far as to properly diagnose the evils the world suffers from, why, it remains for you very little further to be led by the same God to be able to cure those evils yourself. Such a big agent of God as yourself cannot but obviate the necessity of His coming in person amongst men! And if we, poor men of this age, could find in you a

leader to boss God's coming on earth, well, we should not grudge the poorer men of the next century, say, the greater fortune of living with a God Himself! For God in history was never found to affect the extravagance of having a boss to prearrange His manifestation to the detail. The Bible shows that John the Baptist even miscalculated in foretelling the coming of a Christ that had already come, and he could not band together the fishers of men whom his Christ fished, not to speak of anything like the modern time-tabling of a coming Avatara's deeds and movements! Jesus had his single John the Baptist, Ramachandra had his few Kishis to be counted on the finger's end, Sri Krishna had his Bhishma among myriads of friends, but the modern bosses of God have hundreds of societies to draw out His cut-and-dried programme of business! Great fun, indeed!

The greatest need of a Divine Revelation in this age is for knocking down the overweening antics of man's self-sufficient intellect, and could such antics go ever farther than all this proud bossing of God's self-revelation among men? It may be good for human society to have a sort of expectancy for the birth of great men, but if this expectancy is traded upon in a way to divert men's efforts from individual achievements of spiritual greatness to a morbid dependence on occult happenings calculated to raise themselves to a position of cheap importance, then such expectancy becomes a snare, and an organisation of men which serves to disguise this snare by a false ferment of collective enthusiasm, is an instance of the many organised evils which have appeared in the modern world to prey upon its very vitality for real progress. The unseen helpers of humanity are not such a foolish lot as to be party to such a wholesale infatuation of human minds with an idle curiosity for occult happenings. For they themselves lived and stood among men for unhidden and

unmasked spiritual achievements and their blessings go forth to those on earth who achieve and not those who mystify, to those on earth who are strong to manifest and live *their* life as their own openly in the eyes of men, and not those who are smart enough to claim to do any secretariat work for them! Greatness on earth is not a double-barrelled mystery that occultism should have the preference of prearranging the shot in the hidden barrel of achievement, and less fortunate mortals can but deal with the other barrel. Whatever is great on earth has actually to be achieved on earth. It seeks to be achieved by you or me or somebody else and not to be engineered into being. The unseen help becomes the seen achievement in some deserving man amongst us. The great ones have to take birth and grow as men amongst men. They do not hoist themselves on human vehicles to be hot-housed for the purpose.

Our wisdom about the Avatara behaving thus and thus only when on earth, is the most ridiculous arrogance. How must our problems be exactly his likewise? Must he see things from the same plane of knowledge and spirituality as we see things from? How can we anticipate his mode of life and thought and activity? How can we judge for him his choice of vocation, method or station in life? Whoever pretends amongst us to a foreknowledge of all these matters must be either an Avatara himself or an imposter. Granted we may speak of our own hopes and expectations, but how can we speak of any foreknowledge? A statesman may expect an Avatara as a soldier-statesman, a diplomat may expect one as a diplomat, a pundit may expect one as a pundit, a sensational modernist may hope for one who is his ideal. Such expectations of men only figure forth their ideals as their expected God-men. All that is natural. But to claim that one's own ideal hits off the real personality God must

have to assume on earth, and to create on the the strength, easily, of an organised influence a big movement to impose that assurance on men is something like a dare-devil challenge thrown before the bar of human thought and culture. Surely no pious soul would wax so "fat and kicking" in his wisdom in matters that pertain to God and His self-revelation on earth. But this is pre-eminently an age of kicking intellectual pride, and we find hundreds of oratorical platforms in the country resounding with wise oracles about "the coming Avatara"! The doctrine of Divine Incarnation has been travestied to a nauseating degree, and it seems it is even better for our countrymen to go without such a doctrine than to have the divine faculty of imagination stultified in them with such a wretched sort of abuse.

For every artificial line drawn persistently between the human and the divine turns out to be an eventual evil, and man himself is divine in a sense more real than that in which he is human. So the more we keep men gazing towards the skies for something divine to fall from them, the greater the disservice we render to the growth of real manhood in them. God becomes humanly great only through human beings, the likes of you and me. We have really to nurse all the Divinity that is to live amongst men only in the cradle within ourselves and not in the impossible hot-house of any occult societies. So down with all creepy whispering occultism that holds human minds outside of themselves for events and achievements of greatness, that serves to feed idle fancy and abort true spiritual insight and effort, that leads men blindfolded by an insidious self-esteem and the false glory of corporate enthusiasm! It is true as truth itself that the God of India, the Mother of all spirituality among men, will never desert us in moments of great historical crises, but let us be humble and sincere from the depths of

our soul that we may have our eyes open, otherwise we may be deserting the very God that hath not deserted us, we may turn Him out from the very door at which He seeketh entrance to be in our midst! True humility before God and men is the best welcome to

bid to an Avatara, not the trumpeting forth of self-constituted envoys,—the blind leading the blind,—for humility only clarifies the vision and shows how and where the Lord reveals Himself.

THE INDIAN PROBLEM.

(I) ITS MATERIAL ASPECT.

CLEAR thought is the *sine qua non* of successful action, and clear thought as to what the Indian problem really is at the present moment is a thing conspicuous by its absence among educated men in India.

The powerful Government and the civilisation it represents fill up such a big space in the range of their mental vision, that their minds, like a poor beast hypnotised by a python, cannot shake themselves free from an insidious obsession and take up a manly, independent standpoint in studying their own country and its real problem, a country that has surely an all-round individuality of its own developed through scores of centuries, through a past history that is in its own way richer far in experience than the history of any other country on the globe.

But still let us struggle for a clear mental grasp of facts, and facts that lie closest to everybody's life are facts concerning our struggle for physical existence, facts that stare full on our face, day in and day out. "Feed India," was the innermost cry of the Indian soul that uttered itself forth through the inspired lips of Swami Vivekananda when pointing out the most immediate and the keenest need of his mothercountry. "Feed India" is still the divine call that we feel sometimes echoed back through every sound that meets the ear wherever we wander on this beloved soil of India.

So the most urgent issue in the Indian problem is: How to feed India? And immediately we put this question to ourselves, it wakes up in a calm, sincere mind the further question: How did India use to feed herself so long? India has surely got a store of past experience to appeal to in new difficulties, but if our eyes are held off from such a store in spite of themselves, that shows how they are unnecessarily enthralled by the glare of facts that have come to dominate over us from the West.

How did India feed herself so long in the past? Was it all due to some perpetual initiative and management of any political state? Did any such state constantly legislate from above the heads of the people as to what soil each villager should till, what crop each should raise, how each ploughshare and loom in the village should work, or how every source of production, in a word, should be tapped and by whom? No, the people in India never lived under that sort of too much political government from above. Carefully study the history of India and you will find that all the productive labour and industry of the country that went to form its economic foundation maintained themselves through the independent initiative of the people. They never even looked up to the state to lead their initiative in this matter, they only looked up to the state to protect it. And in return for such protection, they paid

their taxes to the state. But then whence did come the leading, the motive force, to make the people take their own initiative in all productive labour and industry such as used to feed and clothe the India of the past? Why, carefully study those ancient codes of law or Dharma which built up the life of the people in all the formative centuries of their history, and you will clearly discover that the people who were to produce the necessaries of life in India were taught from the very beginning of history to cling through life and death to their *swadharmas* or the round of religious duties ordained for them, and this their religion kept them faithful from age to age to their agricultural and industrial occupations, while leading them through these to fulfil their own modest part of the national duty of preserving and practising the spiritual ideals of the race. So all the real leading that the people in the villages required for all the purposes and tasks of life, both educational and practical, both material and spiritual, came from their religion and from those that lived amongst them to interpret and teach it.

This self-dependent system of village life really constituted the very core of all that politics and economics which preserved India from death through centuries and centuries of her history. And those who are conversant with the highest principles of political philosophy will easily admit that no stronger and sounder foundation than this can be conceived for any system of politics in any country. The modern system of Western politics is already tottering to its final fall in the West, for its inevitable tendency to centralise all initiative in a political state gradually reduces the people in every country to puppets in the hands of rich, influential wire-pullers, who begin by exploiting their labour and sentiment in the name of national ambitions and end in creating crushing problems of labour and capital, of socialism and imperialism. Real democracy can never

be covetous of other people's dominions and riches. Real democracy is always the one stepping-stone to the realisation of a common humanity all over the world. But too much centralisation of all the power and initiative in a country such as gives rise to any form of modern state-socialism is bound to turn the heads of political states starting them on a policy of feverish competition in land-grabbing and money-grabbing. Real democracy will therefore always imply the freedom of the people from too much centralised government, and the people of no country can really qualify themselves for such freedom unless they start with a spiritual outlook and guidance in the common pursuits and tasks of their life. It is ultimately on individual righteousness and conscience that all such democratic freedom from too much centralisation in political government must pivot itself, and from an immemorial past India sought to set an example of making the righteous self-determination of the individual the real foundation of all the politics and economics of a country. The people of India therefore more than the people of any other country may rightly claim to have received for long this fundamental training in real democracy, as opposed to the spurious democracy of modern Western politics which is characterised by a grasping ambition for state-power, a machine which is to supersede individual self-determination in right conduct and thought by the superimposed policies of a centralised government thrown into competition with other governments in a race for material supremacy.

So far, therefore, as the foundation of a sound political and economic system is concerned, India has hardly anything to learn from the West. This foundation, as we have seen, was planted on the individual *dharma-buddhi* of the people, that is, on their individual sense of religious duty, and this whole political and economic foundation was known as *prajā-dharma*, duties of the people,

as distinguished from the *rāja-dharma* or duties of the state.

Now the next question to ask ourselves is: Is this *prajā-dharma* alone sufficient to enable India to feed herself? Evidently the reply is 'no,' for *prajā-dharma* is only the foundation of our political and economic life in India. We have still to provide a superstructure and a protection,—have still to build up a permanent system of political and economic life on this foundation of *prajā-dharma*. Our history shows that proper lines of advance in the upbuilding of such a system were never left unattempted in ancient India, and between the basis of village life and the apex of the state a fabric of political administration had time and again been sought to be raised. For instance, Manu—chap. 7, Mahabharata, Shantiparva,—chap. 87, Vishnu—chap. 3, among many other authorities clearly indicate how the *rāja-dharma* or duties of the state were sought to be brought into line with the *prajā-dharma* or duties of the people. But in all these attempts to build up a fabric of political life in India, two fundamental principles stand out as the essential and indispensable conditions of the whole organising work. The first lays down that every attempt to organise a system of politics in India must proceed from the village upwards and the second principle requires that the people and the state, the *prajā* and the *rājā*, must keep within the bounds of their respective *dharma*. Neither the state should try to usurp the initiative and *dharma* of the people, nor the people should try to usurp the material power and *dharma* of the state, while both the *dharma* of the people and that of the state should be derived from the lofty spiritual mission to which the life of the society or nation had been pledged by history.

These two principles forming the cornerstone of the Indian political system distinguished it from all other possible systems. While the first principle of organising from

the village upwards embodies its real democratic character, the second serves to maintain the spiritual ideal as the governing end of the whole collective life. For as on the one hand the state must stand aloof from thrusting its material ambitions on the system of life the people work out for themselves, giving it all the protection and supervision it requires in exchange for its own necessary resources in men and money, the people on the other hand must not seek to seize the power of the state for themselves with a view to make it the centre and basis of their collective system of life, thus evidently plunging it into the world-vortex of competition for material power and wealth,—a competition which cannot but root out and smash to death those spiritual ideals which constitute the governing end, the soul, of their system of life. To avoid such a fatal centralisation of life in a political state inevitably exposed to the material competition of the political world, the people in India were never trained to build on political consciousness and unity. They may be inspired by their *swadharma* to lay down their lives when necessary to help a state which by its *rāja-dharma* defends and protects their own *prajā-dharma*, but on no account should they appropriate to themselves the *dharma* of the state and thus overwhelm and crush their own life with the material aims and ambitions of a political state. This dichotomy or bisection of the political plane of life, into *rāja-dharma* and *prajā-dharma* under one, undivided spiritual scheme of national life is the method which ancient India evolved to save the life of the people from its inevitable exploitation by politics, to prevent the otherwise irredeemable secularisation of national aims and aspirations by politics. Can modern thought and philosophy propose any better or sounder method? We invite discussion on this point.

While, therefore, in Western countries the perpetual political problem in history has

been to fuse the dharma of the people into the dharma of the state making for the rise of the new type of modern centralised states, in India this perpetual problem has been to bring the prajā-dharma and the rāja-dharma into perfect alliance. In one case it is a problem of fusion tending to make the life of the people merge in the life of the state, while in the other case it is a problem of harmony tending to make the life of the state ally itself to the life of the people. In one case politics is the foundation on which the people and the state live their common life in its entirety, a life that is affected to its depths therefore by political fortunes, free if politically free, enslaved if politically enslaved,—while in the other case, politics is but essentially an instrument by which the state is to be allied to and made to maintain the life of the people, a life of which politics does not form the organising principle, which politics may affect only from the outside for good or for evil and which politics cannot properly be said to have enslaved as long as it maintains and centres its freedom in the proper pursuit of its prajā-dharma.

And in India, for long periods of her past history, we find politics to have only affected the life of the people prejudicially, but it could never disintegrate or kill it. Such a phenomenon would have been impossible in any other country. But now the whole situation has been rendered intensely critical, for the very foundation of prajā-dharma on which the real life of the people had been maintaining itself so long, is now being exposed to dissolution by the secession of modern educated people from it, the educated people who really constitute that organising intelligence in the country which is to tackle the perpetual problem in Indian history, namely, the problem of bringing the rāja-dharma into alliance with the prajā-dharma. The most urgent task therefore that lies before us is to carry this seceding organising intelligence in the country, back to the

rescue of prajā-dharma. And if this rally of educated, patriotic people can be brought about, then more than half of the modern Indian problem would be solved. For once we are able to reinstate our prajā-dharma from our village life upwards through the motive force of our *svadharma* or sense of our religious duty, we shall be in a position to build up, through a system of popular representation extending from villages and districts towards the provinces, the clear outlines of a fabric of collective life through which the rāja-dharma of any political state will find it to be the easiest next step to ally itself completely to our prajā-dharma.

For remember, it is always an alliance of rāja-dharma with prajā-dharma that we have to strive for in India, and never their fusion as in Western countries. This fundamental principle in the Indian system of politics as distinguished from the Western system must have to be fully understood by educated men in India. And we assure them that the distinction is not at all arbitrary. It is justified both by history and by the highest political philosophy and we are ready to prove it to any sincere seeker after truth.

Why should we run mad after a system of politics which has already been weighed in the balance and found wanting? If the war, with all the social and democratic problems that it is creating in every Western country, does not open the eyes of our educated leaders in India, alas for our pretensions of intellectual culture! Is not the writing on the wall clear as to the penalty every country shall have to pay for allowing all its politics and economics to become state-centred? Has not the better mind of every country already raised the cry of complaint against the trench-burial of democracy and “the cannon fodder of industry”? Ambitious imperialism, the inevitable offspring of state-centred politics, has proved itself strong only to bring Europe to the brink of ruin and is

daily betraying its utter impotency to avert the impending crash of all the civilising forces which Europe has been developing for long through her wonderful democracy of culture. This imperialism is still making a frantic effort to exploit socialism in the interest of its blind political ambitions. It has proclaimed a policy of co-operation in preference to one of competition within the empire and professes to be trying to switch over the allied forces of capital and labour from the direction of war to that of peace.* But the central motive that is quite apparent is to make the imperialism of one country triumph over and crush the imperialism of another. Is this the way the octopus of war is going to be starved out from the fair globe of earth? State-centred politics by its very nature can never be cognisant of any supreme aim for the nation except that of material self-aggrandisement. For history proves that the very birth of highly centralised states was sponsored by the popular desire in European countries to win in a universal competition for material wealth and power.

Why should India make a blind bid for the state-centred politics of Europe, and then make a common cause with the ambitious imperialism of one country or another? For an Indianised political state is not going to enter the arena of material competition on its own initiative and strength. It must have to tag itself on to the imperialism of one country or another. And this imperialism must be allowed to direct its state-policies. So if India centres her national life in a political state, she can never avoid the exploitation of that life, as in European countries, by imperialistic politics, and the consequent secularisation of all her national ideals. But if, instead, she builds her political life on her *prajâ-dharma*, that is, on the actual needs

which her own national aims and aspirations create for her, and then enter into an alliance with the state established by British rule, according to her own terms and with a view to protect her national life out of resources she may supply to the state, then only her national life may have the freedom reserved to itself of standing aloof from that cruel competition for material wealth and power which is bound to engulf into its vortex every centralised state claiming to stand on the strength of its own material efficiency. Let England, called upon by Providence to do so, maintain her own political state and with it her political sovereignty in India. India will find for her as much of her own resources to maintain her empire as she can afford to part with conformably to providing her own internal wants and needs. But let India first organise her national life from a basis lying elsewhere than in the political state, that is, from the basis of her *prajâ-dharma*, and then through a system of real representation, she will say how and how much help she can render to the state in exchange for all the protection she receives, through such representation, for her system of national life and for her own task of working it out.

Thus the government in India will be a meeting-ground of twofold interests,—the interest of England on the one hand and the interest of the Indian people on the other. It will be representative of both the interests in all its executive and deliberative councils. And in every branch of its administration, its policy would be simply to protect, to maintain, what the people themselves work out on their own initiative. Protection and maintenance are the terms which define the *râjâ-dharma* of the state in India and they should always be the watchwords of administrative policy in every branch of the government. There may be that progressive association of the people in every branch of administration which England is now promising to see to, but more important than that is the real voice

* Vide Dr. Addison's speech in the House of Commons on the Ministry of Munitions and comments of the papers on it and on the Reconstruction Committees.

of the representatives of the people in determining how the *râja-dharma* of protection and maintenance is to be pursued by the state in every branch of administration. For without such effective voice the *prajâ-dharma* of the people cannot have the *râja-dharma* of the state harmonised to itself.

But the most central task that lies before our countrymen is the re-organisation of village life. Unless we make some solid advance from that foundation, we cannot set up a real system of representation. For mere electioneering meetings do not give us real representation in the councils. Real representation is the outcome of real life. It is the actual life of people in our villages which must be ultimately heard to voice itself forth in the council chambers. We have not yet put forward this real representation in our *râj-durbars*, and that is why we never could make the voice of our representatives effective in any real sense. No government can give us effective voice in its councils, let us remember. It is useless to agitate for effective voice being given by any government. It is valid, real representation only which can make our voice effective, and for such reality of representation, we must go back to our people and organise them from their villages upwards. And without such organisation of the people to stand at our back, an organisation brought about not by state-initiative but by our own *praja-dharma*, any effective voice, even if won through state-legislation, will make us only the agents of a new despotism and not the true representatives of the people.

If in the true spirit of our Indian system of politics, we strive to bring about such a rally of the people on the basis of their *prajâ-dharma* and not on the basis of an ambition for seizing the power of the state or the *râja-dharma*, no hostile attitude of the Government towards such efforts on our part need be apprehended. For in every instance in the past where the Government has been suspected to discourage any step taken by us to

rally the people behind our efforts, such a rally has been attempted *on the lines of the Western politics*. The peculiar frame of mind with which we have so long approached the people to back us up in our political struggles, have clearly bespoken a highly probable and ultimate risk or menace against the security of British political sovereignty in India. For if once the political consciousness of the Western state-centred type is awakened in the Indian masses, there is absolutely no knowing where our political activities will ultimately tend to. But the Indian system of politics does not inspire ambition in the masses to seize state-power for themselves to build their political life on. The Indian system of politics affords ample room for *râja-dharma* to be exercised by any foreign power so long as this *râja-dharma* seeks to ally itself to the *prâja-dharma* of the people. So if we really go back to our people with our Indian system of politics, it will be to the highest interest of the Government rather to encourage and facilitate such work of re-organisation. Political ambitions on the lines of Western politics have already raised a fearful Frankenstein before the vision of our Government, and England is eager to put it out of its many present perplexities. So may we not now count upon that measure of far-sightedness and statesmanship in British political leaders by virtue of which they will be able to see how in the revival of the Indian political system lies the only solution of the Indian political problem?

India has her national mission in this world, and it is the solemn duty of England to rise to justify her right of political sovereignty in India by bringing this sovereignty into perfect alliance with our national spiritual mission. In terms of practical politics this duty of England consists in harmonising the *râja-dharma* of her sovereign state in India with the rejuvenated *praja-dharma* of the people. To bring about such a harmonisation it is on the one hand necessary for

educated leaders of India to constitute themselves the true representatives of the prajā-dharma of the people, and for this purpose they must begin by reviving the village life in India on the basis of its swadharmas or religious duties, building up along with it a system of popular representation from village upwards. On the other hand, the Government must begin by affording all its protection to this task of reorganising the spiritual polity of village life and then admit the representatives of the people into the deliberations and functions of its state, so that a *modus operandi* may be unmistakably laid out for harmonising its political sovereignty or its rāja-dharma with the life of the people along its national lines, or in one word, their praja dharma. It is needless to point out that the problem of "feeding India," which we started with considering, can only be solved if this superstructure of harmony between the rāja-dharma and the prajā-dharma in India be successfully raised on the foundation of the latter.

Now who will raise this important superstructure? Evidently, the organising intelligence as embodied in men who call themselves the educated of India. But unfortunately, most of this organising intelligence in the country is now in a state of deplorable confusion, mainly due to an infatuation of mind for the lure of the Western state-centred system of politics. It will take time to work off this infatuation and bring to the task of re-organising our national politics that correct frame of mind, indispensable to a clear understanding of our national ideals and methods, and re-assuring to the Government naturally suspicious of developments prejudicial to its political authority. But the task is urgent, and the very nature of the task is such that both to work at foundations in rural areas and to keep the distinctive features of our nationalism intact, a good deal of spiritual leading and light is absolutely necessary. So how this motive force of spirituality

has to work in order to direct the organising intelligence in the country both in its task among the masses and in its task lying between itself and the Government, will form the subject of a second article.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

CXXIV.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

EXTRACTS.

Dear—

Your letter just reached me. Perhaps by this time you have received my other letters and learnt that it is not necessary to send anything to America any more. Too much of everything is bad. This newspaper booming has given me popularity no doubt but its effect is more in India than here. Here on the other hand constant booming creates a distaste in the minds of the higher class people; so enough. Now try to organise yourselves in India on the lines of these meetings. You need not send anything more to this country. * * *

I would have, before this, returned to India, but India has no money. Thousands honour Ramakrishna Paramahansa but nobody will give a cent—that is India. * * * In the meanwhile live in peace at any price. The world cares little for principles. They care for persons. They will hear with patience the words of a man they like, however nonsense, and will not listen to anyone they do not like. Think of this and modify your conduct accordingly. Things will all set themselves right. Be the servant if you will lead. That is the real secret. Your love

will tell even if your words be harsh. Instinctively men feel the love clothed in whatever language.

My dear brother, that Ramakrishna Paramahansa was more than God incarnate, I have not the least doubt of, but then you must let people find out for themselves what he used to teach,—you cannot thrust these things upon them—this is my only objection.

Let people speak out their own opinions, why should we? Without studying Ramakrishna Paramahansa first, one can never understand the real import of the Vedas, the Vedanta, of the Bhagavata and the other Puranas. His life is a searchlight of infinite power thrown upon the whole mass of Indian religious thought. He was the living commentary to the Vedas and to their aim. He had lived in one life the whole cycle of the national religious existence in India.

Whether Bhagavan Sri Krishna was born at all we are not sure; and Avatars like Buddha and Chaitanya are monotonous; Ramakrishna Paramahansa is the latest and the most perfect—the concentrated embodiment of knowledge, love, renunciation, catholicity and the desire to serve mankind. So where is anyone to compare with him? He must have been born in vain who cannot appreciate him. My supreme good fortune is that I am his servant through life after life. A single word of his is to me far weightier than the Vedas and the Vedanta. तस्य दास-दासदासोऽहम्—Oh, I am the servant of the servants of his servants. But narrow bigotry militates against his principles, and this makes me cross. Rather let his name be drowned in oblivion, and his teachings bear fruit instead! Why, was he a slave to fame? Certain fishermen and illiterate people called Jesus Christ a God, but the literate people killed him. Buddha was honoured in his lifetime by a number of merchants and cowherds. But Ramakrishna has been worshipped in his lifetime—towards the end of this nine-

teenth century—by the demons and giants of the university as God incarnate. * * Only a few things have been jotted down in the books about them (Krishna, Buddha, Christ etc.) "One must be a wonderful house-keeper whom we have never yet lived with," so the Bengali proverb goes. But here is a man in whose company we have been day and night and yet consider him to be a far greater personality than any of them. Can you understand this phenomenon? * *

Without Sakti (power) there is no regeneration for the world. Why is it that our country is the weakest and the most backward of all countries?—Because Sakti is held in dishonour here. * * Once more will Gargis and Maitreya be born into the world. * * Without the grace of Sakti nothing is to be accomplished. What do I find in America and Europe?—the worship of Sakti, the worship of Power. Yet they worship Her ignorantly through sense-gratification. Imagine, then, what a lot of good they will achieve who will worship Her with all purity, in a Sâtvic spirit, looking upon Her as their mother! I am coming to understand things clearer every day, my insight is opening out more and more.

* * * * *

The chief cause of malaria lies in water. Why do you not construct two or three filters? If you first boil the water and then filter it, it will be harmless. * * Please buy two big Pasteur's bacteria-proof filters. Let the cooking be done in that water and use it for drinking purposes also, and you will never so much as hear of malaria any more. * * On and on, work, work, work, this is only the beginning.

Yours ever

Vivekananda.



CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES
OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

X.

[Place—Calcutta.

Time—1897.

Subjects.—Swamiji giving lessons in, *Rig-veda* to the disciple.—His amazing opinion about Max Müller.—The meaning of the Vedic dogma about God's creating the world out of the Vedic Word.—The Vedas as the Word or Sabda.—the old meaning of the term Sabda.—In Samadhi one may realise the Sabda rising out of Nāda, the primal Sound, and the world rising out of Sabda.]

For the last ten days, the disciple had been studying Sayana's commentary on the Rig-veda with Swamiji, who was staying then at the house of the late Babu Balaram Bose at Baghbazar. Max Müller's volumes on Rig-veda had been brought from a wealthy friend's private library. The book being a new one for the disciple and the language being Vedic, he was stumbling into error very often, at which Swamiji was sometimes flinging a joke at him with the term "Bāngāl," and giving him the true pronunciation or construction as necessary. Sometimes while explaining the arguments of Sayana to establish the eternity of the Veda, Swamiji was praising very highly the commentator's wonderful ingenuity; sometimes again while arguing out the deeper significance of the doctrine, he was putting forward a difference in view and indulging in an innocent squib at Sayana.

While our study had proceeded thus for a while, Swamiji raised the topic about Max Müller and continued thus: Well, do you know, my impression is that it is Sayana who has taken birth again as Max Müller to rediscover his own commentary on the Vedas? I have had this notion for long. It became confirmed in my mind, it seems, after I had seen Max Müller. Even here in this country, you don't find a pundit, so persevering, with a learning so firmly grounded in the Vedas and the Vedānta. Over and above this, what a deep, unfathomable

respect for Sri Ramakrishna! Do you know, he believed in his Divine Incarnation! And what great hospitality towards me when I was his guest! Seeing the old man and his lady, it seemed to me that they were living their home-life like another Vasistha and Arundhati! At the time of parting with me, the eyes of the old man became tearful.

Disciple.— But, sir, if Sayana himself became Max Müller, then why did he take birth as a *mlechchha* instead of being born in the sacred land of India?

Swamiji.— The feeling and the distinction that "I am an Aryan and the other is a *mlechchha*" come from ignorance. But one who is the commentator of the Vedas, the shining embodiment of knowledge, what are Varnashrama and caste divisions to him? To him they are wholly meaningless, and he can assume human birth wherever he likes for doing good to mankind. Specially if he does not choose to be born in a land which excels both in learning and wealth, where would he secure the large expenses for publishing such stupendous volumes? The East India Company paid nine lakhs of rupees in cash to have the Rig-veda published! But this money was not enough. Hundreds of Vedic pundits had to be employed in this country on monthly stipends. Has any body seen in this age here in this country such profound yearning for knowledge, such prodigious investment of money for the sake of light and learning? Max Müller himself has written it in his preface, that for 25 years he prepared only the manuscripts. Then the printing took another 20 years! It is not possible for an ordinary man to drudge for 45 years of his life with one publication. Just think of it! Is it an idle fancy of mine to say he is Sayana himself!

After this talk about Max Müller, the reading of the Vedas was resumed. Now Swamiji began variously to support the view of Sayana that creation proceeded out of the Vedas. He said, "Veda means the sum-total of eternal truths; the Vedic Rishis experienced those truths; they can be experienced only by seers of the super-sensuous and not by common men like us. That is why in the Vedas the term Rishi means the seer of the truth of the Mantras, and not any Brahmana with the holy thread hanging down

the neck. The division of society into castes came about later on. Veda is of the nature of Sabda or of Idea. It is but the sum-total of Ideas. Sabda, according to the old Vedic meaning of the term, is the subtle Idea, which reveals itself by taking the gross form later on. So in the destruction or involution of the creation, the subtle seeds of the future creation become potentialised in the Veda. Accordingly in the Puranas you find that during the first Divine Incarnation, the Minâvatara, the Veda is first made manifest. In this Incarnation the Veda being first revealed, the other creative manifestations began to follow. Or in other words, all the created objects began to come into concrete being out of the Sabdas or ideas in the Veda. For in Sabda or idea all gross objects have their subtle forms. Creation had proceeded in the same way in all previous cycles or 'kalpas.' This you find in the Sandhya Mantram of the Vedas: सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ धाता यथापूर्वमकल्पयन् पृथिवीं दिवश्चान्तरिक्षमथो स्वः, "the sun, the moon, the earth, the atmosphere, the heaven, the upper spheres, all, the Creator projected out in the same manner and process as in previous cycles." Do you understand?

Disciple.— But sir, how in the absence of an actual concrete object can the Sabda or idea be applied and for what? And how are the names to be given at all?

Swamiji.— Yes, that is what at first thought seems to be the difficulty. But just think of this. Supposing this jug breaks into pieces, does the idea of a jug become null and void? No. Because, the jug is the gross effect, while the idea, "jug," is the subtle state, or the Sabda-state, of the jug. In the same way, the Sabda-state of every object is its subtle state, and the things we see, touch, or perceive in any manner, are the gross manifestations of entities in the subtle or Sabda state. Just as we may say of the effect and its cause. Even when the whole creation is annihilated, the Sabda as the consciousness of the universe or the subtle reality of all concrete things, exists in Brahman as the cause. At the point of creative manifestation, this sum-total of causal entities vibrates into activity, as it were, and as being the sonant, material substance of it all, the eternal, primal sound of "Om" continues to come out. And then from

that causal totality, comes out first the subtle image or Sabda-form of each particular thing and then its gross manifestation. Now that causal Sabda or world-consciousness is Brahman and it is the Veda. This is the purport of Sayana. Do you now understand?

Disciple.— No, sir, I can't clearly comprehend.

Swamiji.— Well, you understand, I suppose, that even if all the jugs in the universe were to be destroyed, the idea or Sabda, "jug," would still exist. So if the universe be destroyed,—I mean, if all the things going to make up the universe be smashed to atoms—why should not the ideas or Sabdas representing all of them in consciousness be still existing? And why cannot a second creation be supposed to come out of them in time?

Disciple.— But, sir, if one cries out "jug," "jug," that does not cause any jug to be produced!

Swamiji.— No, nothing is produced if you or I cry out like that; but a jug must be revealed if the idea of it rises in the Brahman-consciousness which is perfect in its creative determinations. When we see even those established in the practice of religion (Sadhakas) bringing about by will-power things otherwise impossible to happen, what to speak of Brahman with perfect creativeness of will? At the point of creation Brahman becomes manifest as Sabda, and then assumes the form of "Om" or "Nada." At the next stage, the Sabdas or sound-forms that variously existed in former cycles, such as Bhuh, Bhubah, Swâh, cow, man etc., begin to come out of that "Om." As these sound-forms appear in the Brahman-consciousness of perfect will, the corresponding concrete things also appear and gradually the diversified universe becomes manifest. Do you now understand how Sabda is the source of creation?

Disciple.— Yes, I just form some idea somehow, but there is no clear comprehension in the mind.

Swamiji.— Well, clear comprehension, inward realisation, is no small matter, my son. When the mind makes for its self-absorption, in Brahman, it passes through all these stages one by one to reach the absolute state (nirvikalpa) at last. In the serene flight of Samadhi, first the universe appears as one Sabda, an ideal mass; then the

whole thing loses itself in a profound 'Om.' Then even that melts away, even that seems to be between being and non-being. That is the experience of the eternal Nada. And then mind becomes lost in the Reality of Brahman, and then it is done! All peace!

Swamiji's words were such as to drive home to the mind of the disciple the fact that he must have himself passed through the stages, time and again, to go into and come back from his state of Samadhi. Otherwise how was he describing things so vividly? So the disciple sat mute and athinking—none can express and explain in the way he has been doing except the whole thing be matter of one's own experience.

Swamiji then resumed the subject: "Great men like Avatars, in coming back from Samadhi to the realm of "I" and "mine," first experience the unmanifest Náda, when by and by this grows distinct and appears as 'Om,' and then from *Omkar*, the ideal whole of the universe as Sabda becomes experienced, and last, the material universe comes into perception. But ordinary Sadhakas somehow reach beyond Nada through immense practice and when once they attain to the direct realisation of Brahman, they cannot again come back to the lower plane of material perception. They melt away in Brahman,—*दीरे नीरवत्*—"like water in milk."

ESCAPE.

I thought on Fame—and how I have no fame :
On Fortune—and how she forgets my name :
Love—and I've none !

Concluding thus with sighs,
I open'd my closed eyes,
And—laugh'd ! For lo ! so laugh'd the splendid sea
(So blue, so brave !) and o'er the sea, the rare
White peak so heavenly rose, in such vast air,
That I forgot the *I and Mine and Me*
In a glory of passionate joy that such as these
could be !

B. E. BAUGHAN.

N. Z.

KAIVALYOPANISHAT.

[This is another Upanishad belonging to the Atharva Veda. It is at once clear, concise and poetic, and withal, highly philosophical. All this makes it one of the most valuable among the Minor Upanishads. The story form is an apt device to make the subject easily intelligible as well as to give a pedigree to the teachings inculcated. Asvalayana was a teacher of the Rig Veda. Some extracts of this Upanishad were published in the *Prabuddha Bharata* of July, 1905 as 'Selections from Sanskrit.' They are incorporated here in a revised form.]

अथाश्वलायनो भगवन्तं परमेष्ठिनमुप-

समेत्योवाच—

अधीहि भगवन् ब्रह्मविद्यां वरिष्ठां

सदा सद्भिः सेव्यमानां निगूढाम् ।

ययाऽचिरात् सर्वपापं व्यपोह्य

परात्परं पुरुषं याति विद्वान् ॥ १ ॥

1. Then (a) Asvalayana approached the Lord Paramesthin (Brahma) and said :—

Teach, O Lord, the knowledge of Brahman, the highest, always cultivated by the good, hidden, and by which a wise man drives away instantly all the sins and reaches the Purusha, higher than the high (b).

(a) *Then*.—That is, after having duly qualified himself by possessing the fourfold requisites for the highest knowledge.

(b) *Higher than the high*: Prakriti, the Mother of all manifestation, is called High. Purusha is higher than Prakriti even.

तस्मै स होवाच पितामहश्च

श्रद्धाभक्तिध्यानयोगाद्वैहि ।

न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन

त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानशुः ॥ २ ॥

2. And to him, the Grandsire (Brahmá) (a) said, "Know (this) by means of faith, devotion and meditation. Not by work (b), nor by progeny nor by wealth, but by renunciation, some attained immortality.

(a) *The Grandsire (Brahmá)*—a common epithet of the Creator, who is the father of the Prajapatis, from whom all beings have proceeded.

(b) *Work—Sakáma Karma* or work done with the motive of gaining sense-gratifications is meant here, not selfless work, which helps to remove bondage.

परेण नाकं निहितं गुहायां
विभ्राजते यद्व्यतयो विशन्ति ।

वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः

सन्यासयोगाद्व्यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः ॥

ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले

परामृतात्परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे ॥ ३ ॥

3. Higher than heaven, seated in the cave (Buddhi), that shines, (which) the self-controlled attain,—the self-controlled, who being of pure minds have well ascertained the reality (a), by the knowledge of Vedanta, and through Sannyasa or renunciation. In the sphere of Brahmá at the time of Cosmic Dissolution (b), they all get liberated from the highest (apparent) immortality of the manifested universe.

(a) *Ascertained the reality*—realising the identity of the individual self with Brahman.

(b) *At the time of Cosmic Dissolution etc.*—This portion of the stanza speaks of those who through some obstacle or other fail to realise Brahman in this life. They remain in Brahmáloka, and at the time of Pralaya become merged in Brahman along with everything else. Up to this point they can attain to various grades of authority, lasting for durations which from the human standpoint would be very long and would be considered as tantamount to immortality, but which can never be absolute immortality, being connected with the manifested universe. This explains the last two lines in the translation of this stanza. The last four lines in the text are quoted almost verbatim from the Mundakopanishad, Ch. VI., 6th verse.

विविक्तदेशे च सुखासनस्थः

शुचिः समग्रीवशिरःशरीरः ॥ ४ ॥

अत्याश्रमस्थः सकलेन्द्रियाणि

निरुध्य भक्त्या स्वगुरुं प्रणम्य ।

हृत्पुण्डरीकं विरजं विशुद्धं

विचिन्त्य मध्ये विशदं विशोकम् ॥ ५ ॥

4-5. In a secluded place, sitting in an easy posture, pure, with the neck, head and body erect, living in the last of the orders of religious life (a), having controlled all the senses, saluting his own preceptor with reverence, meditating within the lotus of the heart (on Brahman), untainted, pure, clear and griefless.

(a) *The last of the orders etc.*—The Paramahansa order of Sannyasins are meant here.

अचिन्त्यमव्यक्तमनन्तरूपं

शिवं प्रशान्तममृतं ब्रह्मयोनिम् ।

तथाऽऽदिमध्यान्तविहीनमेकं

विभुं चिदानन्दमरूपमद्भुतम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. (Who is) unthinkable, unmanifest, of endless forms, the good, the peaceful, the origin of the Vedas, without beginning, middle and end, the only one, all-pervading, Consciousness and Bliss, the formless and the wonderful.

उमासहायं परमेश्वरं प्रभुं

त्रिलोचनं नीलकण्ठं प्रशान्तम् ।

ध्यात्वा मुनिर्गच्छति भूतयोनिं

समस्तसार्द्धं तमसः परस्तात् ॥ ७ ॥

7. Meditating on the highest Lord, allied to Uma (the Creative force) (a), powerful, three-eyed, dark-necked, and tranquil, the holy man reaches Him who is the source of all and is beyond darkness (b).

(a) *Allied to Uma (the Creative Force)*.—This and the subsequent epithets of 'three-eyed' and 'dark-necked' point to the Lord Siva, who is to be meditated upon in His Saguna aspect as a means to attaining the highest state. Or, 'Uma' may stand for the Brahmavidya or the knowledge of Brahman, 'Trilochana' may mean 'who as the Turiya is the eye of the three lower states, Viswa, Taijasa, and Prájna, or Virat, Hiranyagarbha and Isvara—for all these shine after Brahman who alone is self-effulgent. Nila-kantha' may likewise

be explained thus: Brahman being of the essence of knowledge, darkness or Nescience lies subjugated in what may be called only a part of It; in other words, It transcends Avidya.

(b) *Darkness*—is Avidya.

स ब्रह्मा स शिवः सेन्द्रः सोऽक्षरः परमः स्वराट् ।
स एव विष्णुः स प्राणः स कालोऽग्निः स चन्द्रमाः ॥८॥

8. He is Brahmā, He is Siva, He is Indra, He is the Immutable, the Supreme, the Self-luminous, He alone is Vishnu, He is Prana, He is Time and Fire, He is the Moon.

स एव सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यं सनातनम् ॥
ज्ञात्वा तं मृत्युमत्येति नान्यः पन्था विमुक्तये ॥९॥

9. He alone is all that was, and all that will be, the Eternal; knowing Him, one transcends death; there is no other way to freedom.

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
सम्पश्यन् ब्रह्म परमं याति नान्येन हेतुना ॥१०॥

10. Seeing the Atman in all beings, and all beings in the Atman (a), one attains the highest Brahman—not by any other means.

(a) *Seeing the Atman etc.*—The first line in this verse occurs in the Gita also (VI. 29). The oneness of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm through Samadhi is meant.

आत्मानमरणिं कृत्वा प्रणवं चोत्तरारणिम् ।
ज्ञाननिर्मथनाभ्यासात् पाशं दहति परिडतः ॥११॥

11. Making the Atman the (lower) Arani (a), and OM the upper Arani, by the repeated friction of knowledge, a wise man burns up the bond.

[Compare Swetaswatarā I. 14.]

(a) *Arani*.—One of the two pieces of wood used in ancient times for kindling the sacred fire by friction. As by constant friction fire is produced from the Arani, so by constant meditation on the unity of the Jiva and Brahman the fire of realisation is produced which burns off the bond of Nescience and restores the aspirant to his pristine freedom.

(To be continued).

THE IDEAL OF FORGIVENESS AND THE FRUITS OF SAINTLY COMPANY.

By Swami Madhavananda.

The moon was gliding at a slow pace through a bed of clouds. Below, a river danced on, matching its murmurs to the tune of the winds. The earth looked extraordinarily beautiful in a blend of half moonlight and half darkness. On all sides were hermitages of Rishis, each one throwing an Eden into the shade. Every cottage belonging to the Rishis wore an uncommon charm, adorned with trees, flowers and creepers. Once in such a moonlight-gladdened night, Brahmarshi Vasistha Deva was saying to his partner, Devi Arundhati, "Devi, pray, ask a little salt of Rishi Viswamitra." Startled at these words, Devi Arundhati replied, "My Lord, what is it that you command me to do? I do not comprehend it at all. He who has deprived me of my hundred sons—" The words made her accents falter with tears, roused the whole memory of the past, and stirred the depths of her marvellously serene heart. "My hundred sons," she began, "used to walk about chanting Vedic hymns in such moon-illuminated nights, all the hundred were versed in the Vedas and devoted to the Brahman. And everyone of them he has killed. Are you commanding me to beg salt from such a person's hermitage? I am at my wits' end." Slowly the Rishi's countenance beamed with light, slowly, from that ocean-like heart, came these words, "But I love him, Devi." Arundhati's wonder grew all the more, and she said, "If you love him, you might have put an end to all troubles by calling him by the name of 'Brahmarshi,' and spared me the loss of a hundred sons!" Again the Rishi's face lit up and he said, "It is simply because I love him that I have not called him a 'Brahmarshi,' and my refusal to address him thus keeps alive in him the lofty aim of becoming a Brahmarshi."

To-day Viswamitra is mad with rage. He has failed to concentrate his mind upon his austerities. He has made up his mind that unless Vasistha recognise him as a Brahmarshi, he would kill

Vasistha to-day. With a view to carrying out his resolution, he started from his hut with a sword in his hand. Slowly he took his stand beside the cottage of Vasistha Deva, and thence overheard the whole speech of the sage. His grip of the sword slackened. He thought within himself, "What have I done! What a foul deed have I committed by mistake! What an imperturbable heart was I going to pierce through ignorance!" A hundred scorpions, as it were, stung his heart, which was now burning with penitence. He ran and flung himself at Vasistha's feet. For a time he could speak nothing. After a while he said, "Pardon me, but I am even unworthy of it." The proud heart could say no more. But what did Vasistha do? He caught hold of the other by his arms and said, "Get up, *Brahmarshi*, get up." Doubly ashamed, Viswamitra replied, "Sire, why do you put me to shame?" "I never tell a lie," rejoined Vasistha, "to-day you *have* become a *Brahmarshi*, to-day you have cast off pride." "Please teach me about Brahman," said Viswamitra.—"Go to Ananta Deva and he will teach you." Viswamitra came to the spot where Ananta Deva supported the earth on his head. The latter said, "I shall teach you about Brahman if you can support the earth on your head." Viswamitra, who was proud of his powers of asceticism, said, "I am doing it, please let go your hold of it."—"Support it then, I give it up." The earth whirled through space as it began to fall.

"I am giving up the fruits of my entire asceticism, let the earth be supported—" shouted Viswamitra. But still the earth tumbled on. At the top of his voice Ananta Deva shouted, "Viswamitra, your penances have not been so great that you can support the earth on their strength. Say, have you ever enjoyed the company of holy personages? Give up its fruits then." "A few minutes only have I kept company with Vasistha," answered Viswamitra. "Then give up its fruits," said Ananta Deva. And Viswamitra said, "I give these up." Slowly the earth came to a standstill. Then Viswamitra said, "Now condescend to give me the knowledge of Brahman." "Fool that thou art, O Viswamitra" said Ananta Deva, "are you preferring me to one, a few minutes of whose company have caused the tumbling earth to come to rest?" Viswamitra got incensed, he thought Vasistha Deva

had played him a trick. He hurried to Vasistha and said, "Why did you deceive me?" Slowly and calmly Vasistha Deva answered, "Ah, then you would not have believed in the knowledge of Brahman that I would have imparted to you. Now you will believe it." Then Viswamitra got from Vasistha the knowledge of Brahman.

There lived in ancient India such Rishis and such holy men, and there were such ideals of forgiveness! And people had such power of asceticism as could support even the earth. Are not once more Rishis of that type going to be born in India, who will outshine the ancient Rishis in lustre and will restore India to more than her pristine glory?*

AMERICAN HELP FOR INDIAN STUDENTS.

We are glad to publish the following communication from Prof. Sudhindra Bose of the State University of Iowa, U. S. A. :—

An Indian student planning to enter a college in America has many questions to ask. He wants to know: What university shall I choose for my education? How many years will it take me to get my degree? Where shall I find suitable accommodation? These and many other questions, which confront a prospective student, are cheerfully answered by the Hindusthan Association of America.

The Association is a voluntary organisation with branches at most of the leading centres of education in America. The President of the society, who has an intimate knowledge of the conditions of life in different parts of the Republic, conducts an unofficial bureau of information. He, with the assistance of other officers, makes it his business to collect data from various colleges and universities concerning their educational facilities. And when a student applies for advice or information, the President helps him the best he knows how.

A notable instance of the desire of the Association to render efficient service to Indian students is seen in the founding of a Loan Fund. Since

* Translated from an old Bengali periodical.

the resources of a student may sometimes run short towards the end of the college year, or his allowances may fail to reach him from home on time, the society tries to tide him over a hard period by a little advance of money. For lack of proper financial support this phase of the work, however, is not so well developed as it might be.

No one need imagine from this that the Hindusthan Association is a charitable organisation engaged in giving away money to needy people. It has no money to give, although it has some to loan. The Association is only prepared to furnish gratis all the information that honest students in India may desire. The cost of living is now so high in the United States that no one should think of coming here without a steady allowance from home of, at least, a hundred rupees a month. The days when a student could earn his way through college are gone. Under the new Immigration Laws, no student from India will be allowed to land in America who has not a visible source of income from Hindusthan.

It may be mentioned in parenthesis that the Association is most emphatically an educational, not a political organisation whatsoever. From my personal knowledge of the workings of the Association as its first ex-President, I can affirm with utmost certainty that the ends and objects of the leaders of the movement are simply and solely to look after the interests of the Indian students, and that the Hindusthan Association with its score or more of branches is strictly a non-sectarian, non-partisan, and non-political body.

The Association is not only promoting the educational interests of Indian students in the United States, but it is doing a splendid missionary work in fostering cordial relations between America and India. To this end, the local chapters give public programmes and enlighten American audiences on the present-day conditions in Hindusthan. Sometimes, the representatives of the Association visit other clubs and societies, and discuss Indian culture and civilisation from the angle of an Indian. Moreover, the central organisation of the society, which has its own printing plant, publishes a monthly periodical called *The Hindusthane Student*. Just now the enterprising editor of *The Student*, A. C. Chakravarty, has published a useful pamphlet known as "Education in the United States of

America." It gives valuable information on such subjects as American system of education, the best way to come to America, cost of living, leading American colleges and universities, medical dress and equipment, and other related topics. The book can be had from the editor of *The Student*, Urbana, Illinois, for 2 As. 6 P. Publications, such as these, help to interpret India to America and America to India. They inevitably tend to roll away misunderstandings, and pave the way to mutual appreciation of Indian and American life.

Perhaps the greatest single achievement of the Association was the International Hindusthane Students' Convention held under the auspices of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, 1915. The Convention, which had a three-day session, met right in the famous Festival Hall of the Exposition. It is also a matter of patriotic pride to note that the Hindusthan Association was instrumental in securing an Indian booth in the Palace of Varied Industries on the Exposition grounds. Here were exhibited works of high-class Indian arts and industries. Never before in the history of international expositions had Hindusthan taken such an independent part among the nations of the world. To be sure, India had some share in the world's Fairs at Paris and at St. Louis; but on those occasions India was not represented by the Indians and for the Indians. India was made to appear as a tail to somebody else's dog. In the Panama-Pacific Exposition India appeared on her own account. And as a fitting recognition of the role played in this great festival of nations, the Hindusthan Association was presented by the Panama-Pacific International Exposition with a commemorative bronze medal. Indians in America can now lift their heads high in pride and greet the world as men.

Such, in brief, are some of the activities of the Hindusthan Association. It is now peculiarly fortunate in having Doctor Rafiddin Ahmed as its President. Doctor Ahmed, who is employed in the responsible position of a dentist in the Forsyth Dental Infirmary of Boston, is a tireless worker for the welfare of Indians in America. He places the services of the Association unreservedly at the disposal of those who may need them. They are yours for the mere asking. "The Hindusthan

Association," said President Ahmed to me the other day, "is simply another phase of the cosmopolitan instinct of the Indian students. They look upon the whole world as a granary of knowledge to be ransacked in order to usher in the India of tomorrow. To accomplish this we need the active help of our people at home. Send out students, more students, and yet more students; there is room for them all in American universities."

Sudhindra Bose. M. A., Ph. D.,

Iowa City. } Lecturer in Political Science in the
U. S. A. } State University of Iowa.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES.

THE report of the R-k. Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban, for the month of July, 1917, shows that there were in the indoor department 15 old cases and 27 newly admitted ones, out of which 21 were discharged cured, 2 died, 2 left treatment and 17 were still under treatment. In the outdoor department, 2853 prescriptions were served during the month showing 859 new cases. Three persons were treated in their homes and one of them had to be provided with diet in addition. Expenses from the Building Fund amounted to Rs. 634-7-6 during the month. Particulars of receipts totalled Rs. 211-5-9, and those of expenditure Rs. 189-11-6.

FROM the monthly report of the R-k. Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, for July 1917, we find, there were 32 indoor cases, 25 being new ones for the month, and out of these, 24 were discharged cured, 1 died, 2 left treatment and 5 are still under treatment. There were 3230 outdoor cases of which 1444 were new ones. The accounts carry Rs. 4601-2-3 as balance in hand including the Building Fund.

MINOR relief-activities of the Ramkrishna Mission during the first half of the year are reported to have consisted of the following:—

(a) For the last Flood of Oct. 1916, in the Dist. of Cachar, a sum of Rs. 670 from the Provident Relief Fund of the Mission was sent to Hon. Babu Kamini Kumar Chanda, President, Ramkrishna Home of Service, Silchar. The work was

closed successfully by the second week of July last.

(b) In the month of May a small sum of Rs. 25 was sent to the village of Latabdi, in the Dist. of Dacca, for the distressed people there.

(c) In the same month, fire broke out in the village of Bhawanipur, in the Dist. of Murshidabad, five miles off from Kandi, destroying 160 houses of 36 families out of 60. The Mission was invited by the Anjuman Islamia Society, Kandi, to help the distressed people. Accordingly, a worker with Rs. 160 was sent there immediately, and 25 huts of 14 families were erected, which cost Rs. 149-15-9.

WE are glad to go through the Report of the Calcutta Vivekananda Society (from Oct. 1915 to Dec. 1916), recently placed on our table. The Society was founded in Aug. 1902 with the object of "studying and disseminating the knowledge of the universal aspect of the Vedanta" as taught by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Just before the period under review the activities of the Society had slackened to a degree, but we are gratified to find that the whole-hearted services of Swami Suddhananda, the Resident Supervisor of the Society, and of his worthy colleagues have breathed new life into it, and the Society is organising the following activities:—public Saturday Vedanta lectures, monthly conversazioni, weekly religious classes, the reading of papers on religious subjects and publishing books and pamphlets relating thereto, helping poor students, getting prize-essays written and doing Seva-work on a small scale, besides conducting a chapel for divine service, a library and free reading-room, and celebrating the anniversary of Swami Vivekananda. This is as it should be, for the soul of enlightened modern India spoke through Swami Vivekananda, and a society to be worthy of being associated with his name, in the premier city of India, should be a centre of spiritual education to a large number of educated people who will carry that education to the distant nooks and corners of the country. People of Calcutta, and specially the student community, should lose no time in availing themselves of the spiritual advantages that a society so constituted is sure to bestow. The Society is at present situated at a rented house at 78/1 Cornwallis Street, and appeals to the generous public for funds to meet the general expenses as well as for having a permanent habitation of its own. The Resident Supervisor can be consulted by persons seeking self-improvement, as well as by promoters of like societies in the mofussil seeking advice on efficient management.
