

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरात्रिबोधत

Katha Upan. 1. 1. 4

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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CONVERSATIONS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA.

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The Swami opened the conversation addressing himself to a monk of the Order who conducted a Vedanta class.

The Swami—You had the Vedanta class to-day ?

A. Yes, Sir.

Q. What was the topic ? सत्तु समन्वयात्—“That Brahman (from which the origin, subsistence and dissolution of this world proceed) is to be known from the scriptures, for so all the scriptures say ?”

A. Yes, Sir. We had the discussion about ‘changeably eternal’ and ‘absolutely eternal.’

The Swami—The very expression ‘changeably eternal’ sounds like ‘hot ice.’ It is, I think,

* Vedanta Sutas I. i. 4.

the Sankhya view. Prakriti consists of the three Gunas—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas (balance, activity and inertia). It is these which undergoing modification lead to creation. Dr. S. one day asked me this very question. He said, “The three Gunas make up the Prakriti. So, if the Gunas undergo modification, does not the Prakriti verily cease to be itself?” I replied, “The whole of the Prakriti is not of course undergoing modification, but only a portion of it. There is the Prakriti, and there is also the modified Prakriti. As for instance, when milk is coagulated into curd somewhere, all the milk in the world does not turn into curd—there is yet milk somewhere or other. The Vedanta describes the Purusha and Prakriti as identical. (Pointing to his own body) Even here don't you find both Prakriti and Purusha* existing together? . . .

Even in a single grain there are two halves.

पुरुषो प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान् गुणान् ।

कारणं गुणसंगोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥

“The Purusha resting on the Prakriti experiences the attributes that spring from the latter. The attachment for the Gunas is the cause of the soul's being born in higher and lower bodies.” (Gita XIII).

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥

“He who thus knows the Purusha and the Prakriti together with its Gunas, is never subject to rebirth, howsoever he may live.” (Ibid).

* As ‘Kshetra’ and ‘Kshetrajna.’ The body and mind are changing but the Self is always remaining unaffected by the changes.

Well, what is spiritual practice but purifying this Prakriti? The Vaishnavas say, Krishna alone is Purusha, all else are Prakriti.* Sri Chaitanya used to say, "Being a Prakriti, why should one accost another Prakriti? † Does Prakriti ever court Prakriti? We must make Prakriti attached to Purusha. Mira Bai, when she went to Brindaban, wanted to see Sanatan, ‡ but the latter refused to grant her an interview on the ground that she was a woman. He was, you know, a man of great renunciation. Thereupon Mira replied, "At Brindaban I know of only one Purusha and he is Sri Krishna. And who is the second man that has come? Well, I must see him!" Then they met. Both were advanced souls, so they were in raptures. Sanatan saluted Mira with the words: "She through whom Sri Krishna manifests His divine sport, and from whom I have been born." It is almost useless to read the Vedanta unless one compares notes with one's own experience.

* The terms Purusha and Prakriti, in Sankhya philosophy, mean the soul and Nature which, in its broad sense, is the material cause of the universe. Purusha is intelligent, unchanging, eternal and infinite in number, and experiences happiness and misery etc. through its falsely identifying itself with Prakriti which is insentient, ever-changing and eternal, and contributes to the experience of the Purusha. Both are independent. In the culmination of its experience the Purusha knows that it is eternally aloof from Prakriti. This is Kaivalya or Moksha.

The words Purusha and Prakriti have also got a second meaning—male and female.

† The words quoted form a part of Sri Chaitanya's rebuke to one of his disciples, Haridas (junior) who happened to beg some rice for his master from a distinguished old lady devotee.

‡ A great Vaishnava Acharya—a disciple of Sri Chaitanya. He was formerly the Vazir of the Nawab of Bengal, but renounced everything for the sake of the Lord.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

INDIA has been the land not only of spirituality but also of religious freedom and toleration. Behind her broad outlook upon life and her wonderful sympathy for all religions and sects, lies India's spiritual vision—the vision of Unity, her realisation of the Permanent amidst the impermanent, of the One Existence at the back of the infinite diversities of the universe. The ancient history of India stands as a glorious example of the spirit of universal love and harmony which actuated India's religions and systems of thought acting and reacting on one another, and thereby helping in their growth and development in various parts of the country. We learn from history that even in the pre-Buddhistic age different schools of Hindu philosophy, drawing their inspiration from the perennial fountain-head of the Vedas gradually developed into centres of spiritual force, and that even during the ascendancy of Buddhism the Brahmanas and Sramanas lived in peace and amity and were patronised by kings and respected by the people, as the edicts of "King Piyadasi, beloved of the gods," and the records of the Chinese pilgrims clearly indicate. Herein lies the explanation why of all the countries in the world, India, the land of religious fusion and tolerance, has been chosen for the purpose of synthesising religious diversities by recognising their significance and underlying unity.

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By divine dispensation the soil of India has been the meeting place of all the religions of the

world. India gave shelter to the followers of ancient Judaism when they turned to her for refuge after their holy temple was broken to pieces by Roman tyranny. And this purest stock of the Israelites, the White Jews as they are called, live unmolested even to this day in South India. The loving bosom of Mother India also received the Zoroastrians when they left Persia, their original home, which was overrun by Mohammedan conquerors, to safeguard their lives and religion. Again if we are to believe in Christian traditions, it was in India that the apostle St. Thomas preached Christianity, a few years after the passing away of his great Master. And since then various Christian missionary bodies belonging to different nations and denominations of the world have been propagating the religion of Christ with an amount of success, so that the number of Christians in India at the present times is by no means inconsiderable. Islam, too, following in the wake of Mohammedan conquest, has come to stay in India. And today the followers of Mohammed, numbering many millions, live in peace and harmony with their brothers of the Hindu faith. Besides these religions having their origin in foreign lands, there exists in India the ancient religion of the Indo-Aryans with its thousands of sects and creeds, with its various offshoots—Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism and others. India has thus become a vast religious museum, accommodating all the great religions of the world, ancient and modern, proselytising as well as non-missionary.

No two religions are identically the same. They vary from one another in philosophy and mythology, in rituals and ceremonials, in forms and symbols, in traditions and cosmological theories. The founders and prophets spoke in different tongues; and their sayings and utterances were recorded in various languages, widely differing from one another. One religion puts greater stress on knowledge and devotion, and another on mysticism or work. Each stands for a certain ideal, presenting before its votaries a particular vision of the ultimate reality from a particular stand-point. However contradictory these religions and creeds may appear to be at first sight, there is an underlying unity which is coming to be gradually recognised with the flow of time.

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At that hoary antiquity into which history dares not peep, the Hindu Rishis attempted to see this fundamental harmony behind the infinite variety of sects and creeds. Their highly intuitive mind succeeded in realising the grand truth “एकं सद्भिर्वा बहुधा वदन्ति”—“That which exists is one; sages call it variously.” Different religions aim at viewing the same Universal Truth from different perspectives. Each fulfils a certain purpose in the economy of God, as Sri Krishna says in the Gita—“In whatever way men worship Me, in the same way do I fulfil their desires; (it is) My path, O son of Pritha, (that) men tread, in all ways.” For the Absolute Truth is the common centre to which all religions converge like the radii of a circle. The more we enter into the true spirit of all

religions, wading through the encrustation of forms and non-essentials, the more we approach this universal basis, this eternal verity on which all of them are undoubtedly founded.

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The critical and comparative study of religions, and above all the direct contact and interchange of ideas with the followers of different religions, sects and creeds, have been a powerful factor in widening the bounds of human knowledge and in a consequent changing of the angle of vision. It is a matter of common experience to-day that persons professing one religion appreciate and even try to assimilate the grand truths and principles preached by another. The universality and spirituality of Hinduism, the message of peace and Ahimsa of Buddhism, the love and charity of Christianity, the fervour and democratic spirit of Islam—all these appeal equally to every critical but sincere student of religion, irrespective of the particular faith to which he may chance to belong. The achievement of some religions consists in promoting to the general peace and well-being of the world, of others in fostering piety and social purity. The glory of some lies in furthering temperance and home felicity, while that of others in encouraging charity and service which make no distinction between the saint and the sinner. No single religion can claim the sole monopoly of truth, and profess to be the only custodian of all that is holy and noble, all that ministers to the various spiritual needs of mankind. Such being the case no single religion can ever hope to attain

the unique position of being the only true religion in the world, and satisfy the diverse spiritual aspirations of all men and women peopling this beautiful planet of ours.

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The movement of modern religious thought is tending towards a grand synthesis, towards a universal religion which must make provision for the spiritual unfoldment of persons of all temperaments and tendencies, which must give scope for developing the religious faculties of mankind—knowledge and emotion, mysticism and work. It must be a happy rapprochement of theory and practice, of philosophy and religion. Bigotry and sectarianism are the greatest barriers obstructing the realisation of Religion Universal. This was clearly pointed out in Count Tolstoy's appeal to the clergy. "What will happen if the people of Christendom cease to believe in church doctrines? The results will be—that not the Hebrew legends alone but the religious wisdom of the whole world will become accessible and intelligible to them. People will grow up and develop with unperverted understanding and feelings." These noble words hold as true of Christianity as of all other religions.

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People often talk of the One Humanity and of Universal Brotherhood, but few recognise the great truth that without a Universal Religion this unity of mankind can never be brought into being. Political expediency or community of material ideals and interests can never accomplish any permanent union of races and religions. To achieve this end we must

have a religious synthesis, a Universal Religion which would serve as the great bond uniting all the religions, sects and creeds which exist at present and may yet be born in times to come. The wonderful life of Sri Ramakrishna is a glorious example of how it is possible for men to attain to this religious synthesis in their own lives. This synthesis was realised by the great Prophet of Dakshineswar not by an intellectual flight undertaken with the help of emotion, arguments and reasonings, but by his strenuous spiritual practice and super-human renunciation which effaced his ego and merged his individuality in the Universal. This grand realisation lay at the back of his supreme love and sympathy that made him accept all religions and creeds as different paths leading ultimately to the Eternal Reality manifesting itself as God, Soul and Universe. "The unillumined man in his ignorance says that his religion is the only true one, and that it is the best. But when his heart is illuminated with the light of true Knowledge he knows that above all these wars of sects and creeds presides the One, indivisible, eternal, all-knowing Bliss. It is invoked by some as God, by some as Allah, by some as Hari and by others as Brahman." Standing on the high altar of the synthetic religion of the future, Sri Ramakrishna proclaimed like the Rishis of old this great message to humanity, with all the passion that his soul could command. And humanity, too, has heartily responded to the message.

PILATE ASKS AGAIN.*

“TRUTH! what is truth?”—asks the perturbed—not
“jesting”—Pilate again.

Was Vivekananda a poet? No, we have never learned to think of him so. Was Vivekananda a prophet? He was too passive sometimes for a prophet of the type we know or if at all one, him the world will prove to have cried himself hoarse in the wilderness—he had mistaken his vocation. Was Vivekananda a saint? Why, his biceps were too strong for a saint; a Napoleon or an Alexander must have been in hiding beneath his cassock! a saint! search into him, natural history fashion, and the order he belongs to, is revealed before us. No, don't get astounded at it—he was a sinner who could upbraid and disavow sin also, a very big inconsistent sinner, a revolutionary, who had lost his soul in the mazes of a casuistry that confounded good and evil both and left behind a stalk of bloody offshoot that we see to-day ripening into the red fruit of revolution. He, with his up-standing figure, his fire-flashing eye—he, a poet! a saint! oh no, he would have been at his home to-day in the Russia of Monziks, the Siberian convicts let loose, they, who sing the new carmagnole, the ‘demons’ that haunt the pages of Dostoieffsky, the ‘demons’ who are in the seat of power to-day in Russia. He is one of the ‘Karamazovs’—for what is Vedanta, but a lapse into atheism? He is a ‘Raskolnikoff’ who could have murdered an Elizabeth without the least compunction, and only did not, perhaps because he was placed

‡ Sometime ago a Western writer in comparing Swami Vivekananda with Nietzsche, ended, after the opinion of many others of his persuasion, by branding them both as megalomaniacs and social revolutionaries of the same complexion. This article considers in short the bearings of such a comparison from the point of view of origins, and Dostoieffsky, the renowned Russian novelist is incidentally taken up as explaining the mentality of Nietzsche to a certain extent. Some of Nietzsche's and Dostoieffsky's works have been mentioned in places.

in India than elsewhere; he could have done it all the same, he never knew the difference between right and wrong; he was a twin-brother to Nietzsche, the megalomaniac, a soul potent with criminal intention, talking drivelling nonsense about what is beyond good and evil,—the new Zarathustra, the new Dionysius! What, ho! megalomaniacs all!—"a mad world, my men!"—and O! for a pious hand now to save us from the fate that has fallen on all the steady-going and the sober-minded in Russia to-day or that which has spelt the ruin and disaster to the Huns of the present day, the swollen-head up-starts who upheld the legend of "Deutschland über alles."

For they say they have thus traced him out to-day; him, who in India went by the name of Vivekananda, the "tamer of souls," himself untamed. Even before the war came on and Nietzsche had still to gain that unenviable notoriety with which his name has been invested by irresponsible junkers all the world over, they prided themselves in their hearts as having found out the queer family resemblance that exists between the Nietzsche of the "Nebermensch" and the Vivekananda of the 'Parabrahman.' What are they but promulgators of the doctrine of the "will to power." What did they teach and insist upon? Certainly not what they called the 'slave-morality of Jesus,' the 'Chandala-morality of Saint Paul.' One said: "I rejoice in great sins as my great consolation," and another—"Do even evil like a man! Buddha ruined India as Christ the Romans." Was not Nietzsche's Superman, a colossus beyond good and evil—a Parabrahman?—"a supreme individualist?" And that same authority who pointed it out was in exultation over the fact that he had found out the canker that was eating into the heart of the rising generation in India and expressly stated as fact, that, among all the other causes, physical and moral, that were working havoc to the soul of the Indian student none stood so important mayhap as that "the writings of Vivekananda were very popular amongst them." And was it not said again by a mystified administrative machinery that the doctrines of one, Norendranath Datta, alias Vivekananda of the 'Bhadra-log'

class, were at the root of certain very definite misdemeanours exhibited by a set of unruly boys in the first days of the Swadeshi agitation? "The disaffected Indian graduates and plucked B. A.'s" of Lord Curzon are to be mentioned in the same breath with the sweating city-clerk, the oppressed factory-operatives, the grim convicts of the penal settlements in the West as akin in their ideas of a social revolution and the part they should take in it armed with Vivekananda in India and with the Nietzches and Karl Marxes in the West! With Karl Marx the social revolution in the West has to a certain extent fulfilled itself as also seen its own defects in the clear light of the fact which it now understands that Marx has stopped his thinking after having reached the rupture of the capitalistic integument. But still farther on they are in the West. What of India then? Should they now start with Nietzsche again, or the thousand others who echo him in one or other of the new social gospels they are preaching in the West?—and in India, with Vivekananda too? For the part of Vivekananda 'the fiery,' Vivekananda 'the muscular,' has not yet been played out in the history of India with anything like distinctness. And that we know.

Says the over-penitent wise among the Christians to-day: "In Vivekananda's constant outcries against the sense of sin and the penitent spirit we find Nietzsche's philosophy grafted on to a pantheistic trunk." Nietzsche fastened on to certain amoral impartialities. Whence derived he these? Vivekananda, the heir of ancient Rishis believed in 'no sin.' Whence derived he that? Let us see, for here is a link to follow, though we shall speak of Nietzsche first taking^{*} the order of his popularity as it was, a very short time ago. Goethe, Schopenhauer apart, Dostoieffsky is the only psychologist from whom he had anything to learn. And what does Dostoieffsky represent? That, "when a culture gets tired and begins to decay, the men become hysterical and develop strange lusts." Page upon page of his writings will bear testimony to this fact. And what does Vivekananda represent? To know which it will be good to rehearse a little of our

ancient history. The Mazdean dualism is the rejected stuff of Aryan genius in its Indian habitat which later formed the background of the Mediterranean or European Christianity as preached by Saint Paul and as condemned by Nietzsche. Vivekananda rejected it also for the greater truth of Christ which he had found in Christ's Unity with the Godhead and with all that that unity incidentally implied. Nietzsche scoffed at the Christ of Saint Paul; he made himself an "Anti-Christ." He could not or would not see what compromise Dostoieffsky had arrived on later in his work. Nietzsche wanted to leave the moorings of the past and build a better theory for the existence of the "human, all too human." He said there was never more than one Christian and he died on the cross—and they have made the cross their deity and forgotten Christ instead and the life that was in him. And paradoxically he proposed that the evil god is just as urgently needed as the good god. But he broke down in the transition to a higher development and in this he symbolises the breaking down of the Western mind in reaching the one only exodus out of the tangle it has got itself in. Nietzsche remained a wild and frenzied poet-speculator on the lot of mankind and did not grow into the prophet-like if not the full prophet that Dostoieffsky grew up into before him. Perhaps, if he had lived the life in full he could have surpassed even Dostoieffsky in his synthesis, in the development of a Rajasa-Satvic nature into the full and fuller Satvic. He was rich in potentialities, richer even than Dostoieffsky was. He approximates—though still hazily—towards the heart of the Asiatic East, the East of Manu especially, whom he revered so much as to say: "The code of Manu! Why, it would be a sin against the Spirit to mention it in the same breath with the Bible!" India explains the Nietzsche-phenomenon better than that Western critic, who blind with the meaning he has read into his Christianity, itself a product of the East, wanted to delude his fellow-men by a suggested juxtaposition of the 'superman mystic' and the mystic Vedantic, classing them both in the end as something

like bloody insurgents to the established order of things.

The genius of the Indo-Aryan floated over all these seeming-seen physical and mental worlds to find that after all there was but one who transcends all and yet is immanent in all, that we feel and know the one only who exists and whom the sages call in so many names, the one who is in good and evil both and the path to Him lies more through the *Rita* the true, the straight, though, who knows? also sometimes through the devious and the wrong, the *Anrita*, not as deliberately accepted but pre-determined by a strictly causal nexus, unconsciously borne, but later consciously surpassed. And hence the conception of Rudra, knowing whom they prayed: "Through that alone, which is thy benign face, O Rudra, save, O save us from fall from day to day." They were not intimidated by the knowledge that He had that other form also, the "Arch-fear, uplifted thunder He,—born of our sins and evils may be—whom to know also is immortality." They had the vision-whole to combine the two into one and knowing this they exalted and were not 'penitent.' The penitent souls of this world—or rather the penitence-fed—do not have that vision of the one-whole, themselves though right, which the poet, the prophet, the seer and the saint at their best declare. The 'primeval demiurgus' frightens the soul of the steady believer in the benign God, stealthily doling out his graces from his charity-box. Not so the former class of men. They believe in no mean temporising; they are not scared away by the shadows of sin and guilt, because they are shadows. They know better because they have the full charter of liberty given to them to know. Others with ever so little of the vision in them may try to attune their soul to that harmony they manifest but these break down ere long for they do not have that strength in their pinions which would keep them steady to the height of the great argument they would aspire after. The one thing they have, however, in common is that they all speak in paradoxes sometimes. And when they speak so we who are unaccustomed to think that every moral law is in danger, feel as if a tiger were on our

track, and to our vision at once the saint is lost in the soldier, the pious man of God in the revolutionary, the poet in the lunatic. They all seem to conspire together then boldly to cut the ground from beneath our feet and make good and evil both dance a rhythmic dance on the bosom of the whole creation. Says Tagore “नाचे छन्दे भाल मन्द ताले ताले” loudly, but somehow dangerous still to the puritan. Says Vivekananda: “Sinners; who calls you sinners? It is a sin to call men so.” And Nietzsche proposes with a grim sardonic smile, “The anarchist and the Christian are born of the same womb”—what a turning of tables that is! And Dostoeffsky emphasises the truth: “Restrain me not, for unto us it hath been committed to fulfil a great truth!” But the orthodox rules the roast with the result that sometimes the most Christian opponent of revolution is condemned to be shot or instead marched off to jail as an anti-Christ revolutionary, and the most innocent of Saviours of society are anathematised as dangerous to the peace and solidarity of all mankind. Witness Dostoeffsky, witness the other. The history of the world is witness to the fact that glowing personalities are, more often than not, the creators of glowing paradoxes, no, not mere figures of speech, but earnest, solid, soul-searching truth through these it is that they express. They alone err who know not to view them in their true perspective, they alone err who carry their own pre-supposition of things into every new avenue of thought opened up before them by the makers of the future who stand firm on their own prerogative to teach the world, in each succeeding epoch, lest the good old rule should now corrupt, should now enslave with a fixed routine. And their sympathy and probing into the nature of social evils or the evils of an individual's heart must not be taken to imply a positive incitement to sin but efforts directed towards appraising the individual's and the society's in connection with the individual's heart, through their own; in the execution of which they also lay bare the plague-spots, the rotting seats of corruption in it, and from the point of view of the individual

as a self-creating personality, the blind spot in his vision, the weak point in his character as a whole, which he can only remove in time by an unconscious experimenting with his soul, as it were, in the laboratory of morals. They do not "inspire" men to any wrong action; they simply refuse to be hoodwinked from seeing one aspect of the universe which also has its own place in the scheme of things and as men, who feel the most poignantly for it, they go to seek for a God who does not think it to be beneath Him to go down even into the alleys and bye-ways of a sinner's heart and save him there, a hound of heaven, as it were, following up the track of the forward heart down to the deepest depths of its Tartarus. Man, as man, has an insatiable longing sometimes to taste of the forbidden truth which grows in the garden of Eden; he will not be kept off from it by a mere word of fiat by our kind warder of the garden; who for that prohibition is more the tempter himself rather than the Satan, in the guise of a serpent, who is his eternal adversary. It is the God who requires correction there, not man. "A moment of terror, and then—It is the Lord!," says Swami Vivekananda. "The world has been ever preaching the God of virtue, I preach to you a God of virtue and of sin." Verily, verily, unless and until our virtues climb down to sin and sins ascend up to virtues—to use one more paradox—"it will ever remain the one-legged universe with its lame, one-legged God" that it is to some, and the key to social reconstruction will be lost. The saint of the 'Karamazov' does not rise from the dead on the third day to rehabilitate this world of sin. "The ethic built on such a concept is an ethic of brutality." "The saint hates the sinner and the sinner struggles against the saint," says the Swami Vivekananda again, "the man who is groping his way through sin and misery, through hell, will also reach; we may choose for ourselves the path that runs through heaven, but it must be consciously and seeing all beings as identified with ourselves." And we do not know how much that latter implies and hence—the tragedy.

Thus it is that the Swami Vivekananda with his gospel of energism in religion, his firm and fiery repudiation of the "sin" theory of the moribund pious among the Christians provokes the critical faculty of some scribes among them into suggesting a parallel between Nietzsche and himself. It is very easy to do so as we have seen in some of the main outlines of their teaching but it is very difficult to make that similitude a clincher. The truth is that the great Vedantist is but the full complement, "the broken are made perfect round" in the heaven of the Philosophy of the Absolute or of Brahman and Shakti both, of what the great anti-Christ had but dimly prefigured to himself to attain to. Let the over-penitent among the Christians look about them and they shall yet again find in him who was styled the 'roaring fire' by his master, the fire's own power to burn all sin into cinders so they burn no more and catch the splendour before they die, for only the fire knows how best to absorb the evils that are poured into it, evils which the dancing flames shoot forth into sparkling stars.

That critic was an eye-opener by a great deal who suggested the comparison first. It will be found to be ultimately useful to both the parties involved. The ailing mind of Western civilisation showed forth in a very acute manner in Dostoieffsky, before Nietzsche, although the latter took of him the cup which he drank to the very dregs, further even than Dostoieffsky himself would have dared. Though an epileptic and neurasthenic like him, he must have to all intents and purposes survived the shock tactics of his former days, his psycho-pathology, his studies of the morbid mind. Opinions are fast changing with regard to Nietzsche now. "No, no, he did not invoke the war." Nietzsche hated the German as the blackest hell. The cult of the Superman did undergo some modification at the hands of the Prussian school of historians and militarists like Treitsche and Bernhardt, and they, among all the rest, concocted the witches' cauldron that set all Europe into ebullition—they say. "Might be he was a poet after all, a mystic." And that is how

Nietzsche is gradually coming into his own, but his sponsor's turn is not still over. Dostoevsky is being read all over the Western world to-day and among his students are none so eager as the young men and young women of Germany at the present moment. But it is not so easy to read him as for mere pastime. It has its dangers as well as strong good points. One hundred years have elapsed since he first saw the light of day and Russia now is all ablaze. It is a world all gone awry and a German writer has raised a note of warning saying how Dostoevsky or rather his 'Brothers Karamazov' paints in lurid colours the failure of Europe now to solve her own problems. Shall the light again come from the East? Dostoevsky himself breathes the spirit of the oriental Christ much as Tolstoy did with just a little difference. It is better the Western world should pay heed to him and along with him to Nietzsche, also, even if it be because: "His pictures are announcing themselves to us," the writer says, "with so innocent a voice that good and evil have become interchangeable in them and every law reels under their feet." "It is the threshold across which Europe is stepping—the void and all; but then it also discloses the rich possibilities of life." All Europe will be ever so much indebted to him if that be the case indeed. It would be just like what the late Professor William James said in his Gifford lectures: "If there were such a thing as visitation by the spirit, as inspiration from a higher realm, it might well be that the neurotic temperament would furnish the chief condition of the requisite receptivity." The East understands how that is possible. Not so the West. Let it understand through Dostoevsky the Christian with his 'New Christ' and Nietzsche 'the anti-Christ,'—and if possible, through a certain other who can furnish us with the most suitable comment on their thoughts. It is not our purpose here to bring out in fuller content the similarities and dissimilarities of the European problem with ours, but the message of Dostoevsky as it stands and as we have hinted all along challenges comparison with that of Vivekananda coupled with that of Nietzsche, which as we know represents only the

negative aspect of it. On a superficial observation are they not so similar? Dostoieffsky was wrung out of the womb of Tsarist Russia, quick with the potentialities of the future. He was the sick man of Russia, the sick man of Europe, the sensitive, the pessimist, the amoral and yet a supremely self-conscious unity fidgeting about for the recovery of the health now lost, in his system. In what particular ways chiefly does his self-consciousness manifest itself? First, his love presumably for the unhealthy, the sick, the repulsive and sometimes the grossly sinning, in fact with him it was as with Bandelaire: "O Lady Macbeth, thou, the soul, full of crime, I love." Secondly, his strong repudiation of Westernism and attempt to reveal a Russian Christ to the Western world, the worship of the Man of sorrows, in fit colour with the problems of the 'oblomoff'-Russia with a strange up-turning of face towards a better world and a better life as in some of the sinners he has depicted, and third, in his immense faith in Russia, the Russian 'Poor Folk,' the 'Idiot,' the 'Demons' and shall we say his 'Brothers Karamazov.' With that it ends almost. The 'crime' that he did and the 'punishment' that he got was not sufficient for his purpose of indicting an anarchic individualism after his first triumphant assertion of it. His positive gospel of self-forgetfulness, of love of work and self-victory in the fulfilment of Russia's Mission to the Western world seem in this last of his, to have been lost sight of in orgies of self-indulgence, doubt and disbelief except in the instance of the "re-formed" Father Zoshima and streaks of sunlight here and there. But then this last of his was never finished. Manifestly, he did not say his last word upon it all and the book remains a magnificent torso as certain other great works of literature, most notably, as Shekey's "Triumph of Life." The problem is, who is going to say the last word on it, the last word on the "Downfall of Europe," as our German critic writes of it, the last word on the fate of the 'Brothers Karamazov'? We seek in vain. No 'Russian Christ' of Dostoieffsky's could save Nietzsche who addressed himself to the task of solving the psychological

problem thus left to him by the other. Nietzsche only intensified the problem of Dostoevsky. He but suggested the remedy though he could not fulfil himself accordingly, and the task is still left for one, who, perhaps more than any other in modern times, himself a pious of the most pious, gave a shock to the everyday conceptions of sin and morality, by his bold paradoxes, in the world of the East and West alike and like them cut against everything in order to save everything, he, who succeeded in combining in himself the vision-whole of the poet, the seer, the saint and the prophet and has therefore been stigmatised along with them as 'revolutionaries.' He was the Soul Triumphant of Hinduism in whom all their tendencies were sublimated and who therefore did not mander away his life in strident harshness as a Nietzsche or got himself stuck in a black quagmire as a Dostoevsky. It was he who gave us that jewel of an interpretative vision of a sinner's life, in his "Angels Unawares." How little we know that sometime he was a poet too, he, who, a saint of saints, had in him the grit to stand up and declare that men never committed sins but 'errors' only and that our march from day to day was from lesser truth to higher.

With a philosophy such as his, however, one can ill suit the "Christ of the Russians" only, who is very vaguely afterwards the Christ-saviour of all Europe, of all mankind, of all culture in all the grades of life. Nietzsche and Dostoevsky both blundered upon a great truth when between them they agreed that "unless you have chaos within you cannot give birth to a dancing star." But to give weight to their supposition they had to hit upon, each in his own way, a philosophic ground, more imaginary than real. Dostoevsky creates an ideal which faltering and parochial to the end, and Nietzsche confounds one of the best of means, when philosophically employed towards the Summum Bonum of life as the very acme of that realisation itself. But both of them have done an immense service in that they have stood against the conservative churchian morality loathsome to their active souls, in their lines of burning protest against the priestly

code, the blear-eyed formalism of the past, the namby-pamby art for art's sake doctrine and in the impetus that they have thus directly given to the far greater, the far nobler and the far fuller life to be born which denies but to reassert, frees the fancy but fortifies the soul ;—their pointing out with no unmistakable sign towards that where all our passions mingle to form a star ; their soul-complex, the harbinger of that greater something which they fondly aspired but did not possess the key to.

If the 'Downfall of Europe' is best evidenced to-day in the mad carnivals of pleasure, in low self-seeking in individuals as well as in nations, in the soulless machine-hunting and man-hunting everywhere in it and if "already half-Europe, at all events, half of eastern Europe is on the road to chaos, Europe reeling into the abyss as in a drunken illusion," be true, what more can be said than that it is a world quick once more with the possibilities of the future, yes, the possibilities for even a Dostoieffsky and a Nietzsche, for they explain that curious phenomenon in criminology that the "criminal is often enough not grown to the level of his deed—he is greater than he knows." The orthodoxy of the West laughs at him in scorn—though in many respects its ways to elevate him are better than its precept. The Vedanta of the East hugs him to his bosom, though confessedly, it is notoriously failing in its application of this principle in its social life. But the truth has been preached by one in the East and West both and it is time that they who do not know should pay heed to him.

Russia and with her all Europe, emerged from her recent blood-bath can hardly yet decipher what is in the dim distance, for the muscles there, are still feeling the nervous twitches of reaction, the brains still seething with burning thoughts and the memory, still active retracing the old, old tracks of power, revenge and onslaught—the whole of Europe is tense with brutal excitement still. Should a little more relaxation come, and the politicians and the fashionable homilists of the pulpit and the press try to tackle with the Reality itself, Europe shall

have reaped its harvest of pain and suffering undergone, in the peace that passeth all understanding and in the dreams and visions of her poets and prophets, and litterateurs, some sweet and saintly, some frankly antinomian and ghastly and that because the weight of authority and custom had laid so heavy upon them as to make them professedly unconventional, realised in a richer and broader and more perfect a synthesis than it has ever yet attained in its history. For Asia should have then contributed towards that great consummation as Asia, and India, especially in it conserves that mighty secret, that mighty vision of the new and old worlds both, which Vivekananda saw through, deeper than ever the Dostoieffskys and Nietzches, to speak of two types of thinkers only, though superficially he appears to some even yet as but a faint echo of these, his predecessors in thought. He has gathered up in himself all their resonances to deliver them transmuted and yet still surcharged with all the thunderous energy his individual soul was capable of, before a world which has been kept blind by want of imagination, by crusts of superstitious convention and a dead level of uniform blunder in uniform correction that hardly ever goes to the root of the disease it seeks to eradicate.

The Time-spirit needed that such a spirit should be born in India once more, the home of the synthesis of all culture, of all the attempts of all mankind to meet with its own soul in the verity of life, one, who should combine in himself as many facets of truth as he only should know how best to combine and yet remain the nation's man that he is, with a large hope for all, that, one with his Guru, should justify in his own life what to another through intellect only, might seem 'grotesque' and yet the 'majesty of Law doth order,' might seem self-alienated and erring in objectivity and yet be fully a master of one's self and beyond expectation rational—that, he only will be able to answer for who shall have lived the Life and known it therefore, and not he, the hide-bound Pharisee who thinks that his alone is the seat in Abraham's bosom.

D. MITRA, M. A.

LETTERS OF SWAMI TURIYANANDA.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama,

Luxa, Benares City,

27th November, 1912.

Dear—

Glad to receive a letter of yours after a long time. I could not reply so long, but this morning I felt the urge to write to you, and hence these few lines. But it is very difficult to answer your questions fully in a letter. Such questions are best answered orally. Still I shall try.

As in the seed the future origin, growth and manifestation of flowers and fruits etc. of a tree exist potentially, similarly the potentialities of spiritual progress of an aspirant are developed by means of a certain word (or words) which takes him to perfection. This word is called the Bija-mantra. The saint has sung—“Mind, thou knowest nothing of cultivation. Such a rich field as the human life is lying fallow, which, if tilled, might have yielded crops of gold. Sow the seed supplied by the Guru and sprinkle it with the water of devotion. If thou canst not do it alone, better take Ramprasad with thee. Hedge it with the fence of Kali's name, and there will be no damage to the crops. It is the strong fence of the Mother with dishevelled hair, which Death dares not approach!” The field of life, the seed from the Guru, the watering with devotion, the strong fence of Kali's name—one must practise with such means and finally surrender himself too,—this is the hint. Sri Ramakrishna used to say: ‘Take Ramprasad with thee,’ means—forget the ego-consciousness, the idea that I am Ramprasad or such and such, and be wholly absorbed in the chosen Ideal. This is the culmination of spiritual practice. The different Gods and Goddesses are but the manifested forms of the various

powers of that Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute, and called under various names. They are variously manifested for the fulfilment of the aspirants' aims. So why cannot the Bijas or symbolic names also be different?

All Hindu systems of doctrines have their existence, resting solely upon the Vedas. Therefore no system—that is, the Puranas and Tantras etc.—is non-Vedic. All have their basis in the Vedas. Only for the easy comprehension of aspirants, the sages have interpreted the Vedas in different ways and prescribed different methods of practice. That is all. The authors of Shastras maintain that the theories which they advocate are to be found in the Vedas themselves, and we shall doubtless be doing injustice to them if, without going through the whole of the Vedas, we assert that these theories are not to be found in them. Since all sounds are the outcome of the syllable Om, it goes without saying that all the Bijas or symbolic names also proceed from Om. I have heard that the Anâhata sound can be perceived. The Bija-mantras also are visible in luminous characters and sometimes they are heard also. I do not know whether the Bijas merge in Om or not, but this I have heard that the Mantra and the Deity are identical. The Mantra is as it were the abode of the Deity's body. These things cannot be solved by mere questioning; one has to practise, and then they gradually reveal themselves, through the grace of the Guru. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "Mere repetition of the word 'Bhang' won't produce intoxication; it has to be procured, washed, pounded with water and then drunk, when only the desired effect is produced." The Shastras also have said that it is not good to be always seeking for the cause and effect relation. Of course, for the sake of understanding a thing one may ask a few questions about it, but in the course of Sadhana all questions subside of themselves. Without practice it is impossible to settle them permanently. As questions crop up from within, so also, with the convictions of Truth by means of practice, are all doubts dispelled from within, and this is called the attainment of peace or rest,

He only knows this who through the Lord's grace realises this state. Otherwise, through questions that state is never to be attained,—this is the verdict of the scriptures. “*नायमात्मा श्रवणेन लभ्यः ।*”—“This Atman is not to be realised through the study of the scriptures, etc.”—this and hundreds of similar scriptural texts are proofs of this. Apply yourself heart and soul to spiritual practice, and the Lord's grace must follow. Then you will be always in bliss and say repeatedly, ‘Glory to Mother Kali!’

Recently there was great joy on the occasion of Rāsālīla. There was a representation of the Krishna-līla by little boys called Rasadhāris, and the Holy Mother was highly pleased. Blessed is N— Babu and his family, who are thus giving tangible expressions to their spirit of service and devotion, to their heart's content! * *

Yours with love and blessings,

Turiyananda.

Benares.

10th April, 1920

Dear—

Yours of the 7th inst. to hand yesterday. * * Your stay here was the occasion of good talks everyday, which made me happy. You have done well to return to the Ashrama. Neither — nor anybody else is the cause of anything, at the root of all is He. From Him everything proceeds: “Don't forget Him—*यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसूता पुराणी*”—“From whom this ancient creation has proceeded.” You must fix your attention on Him. If he is pleased there is no more anxiety or fear of anybody's displeasure. Don't pay much attention to external causes. Make it a habit to look for everything within. “Thy lover is in thyself, and thy enemy too is within thee.” *
“आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः”—“The self (mind) alone is one's friend and the self alone is one's enemy.” *“आत्मैवेदं सर्वं”*—“All this is verily the Atman.” *“नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन”*

* From a Hindi verse

“There is no multiplicity here.” It won't do to have these things in the books only. You have to realise them in yourself. Aye, you must do this immediately. Now or never.

My health is no better than when you left this place. Or rather, worse. I can no longer walk about at will, and feel extremely weak. The heat is not yet so very high, but will soon be. K— is very eager to have me (at Kankhal), S— is insisting on my going to Bhubaneswar, while A— and others wish that I should stay here. What the Lord wills shall come to pass. Accept all of you my love and best wishes.

Yours affectionately,

Turiyananda.

THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE BUDDHIST AGE.

(500—300 B. C.)

THE place of women was very high in the social life of the Hindus. Her position as a helpmate in the performance of religious duties and sacrifices has not been questioned by the Hindus. But she has been always considered an undesirable companion, and not only that, any contact with her must be shunned by the Brahmacharin during the period of his mental preparation. Stringent rules have been framed for the guidance of the disciple or student during the whole course of his apprenticeship.

Buddhism was thoroughly a monastic religion, and so it was first ruled that no woman should find room within the precincts of the Buddhist ecclesiastical society. The Bhikkus should not, says Gautama, look on women; but if women come near, the Bhikkus should overlook them and not speak to them. If they speak, the Bhikkus will respond, but with a clear mind, without looking lustfully on them. Elderly women should be

regarded as mothers, youthful girls as sisters and younger maidens as daughters. Gautama prohibits any contact with women, and when the contact is unavoidable, the Bhikkus should "keep wide awake." (Mahaparinibban Sutta). Women have been depicted to be more crooked than the serpent. They are second to none in studying the character of men. The Sribarga Jatakas condemn women as a class. We get a glimpse of the monkish mentality with regard to the character of women in the Buddhist Jatakas which are stories of the actions of Buddha in previous births. Women should not be trusted; their character is essentially corrupt and their chastity cannot be maintained even under strict vigilance from their birth; they are cliquish and their love is changeful like the veering wind; they are a great bar to salvation. (Asatmantra Jataka). Religious scriptures of different denominations agree in pointing out the baneful effect of promiscuous contact with the softer sex, but none are more suspicious, narrow-minded, uncharitable and illiberal than the Buddhist scriptures with regard to women, though Buddha established, no doubt with reluctance, the order of the Bhikkunis among whom were some of the excellent types of womanhood that the world can boast of.

Buddha's ideas of true womanhood did not differ much from those in the Hindu Shastras, and primarily he wanted to confine the activities of the sex to the satisfactory performance of domestic duties and social obligations on which the well-being of every society depends. The duty of a chaste and good woman was, according to Buddha, to look upon her husband as her chief wealth, to serve him with unfailing obedience and devotion. Sujata proved recalcitrant and disobedient to her husband and all elderly members of her husband's family. Buddha made her turn over a new leaf, and she became one of the most devoted of wives. He did not think that they were unfit to attain Arhatship by following the Noble Path, but he thought that their unrestricted familiarity with monks would tend to the disruption of his Sangha by offering opportunities for intimacy which would

culminate in the corruption and loss of sturdiness and virility of the religious Order he founded. He did not look upon their inclusion with favour, and hence did not allow them at first to enter the pale of the church. When the great Tathagata stood before the care-worn world with his new message of Truth and Salvation—when throngs of people flocked to the full-welling fountain-head of kindness and sympathy to drink the healing beverage of life, and to quench the passionate longings of their troubled heart—when multitudinous hosts wended their way to seek shelter in the Buddha, the Sangha and the Dharma—Gotami, the pious foster-mother of the great Sugata, appeared before him and intimated her desire to be included as a limb into his great religious body. Gotami and many other ladies cut their hair, put on yellow robes, and went to the Master. Ananda pleaded in their favour. Buddha yielded with reluctance. He gave way to the repeated importunities of his favourite disciple Ananda and allowed some concessions. The Lord foretold that owing to the inclusion of women into the Order, chastity and holiness will not last long and the Law will stand only 500 years. Subsequent events proved the truth of his misgivings and apprehensions.

The first woman to enter the church was Gotami. Buddha formulated certain rules for the guidance of the Bhikkunis who were not allowed full independence in their monastic life. He was guided by Manu's injunction that women should never be free at any time of their life. Even though they were Bhikkunis, their movements were not unlettered or unrestricted. The following rules were meant for their guidance :—

(a) They should have regard and respect for the Bhikkus.

(b) They should not pass the rainy season where there is no Bhikku.

(c) They should observe fasting etc. every fortnight with the permission of the Bhikku Sangha and accept advice from it.

(d) After the rainy season, both the Bhikku and Bhikkuni

Sanghas will observe austerities as an atonement for their sins in the presence of all.

(e) They must receive injunctions from both the Sanghas,

(f) They must receive Upasampada from both the Sanghas after two years of study.

(g) They must not speak ill of and use words of reproach to Sramanas.

(h) The Bhikkus will keep them in the right path by pointing out their shortcomings; but the Bhikkunis must always refrain from blaming the Bhikkus publicly.

Gotami subscribed to the rules, and was first admitted into the Sangha. Afterwards she moved for an equal status with the Bhikkus according to the standard of virtue and qualification, but Buddha did not consent to this. Buddha's ideal Bhikkuni should give up all desires, be contented with but little, should practise religion and meditation in solitude away from the vain pleasures and deluding joys of life, be active and give up sloth, and live in gentleness, modesty and humility.

The number of Bhikkunis was very small compared with that of the Bhikkus, but they were accorded a very high place in society. We hear of their learning, intelligence and influence in society from Sanskrit books like Malatimadhava. The Bhikkuni could become a Sramanera, even she could rise to Arhatship. We also hear of the erudition and intelligence of Khema and other Bhikkunis. The Therigatha of Sutta Pitaka was written by very many Sthavira Bhikkunis even in the life-time of Gautama. Many of the Gathas are beautiful and prove the piety and intelligence of these ladies. They expounded the high ethical truths and lessons of Buddhism, and many Bhikkus and Bhikkunis came to hear them. In Theri Bhashya has been mentioned the name of Soma, daughter of the court-Pandit of Bimbisara, who rose to Arhatship by meditation and culture.

Those women who had renounced the world with all its joys, and took shelter at the sacred feet of Gautama Buddha, were highly cultured and many of them acquired a true inner vision. The meretricious glamour of mundane things and their

outwardly bewitching aspect could not keep them under delusion, and they snapped asunder the adamantine chains of attachment and shackles of customary rules which so long kept them tethered to the world, and circumscribed the spheres of their participation in the advancement of human progress and culture. Sumedha, a princess of extraordinary genius, was indifferent to the importunities and tears of her mother, the sorrowful glances of her royal father, and the supplications of her lover, and turned her back to the royal palace replete with all the material pleasures and joys of a luxurious existence. Buddhist literature contains many examples of exalted womanhood, and though the weaker sex were at first strictly kept outside the pale of the Buddhist church, they slowly but surely gained a high and honourable place as the most efficient instruments for strengthening the solidarity of the religious organisation and successful propagation of the new faith among the multitude.

The tremendous wave of Buddhism reached all the strata of society. Its educative value was immense. The royal household and the families of big merchant-princes, middle class men and humble mechanics could furnish examples of typical women, and this goes to prove that culture and education, rectitude and piety, liberality and charity were not restricted to the women of any particular class, but they permeated all sections of people. When Buddha became weak and powerless after six years of hard penance, Sujata appeared before him like a sweet ministering angel and offered him delicious food with adoration. The Lord gratefully accepted her offer and blessed her for the fulfilment of her desire. The charming and bright-eyed Ambapali came to adore him while he was staying in her mango garden at Vaisali. Behind her fascinating and bewitching exterior, Buddha detected a pious heart. He eradicated the root of her impious thoughts and turned her from the path of unrighteousness to that of virtue. Buddha accepted her invitation to a dinner at her house in preference to the invitation of the Licchavis. She dedicated her garden-house to the Buddha and the

Sangha. Bishakha invited Buddha with all his Bhikkus to a dinner at her house, and intimated her desire to give clothes to the Bhikkus in the rainy season, to feed 500 Bhikkus through all her life, to offer diet and medicine to the sick, to establish an Annachattra where Sramanas would be freely supplied with food, and to give cloth to the Bhikkunis when they bathed naked in the river incurring the ridicule of bad women. Buddha granted her desire.

The daughter of Anathpinda was married to a Shresthi of Anga. She was instrumental in converting all the members of her husband's family to the religion of Buddha. As the Bhikkunis proved the capacity of women in maintaining high ideals of learning, culture and piety, others of their sex who did not take so bold a step as to renounce the world, contributed largely to the consolidation of the Buddhist monastic Orders. While they discharged their duties round their domestic hearth, they played a prominent part in supporting the active and self-sacrificing upholders of the faith by their munificent gifts, and enabled them to carry on their missionary propaganda with single-minded devotion and undivided attention. The successful propagation of Buddhism was largely due to them.

Women were married after they attained age, and there appears to have been some freedom in their movements. Bishakha was married to Purnabardhan at the age of fifteen. Widow re-marriage was in vogue not only among women of lower castes (Utsanga Jataka), but also among higher classes (Ashatrup Jataka). Boys were not married before they were sufficiently grown up. Love-making in the modern sense was not unknown. Girls were not given in marriage before they attained the age of puberty. Buddha himself married the daughter of his maternal uncle. This custom was in vogue in royal families, especially in the Sakya race. Many sought the hand of Yasodhara after Gautama's Prabrajya, and were candidates for her love, but as she had implicit devotion in her husband, she rejected their overtures and turned a deaf ear to them (Chandrakinnar

Jataka). As sanctioned in the Parashara Samhita a woman could take a husband for the second time in the event of her first husband's death, if he proved unchaste, if he were a eunuch, if he renounced the world or was excommunicated. Fallen women were not given up as lost. The story of Ambapali illustrates Buddha's kindness and sympathy for women dead to society, and shows that those who had strayed away from the right path in moments of weakness due to our common human nature can be won over and their life made useful to society instead of subjecting them to eternal damnation.

HARIPADA GHOSAL, M. A., M. R. A. S.



SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 432.)

यावत्स्याद्गुणवैषम्यं तावन्नानात्वमात्मनः ।

नानात्वमात्मनो यावत्पारतन्त्र्यं तदैव हि ॥३२॥

32. As long as there is rupture¹ of the equilibrium of Gunas, so long is the diversity² of the soul. And so long as the diversity of the soul lasts, it is verily at the mercy of others.

[¹ *Rupture etc.*—leading to manifestation of the universe.

² *Diversity etc.*—The Atman, through Avidya or ignorance which is without beginning, *imagines* Itself divided into the subject and the infinite variety of objects. Realisation puts an end to this self-hypnotism.]

यावदस्यास्त्रतन्त्रत्वं तावदीश्वरतो भयम् ।

य एतत्समुपासीरंस्ते मुह्यन्ति शुचार्पिताः ॥३३॥

33. So long as it is not independent it has apprehensions from the Lord And they who

uphold this doctrine of enjoyment are smitten with grief and are stupefied.

[¹ *Grief*: They find no way out of this maze of Karma and rebirth.]

काल आत्मागमो लोकः स्वभावो धर्म एव च ।
इति मां बहुधा प्राहुर्गुणव्यतिकरे सति ॥३४॥

34. When the equilibrium of the Gunas is disturbed, it is I¹ whom sages call variously as time,² soul, scripture, heavenly spheres, temperament, and virtue.

[¹ *I etc.*—Sages know that the universe, though appearing as various through delusion, is nothing but Brahman.

² *Time etc.*—all these are auxiliaries of Karma. ‘Time’ is the period of enjoyment. ‘Soul’ is the enjoyer. ‘Temperament’ causes the transformation into gods and other beings. ‘Virtue’ is the Apurva or the unseen result of good actions which later on fructifies as the enjoyment of heaven.]

उद्धव उवाच ।

गुणेषु वर्तमानोऽपि देहजेष्वनपावृतः ।
गुणैर्न बध्यते देही बध्यते वा कथं विभो ॥३५॥

Uddhava said:

35. O Lord, so long as the Jiva is mixed up with the attributes¹ that spring from the body how can he help being bound by those attributes? And if he is not enveloped² by them how does he come³ to be bound?

[¹ *Attributes*—such as work and its consequent happiness etc.

² *Not enveloped etc.*—as the Atman, the Eternal subject.]

कथं वर्तेत विहरेत्कैर्वा ज्ञायेत लक्षणैः ।
किं भुञ्जीतोत विसृजेच्छयीतासीत याति वा ॥३६॥

36. How do the free and bound souls live and

enjoy? By what signs¹ can they be distinguished? What or how do they eat, and how attend to other bodily functions? How do they lie, or sit, or go?

[¹ *What signs etc.*—Since the outward actions of both are so similar.]

एतदच्युत मे ब्रूहि प्रश्नं प्रश्नविदां वर ।

नित्यमुक्तो नित्यबद्ध एक एवेति मे भ्रमः ॥३७॥

37. O Thou best of the knowers of (answers to) questions, answer me these questions. My doubt is this: Is the same soul eternally bound and eternally free?



(To be continued.)

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

The National Value of Art.—By Sri Aurobindo Ghose.
Published by the Prabartak Publishing House, Chandernagore. Pp. 68.

This brochure contains six short essays reprinted from the *Karmayogin*, a defunct weekly magazine edited by the author himself. It has been brilliantly shown how art plays a most important part in raising man from the beast, in refining and purifying his passions, in ennobling his emotions and thus in leading him up to the state of the spiritual man. This is as much true of the individual as of the nation. In fact the tastes and expressions of art indicate the level of the civilisation of a particular nation. The place of art in the evolution of a race is by no means insignificant. Through its æsthetic and intellectual use, it gradually raises a race to the highest spiritual plane. The value of art cannot be too highly estimated in the present commercial age when the tendency of mankind has been giving preference to the useful rather than to the beautiful. This brochure, we hope, will dispel the superstitious ignorance of those who

deprecate art as a fashionable or luxurious and therefore a useless commodity of life.

The Soul Problem and Maya.—By Syamananda Brahmachary.

Published by Govinda Chandra Mukhopadhyaya, B.A., B.T.,
Shivala Ghat, Benares City. Pp. 152. Price Re. 1-8.

The author deals with the momentous problem from the point of view of the Advaita Vedanta. The language is simple and the arguments are convincing. The book gives many practical hints on spiritual life. "As the mirage, in spite of its inseparable relativity with the desert," says the author in conclusion, "cannot delude a wise man, so Maya, in spite of its inseparable relativity with the Universal Soul, cannot illude a wise man....As the mirage is to the desert, the wave to the ocean, the blueness to the sky, so is the mind to the soul, ignorance to wisdom, and Maya to the 'Truth.'"

The Paradoxes of the Highest Science.—By Eliphas Levi.

Published by The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar,
Madras. Pp. 172.

A book on occultism. "The Abbé Louis Constant," says the translator, "better known by his *nom de plume* of Eliphas Levi, was doubtless a seer; but...he *saw* only through the medium of the kabala, and his visions were consequently always imperfect and often much distorted and confused,"

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Gandhi and Anglican Bishops.—Published by Ganesh & Co.,
Madras. Pp. 64.

A Voice from Prison.—By C. S. Ranga Iyer. Published by
the same. Pp. 67.



REPORTS AND APPEALS.

The Ramakrishna Mission Flood Relief Work.

We have published the accounts of our relief work in North Bengal from time to time for general information. A recent letter from one of our workers there states that necessary cloths and money for hut-building and husking have been distributed, there is no further need for relief in the area we have taken up. So all our centres will be closed by the 20th November, 1922. Our workers have written to the Magistrates of Pubna and Bogra for information if there is any affected area under them which is in need of relief. We have now resumed the work of rebuilding huts in the distressed area of Bankura and Faridpur.

We have sufficient surplus left at our hands and there is no further need for money.

Our sincere and hearty thanks are due to the generous public for their ready and sympathetic response to our appeals on behalf of the suffering brethren.

Sd. Saradananda.
Secretary, R. K. Mission.

The Report of Sri Ramakrishna Students' Home, Bangalore City, for the year 1921—1922.

The Home is serving a great need by supplementing university education by religious, moral and practical training in Bangalore, an important educational centre in South India. As in the past years, admission was restricted only to unmarried students of the Entrance and College classes, but the strength was increased from 13 to 15. The conduct and progress of the boys were satisfactory. His Holiness Swami Nirmalanandaji continued to hold weekly religious classes on Sunday evenings. The daily prayers held both in the Home and in the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, were duly attended to, and the weekly Bhajana, too, was continued.

The total receipts during the year amounted to Rs. 2,241-8-0, and the total expenses to Rs. 1,813-9-10. The closing balance, including the previous year's balance of Rs. 2,779-15-8, was Rs. 3,207-13-10.

The Home is located in a rented house and stands in great need of a suitable permanent habitation of its own. Any contributions in aid of the Home will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the Secretary, Sri Ramakrishna Students' Home, Gavipuram Extension, Bangalore City,

NEWS AND NOTES.

Archbishop of York on the Church

"I do not believe in a God or religion which cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth. However sublime be the theories, however well-spun be the philosophy—I do not call it religion so long as it is confined to books and dogmas." Nearly three decades have passed since Swami Vivekananda wrote from America these memorable words to his followers and disciples in India. In the past there were very few men and women who could think such bold thoughts as these. But at the present times these ideas are more or less common to the generality of the young men and women in all countries, who refuse to believe in a religion which promises a heaven after death, but at the same time allows men to make a veritable hell of this earth with its oppression of the poor, its suffering of the weak.

"To put the matter bluntly," said the Archbishop of York at a meeting of the Church Congress which took place sometime back in Sheffield, "religion attracts; the Church repels." There is certainly a great yearning for religious truth among the men and women of the present generation, especially among the younger people, but the "shams and hypocrisies of the Churches" turn them away from religion. The reason is that people do not find true religion in the

Churches. And religious institutions before they can aspire after reforming men and women must reform themselves. Said the Archbishop, "If the Church is to preach the eternal Gospel to this generation not in word only, but in power, it must evangelise itself. It must present a new reality of living experience as its warrant to all men of the truth of its great assertion."

We earnestly hope that not only the Christian Church but all religious institutions should take note of this valuable advice and try to profit by it. It is a deplorable fact that most of our present day Hindu religious organisations founded by many of our great prophets and teachers—the makers of Modern India,—are showing a tendency towards exclusiveness and dullness, and are cutting themselves away from the realities of the actual life of the nation. For the sake of Truth and Humanity, we pray, let them try to re-inspire themselves by the new spirit and the new gospel which their founders lived and preached! And then only will these institutions again prove to be living forces working for the uplift of the country and the world at large.

Prison Reform in India

It is a happy sign of the times that the question of prison reform is attracting the notice of the Indian public more and more. The "Modern Review" for October publishes a thoughtful article on "Prison Reform in India" by Mr. Augustus Somerville. The writer who has studied closely this important question describes the Indian prison administration thus:—"It takes all. It gives nothing. It takes from the inmate every interest, every ambition, every hope. It severs him from his work, his family, all that he loved and cherished, and gives nothing in return....Our prisons far from being the houses of reformation we fondly believe them to be, are hot-beds of vice."

The writer finds fault with the general administration of the Jail, which does not take into proper consideration the temperament and capacity of the Superintendent, Jailor and

Warder—the three distinct classes of Jail officials in India—for taking up the work of reforming criminals into useful members of society. He further condemns the present system of prison labour which is compulsory and unpaid for and hence “least likely to inspire any thoughts of a reformatory type.”

In discussing about the After-care Associations the writer very truly remarks that the duty of the citizen does not end with his denunciation of the Prison Administration of the country. “If it is the work of the State to provide prisons and keep offenders there, surely it is the duty of every self-respecting citizen, who has at heart the interest and well-being of his fellowmen to use every means in his power to prevent them from going there.” Mr. Somerville also refers to the excellent system of Intermediate Sentences, and advocates that a prisoner should be released as soon as he is considered fit to return to society. He very truly observes:—“It seems cruelty to detain any man in prison one single day longer than the interests of the community demands.”

Our apathy to the deplorable condition of the inmates of the prisons and penitentiaries of our country has been unjust in the extreme. It may be that to pay the penalty for this criminal neglect of ours, thousands of our educated countrymen are experiencing the horrors of the prison to-day. Now that the mysteries of the inhumane prison system in India is being brought to light day by day, let us try to the best of our power to have it thoroughly reformed, and make it an asylum for ministering to the moral and spiritual needs of the erring and the delinquent.

Swaraj Based on Unity

The enlightened Maharaja of Alwar performed the ceremony of opening the Sanatana Dharma Sanskrit College Hostel, Lahore, and presided over the prize distribution of the College on the 9th November last. In the course of an eloquent lecture delivered on the occasion, he expounded the ancient Hindu religion and philosophy, urging the students to drink deep from the fountain of knowledge left to them

by their forefathers—the ancient Indian sages. In the course of the speech the Maharaja said that the West has many things to teach to the East. Let Indians assimilate in their national life all that is best in the culture of the West, but let them also bear in mind that they can never rise to claim equality of spirit and soul with any one in the world so long as they remain beggars and have nothing to give in return.

The Maharaja pleaded for a unity based on mutual toleration and self-sacrifice. He observed :—“The more you are able to draw your inward soul outward, the more will the outward souls be drawn inward towards you. Then you can claim true Hindu-Moslem Unity. For is not each a part of the whole?...Let our soul rise beyond the pale of selfishness. Teach it to make sacrifices for each other on the altar of love. Teach it toleration, and then your unity will become a consecration that no thunder-bolt or earthquake can ever tear asunder. That unity will then embrace all and be a Moslem-Ango-Hindu-Sikh-Jain Unity.”

Miscellany

His Holiness Swami Prakashananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, President of the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, California, is coming back to his native land, and is expected to reach Calcutta about the middle of December, 1922. For the last seventeen years the Swami has been preaching the universal truths of the Vedanta and interpreting the highest culture and philosophy of India to the people of America. In a public meeting held in Calcutta on Sunday, the 12th November last, under the presidency of Prof. Kokileswar Sastri, M. A., it was resolved to accord a befitting public reception to the Swami.

Under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Lodge, Dadar, Bombay, it has been arranged to hold weekly study classes, commencing from Monday, the 27th November, 1922, between the hours of 8-30 p. m. and 9-15 p. m., at Pandit's House, c/o Mr. V. N. Gupte, Lady Jamsheji Road, Dadar. The classes are open to members and sympathisers.

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

AWAKENED INDIA



इच्छिष्टत जाग्रत प्राप्य चरान्निवोधत ।

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INDEX

To Prabuddha Bharata

VOL. XXVII.

| | PAGE |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| A ncient History and Higher Criticism, by Swami Vivekananda | 281 |
| Awake ! Awake !, by Swami Vivekananda | 1 |
| B ehind the Veil, by Principal D. N. Sen, M. A., B. E. S. | 368 |
| Brahmananda, The Swami, by M. | 169 |
| Buddhist View of the Origin of Society, by Prof. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, M. A., P. R. S., PH. D. | 46 |
| C aste-consciousness and Colour-prejudice, by Swami Vivekananda | 241 |
| Commerce of India, The, by Swami Vivekananda | 41 |
| Conversations with Swami Turiyananda | 401, 441 |
| D evi-Sukta, Translated by Arthur Avalon | 55 |
| Divine Mother, The, by "Bharat" | 380 |
| E gyptian Civilisation, Ancient, by Swami Vivekananda | 161 |
| Epistles of Swami Vivekananda | 90, 135, 180, 213 |
| G autama, the Buddha; Jesus, the Christ, by Don William Leet | 253 |
| H oly Mother, The, by Chaitanya | 19 |
| I ndian Problem and its Solution, The, by Swami Vivekananda | 81 |
| India's Past and Present, A Peep into, by Khagendra Nath Sikdar, M. A. | 6 |
| India that is to be, The, by Swami Vivekananda | 32F |
| L askars or Indian Seamen, The, by Swami Vivekananda | 263 |
| Letters of Swami Turiyananda | 298, 344, 375, 419, 463 |
| Life and Spirit, by Eric Hammond | 386 |
| M ahasamadhī | F56, 312 |
| Mayavati Charitable Dispensary, Eighteenth Annual Report of the, | 228 |
| Meditation, A, by F. A. | 186 |
| N ews and Notes | 35, 77, 117, 157, 195, 233, 275, 316, 356, 396, 436, 477 |
| O ccasional Notes | 2, 43, 82, 123, 163, 203, 243, 284, 323, 363, 404, 444 |

| | PAGE |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| P ilate asks Again, by D. Mitra, M. A. ... | 450 |
| Progressive Hinduism, by Swami Abhedananda | 26, 59 |
| Prophet of Harmony, The Great, by Brahmachari Gurudasa ... | 141 |
| Q uestions and Answers, by Swami Vivekananda ... | 361 |
| R abeya, by Ananda ... | 221 |
| Ramakrishna, Some Thoughts on Sri, by Swami Vivekananda ... | 121 |
| Ramakrishna's Sannyasa, Sri, by Swami Saradananda ... | 129 |
| Ramakrishna, The Eighty-seventh Birthday Anniversary of Sri, ... | 151 |
| Ramakrishna, The Great Messenger of Light, Sri, by Swami Prakashananda ... | 292 |
| Ramayana, The Age of the, by Haripada Ghosal, M. A., M. R. A. S. ... | 183 |
| Religion is Self-abnegation, by Swami Vireswarananda ... | 341 |
| Religious Life, Condition of a, by Surendra Nath Chakravarty, M. A. ... | 215, 265 |
| Reports and Appeals | 65, 193, 273, 310, 354, 434, 476 |
| Reviews and Notices ... | 29, 67, 105, 148, 190, 231, 271, 307, 351, 393, 433, 474 |
| S emetic Religions, The Ancient, by Swami Vivekananda | 201 |
| Shama-dance, The, (a poem), by Voo-Loo ... | 220 |
| Shanti Ashrama, Summer Classes at, by Durga Devi ... | 429 |
| Sri Krishna and Uddhava... 33, 73, 102, 145, 188, 225, 268, 303, 347, 390, 430, 472 | |
| Stories of Saints—IX—Brother Wolf, Retold by G. ... | 62 |
| Struggle for a Moral Life, by Swami Madhavananda ... | 209 |
| T uriyananda, The Swami, by M. ... | 330 |
| Turiyananda, To the Swami, (A poem), by Voo-Loo ... | 340 |
| U nity, by Nameless ... | 301 |
| V edanta and Peace of Europe, The, by A Vedantist ... | 412 |
| Vivekananda—An Apostle of Faith, Swami, by A Brahmacharin ... | 97 |
| Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna, Swami, by Swami Saradananda ... | 86 |
| Vivekananda and the Masses of India, Swami, by Swami Vireswarananda ... | 92 |
| Vivekananda—Reminiscences, Swami, by Madame Calve | 423 |
| Vivekananda, The Sixtieth Birthday Anniversary of Swami, | 109 |
| W omanhood, Indian Ideal of, by Brahmachari Dinesh | 137 |
| Women in the Buddhist Age, The Position of, by Haripada Ghosal, M. A., M. R. A. S. ... | 466 |
| Work, The Secret of, by Swami Madhavananda ... | 12 |