

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

Katha Upa. 1. iii. 4

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

VOL. XXVIII]

SEPTEMBER 1923

[No. 326

CONVERSATIONS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA.

6th July.

The Swami was seated in the verandah surrounded by Brahmacharins and Sannyasins.

The Swami— With whatever evil tendencies one may come, one is sure to improve in holy company. As when you go to an otto shop, the scent will enter your nostrils, whether you will it or not. Well, people are not often inclined to associate with holy persons, and few have the capacity to do so. Sri Ramakrishna would be talking and the devotees listening, but their companions would whisper to them, “Well, let us go, how long will you be listening?” The devotees of course would have no inclination to go, whereupon

being exasperated they would say, "So you remain here while we go and wait in the boat." How beautifully Sri Ramakrishna would describe this!

Well, holy association is bound to produce good effects, for life only can communicate life. Nothing but a round body can give a round shadow. Life can give much more than writing would. What a tremendous difference is there between reading and hearing a lecture! In writing, also, the more life one puts into it, the more effective it becomes. Look at Swamiji's writings and those of other Swamis. Personality is the chief thing. It is only a handful of men who are directing this world—the rest follow like sheep. On his return from travelling the world over Swamiji remarked, "Democracy is a myth. Only a handful of men are doing everything."

A country goes to ruin when it fails to supply the right men for this task. Ours is a religious country. It has all along been producing saints. Show me one period of her history when she failed in this. A single life has been inspiring thousands of people—for how many centuries! Look at Nanak. Look at Kabir. See how long Tulsidas has been swaying this part of the country.

To-day a lady came to me who was recently widowed. I had a talk with her about Sri Ramakrishna. Her people had invited Swami Premananda to their place. Her husband's brother is a graduate who is conducting a school in his village. He is an honorary worker. A new spirit has come into the country. It will take time, it is true, but undoubtedly there is a stir all over the

land. Formerly there was not the boldness of speech that we meet with now. The rule of might is difficult where there is a public opinion to contend against.

Some white ants chanced to fall on the Swami's body, which brought forth the remark, "This is the month when worms and insects etc. are born in abundance. Hence the scriptures enjoin Cháturmásya—a cessation of travel for four months—for itinerants.

In my itinerant days I observed the Cháturmásya many times. Once I was at Pushkar, which, they say, is a difficult place of pilgrimage—'पुष्करं दुष्करं तीर्थम्।' But it is a beautiful place and very solitary. I enjoyed it immensely. During the Cháturmásya the sages used to live together in some place and regularly go through a reading of the scriptures or some such thing, and they travelled from one holy place to another during the remaining eight months. In this season they did not travel for fear of injuring tiny creatures.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

A spirit of deep unrest is now raging in the soul of the East. Beneath the mighty struggles for political and economic freedom, growing in strength all over Asia, there lies, deep below, a revolt against the Western civilisation itself. The West has been trying to dominate and exploit the non-European and non-white races of the world; and this often without any regard for justice and

fair-play. To make her conquest complete, she has also been making a desperate attempt for the cultural subjection of Asia. For a time it seemed as if the age-long culture of the Orient would be swept away before the onrush of the modern civilisation of the West. But this was not to be. The civilisation of the East is founded on the bed-rock of ethical and religious ideals, and possesses a remarkable vitality and power of resistance. For this very reason it has been able to withstand the onslaught boldly. However, to Asia this cultural attack has been a blessing in disguise. It gave her a rude shock and did what the political and economic invasions from the West failed to do. It made her alive to the fact that her very soul—her religion and spiritual culture—was in danger, and at last managed to awake her from her sleep. In consequence we see everywhere the stirrings of a new life which is making itself felt in all its intensity throughout the length and breadth of the East.

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After centuries of strenuous activity in the fields of religion and philosophy, art and literature, the Asiatics needed rest and went to sleep. They awoke to find that a strange race, possessing formidable power and initiative, had invaded their lands, and was trying to get a strong hold upon their life and thought, their education and culture. The civilisation of these Westerners, with its intense energy, its practical application of science, its mighty power of organisation, dazzled the eyes of the Orientals by its glamour. And many among

the latter imbibed a superstitious veneration for the West, and wanted to inoculate themselves and their countrymen with the lymph of foreign culture. They tried to find their emancipation through the introduction of Western science and art, manners and customs, and even religion and institutions to the utter neglect of their own heritage. But fortunately the spell did not last long.

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The vitality of the Eastern civilisation asserted itself in all its intensity. And with the new awakening that followed, the children of Asia came to realise more and more the glory of their own culture, and also found out the defects of the civilisation of the West. The credit of the European civilisation was questioned long ago. It was greatly shaken by the World War, marked as it was by "the wild hatred of the enemy, the furious exaltation of national glory and honour, the deliberate dishonesty of governments, the lies of propaganda," and other crude expressions of a perverted patriotism. As its result the thoughtless admiration of the past yielded place to a sentiment of dislike for the West as also for her civilisation and culture. Many of those who were denationalised both in their life and thought were the first to be alive to the evils of the European culture, and went so far as to look with suspicion upon even its merits and excellences. The disillusionment has been so widespread that the superiority of the scientific culture of Europe to the ethical and religious culture of Asia is now being doubted by the generality of Eastern peoples. Even the

Western brand of Christianity, passing for the religion of Christ, is being called in question by an ever-increasing number of the Christians of the East. This revolt against the Occidental civilisation—its science and religion—is but natural. It arose to a great extent from what Dean Inge calls the whiteman's "arrogant contempt for other races" as also from his grave abuses, both political and economic. It now aims at arresting all forms of foreign aggression and all denationalising processes in different spheres of life. In its positive aspect it stands for the preservation of the Eastern culture, and for the self-expression of the Asiatic soul free from all alien influences. This is the central idea behind all revivalistic movements in Asia, be they in India or Burma, in Egypt or Turkey, in China or Japan.

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The coloured races of Asia are yearning for a new world-order. They are being stirred up by an irresistible desire for emancipation from Western domination and influence, and are putting forth determined efforts to throw off the foreign yoke. This hostility is by no means due to purely political and economic causes. "There is another factor," truly observes an 'Easternised' American writer in the Century Magazine, "seen in its most dramatic form in the Gandhi movement in India, but also existing elsewhere. It is the spreading disenchantment with white superiority, the superiority of Western civilization. A reaction has set in against the blind worship, the avid imitation, and the gulping of everything Western just

because it is Western.....This feeling is not anti-white or racial at all. It is against the concept of life we have brought into the world and insist on spreading. It is a challenge to our civilization and not a threat, and a challenge not to a test of strength, but to a comparison of merits." At the back of the gigantic upheavals going on in the spheres of politics and economics, there exists a great conflict of cultures,—a fact which is often lost sight of by the average student of contemporary history.

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The Asiatics have met the invasion on their culture with their soul-force, and have arrested its advance. The dangers to their distinctive civilisation and national life are fast passing away. The vitality and the resisting power of the ancient cultures have once again been vindicated. The day of slavish imitation is gone; and that of healthy assimilation has dawned. The great task before the Oriental nations now is to absorb what is best in the Western culture. The mighty conflict going on between the East and the West has laid bare the merits and defects of the two civilisations. It has already shown that the scientific culture of Europe contains factors which are of vital importance to human progress. It has further proved beyond the shade of a doubt that without the back-ground of religious ideals, which Asia possesses, scientific knowledge becomes only a source of terror and destruction. A union of the two is what the world stands in need of to-day. Asia, the mother of religions, can easily realise this synthesis, and set

up a new ideal before mankind, thereby opening a new page in the history of the world. After carefully studying the new awakening in Asia as also the trend of her ancient civilisation and culture, remarks an Italian savant, Signore Ferrero,—“In the last two centuries Europe has, without knowing it, made of man a demi-god who possesses a formidable power but does not know how to use it. This blind demi-god, yesterday the admiration of the world, begins now to become its terror, since he is possessed by the rage of destruction. Where then can be found the remedy which will give him sight and will teach him to make use of his strength and force according to reason and wisdom, and for objects recognised as legitimate by the moral conscience of the world? Amongst the most ancient peoples of Asia who philosophised, sculptured, painted, sang and lived under wise and just laws, when the peoples of Europe were still living as barbarous? If Asia succeeded in making her own the arms and the sciences of Europe, at the same time conserving the highest portion of her ancient civilisations; if she succeeded in putting in accord both perfection and power, quantity as well as quality, she would once more become the model of the world.”

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A rapprochement between the Eastern and the Western cultures is highly desirable. It is a happy sign of the times that many thoughtful men and women of all nations are coming to realise more and more the comparative merits of both the cultures, and are trying to effect a synthesis between them.

But to achieve this object the great gulf of misunderstanding should first of all be bridged over. The Western peoples look upon the Asiatic races,—probably with the exception of the Japanese, for he has mastered Western militarism thoroughly and has even beaten some of the European nations in their own game,—as visionary, ignorant, superstitious and devoid of all initiative and virility. The Asiatic races, on the other hand, consider the Western nations no better than barbarians who worship material powers, and care only for plundering others' lands and wealth in order to satisfy their insatiable desire for the enjoyments of the world. Both these views, though true to some extent, are born of ignorance and bias. The Westerner sees only the outside, and not the inherent glory of Eastern civilisations—their spirit of renunciation and conquest of inner nature, their wonderful ethics and religion. While the Asiatic notices only the horrors of the Western scientific culture, but not its splendours—its indomitable energy, its conquest of external nature, its characteristic tendency ever to explore new fields of secular knowledge. Each tries to judge the other's culture from a wrong stand-point and by a wrong standard. This is the main cause of the conflict that is threatening the peace and well-being of the whole world.

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In the exchange and practical realisation of the highest ideals of the Eastern and the Western civilisations lies the solution of the world's most complicated problems, political, economic and spiritual. The East is gradually becoming alive to this

great fact. But the West in her vanity and self-complacency does not yet feel this necessity, and still thinks she has nothing to learn from the civilisation of the East. The lessons of the Great War seem to have been practically lost upon her. A much more terrible calamity than that is required to humble her pride, to bring home to her "what the soul of Europe (and of America)," as M. Romain Rolland thinks, "is most in need of to-day—the calm, the patience, the virile, never-failing hope, the joy, serene like a lamp in a windless place, which never flickers." Then only will she yearn for a new world-synthesis, and realise that the two great civilisations are complementary, and form parts of one world-culture. This assimilation of mutual ideals does not imply any lifeless uniformity, nor the suppression of any one's individuality. Europe is not to become another Asia, nor Asia another Europe. Each must attain to her complete freedom, and realise her true soul, preserving her historically acquired character in the fullest degree. Each must develop in her own way a particular phase of humanity, and fulfil the other. The East will give her spiritual culture to the West. The West, on the other hand, will impart her scientific knowledge to the East. There will then take place a happy union of spirituality with science, of idealism with practicality, of serenity with activity. This will effect in both the East and the West a thorough change in their angles of vision, and a wonderful broadening of their mental outlook. Gradually the spirit of racialism will give place to brotherly love, domination to sincere comradeship,

and exploitation to willing co-operation. The Easterner and the Westerner will both stand in their own strength, and join hands with each other in a spirit of perfect equality, respect and sympathy. Then shall we be able to repeat with the poet—

“There is neither East nor West
Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,

When two strong men stand face to face

Though they come from the ends of the earth.”

Then alone will a new era dawn upon the world, and bring peace and harmony to a discordant and distracted humanity.



IDEAL OF INDIAN NATIONAL ORGANISATION.

BESIDES a large number of foreign students interested in the history of ancient India in whose opinion this country was the home of a semi-savage people, innocent of the modern developments of knowledge, there are not a few patronising people who think of India as a land of star-gazing philosophers and pain-hugging anchorites, whose transcendental outlook on life is responsible for the lack of interest of the Indians in matters relating to their material prosperity. Thus whatever may have been the achievements of the Indians in the domain of subtle philosophy, the idea has been spread far and wide that they have miserably failed to leave an impress of their intellect on art, science, state-craft and other branches of secular wisdom. Evolution of state-craft, political organisation and such other kindered subjects were—so it is alleged—left out of the curriculum of their national culture, and this folly of their forefathers has been the cause of their repeated humiliations at the hands of the

foreigners. The result is that to-day after the lapse of scores of centuries, India is a land of heterogeneous multitudes with no common national ideal and aspiration, a babel of motley crowds flying at one another's throat when the interest of one collides with that of the other. Even the average thinkers of the country, who have set themselves to mould the destiny of this ancient land, do not take this view *cum grano salis*. Hence their feverish impatience to import alien ideals into the present struggle for national emancipation. These Indians also look askance when they are asked to believe that their forefathers were not blind to this all-important question of national evolution, and that their future national culture, however it may be enriched by the assimilation of foreign thoughts, must, in the main, fall back upon their ancient ideals to keep erect the mighty fabric of their national existence.

From Herodotus down to the modern globe-trotter, almost all foreign students have failed to understand India in one important aspect. None fully realised the most important fact of Indian life—the warp and woof of the gorgeous damask of Indian culture. They never realised India's conception of God and religion,—never understood how this important subject permeating the entire thought-stuff of the Indians, has endowed all their activities with a mystic hue of other-worldliness and made even the most secular branch of knowledge verge on transcendentalism. None could take their stand on that basic stand-point and try to judge India from there.

Thus weighed in the balance of modern thought, India is considered to be singularly wanting in matters of political organisation. But to a real student of Indian history this view-point is not true. Besides many books of later origin, one finds in the Mahabharata also, many chapters in the Shantiparva, devoted to the subject of Rajadharma or Politics which is considered superior even to Mokshadharma—the path of salvation—in as much as a nation, in the opinion of the author of that great epic, cannot progress as a whole towards

the glorious ideal of spiritual perfection without a strong political organisation at its back. A nation, fallen, miserable, cowering at the feet of others and passing its days in abject slavery, cannot aspire to enjoy that Immortality which can be attained only by the strong, brave and truthful and by those who take their stand on the bed-rock of honesty and integrity which proceed only from the consciousness of one's inherent strength and power. A weak and valetudinarian person is miserable everywhere, whether in the realm of matter or of spirit. Our ancient philosophers, therefore, concentrated a great part of their attention on moulding the national life of the people in a way which, while bestowing on the different units the highest benefit that can accrue from a healthy organisation of society, yet showed them the path to reach That which lies beyond. They asserted that the king was the protector of Dharma, and hence they protected him on all sides by strong, almost sacrosanct, safeguards. He was extolled as God and even, apparently considered as the supreme agent who could, with impunity, do anything with his subjects. But far from making him an autocrat or a tyrant, the laws laid down certain qualifications for the Chief of the State, such as integrity of character, truthfulness, purity, an utter absence of selfishness, a life of utmost simplicity and rectitude etc., which could not but make him feel that this unenviable position only made him a servant of his subjects, a vigilant guardian of their welfare, material, moral and spiritual. The laws which endowed a king with an almost despotic power prescribed in the same breath condign and even extreme punishments for a violation of kingly duties. A faithful king and his noble government were envied even by the gods in heaven. This efficient political organisation was responsible for all that was great and noble in Indian civilisation. Our forefathers knew it quite well that no people, unless fused into a homogeneous whole with common aims and aspirations, can make headway towards progress, and hence they laid down a wonderful system which has enabled the vast number of people inhabiting this great

sub-continent to form themselves into a nation, with a common belief in the ultimate verities of existence. In this wonderful laboratory of the Creator, many apparently incompatible ingredients have been melted in the same crucible, and a miraculous synthesis has been worked out of many a jarring creed. Invaders and colonisers from different parts of the world have been absorbed into its structure. The civilisation of India is not the glory of the Hindus alone; the Scythians, the Greeks, the Parsis, the Turks, the Afgans, the Moguls and the whole host of foreign invaders have contributed their mite to its enrichment. Compare with it the internecine struggles that are eating into the vitals of Europe to-day, and yet have not succeeded in crystallising its different units into Gaulic, Teutonic or Slavonic groups. One wonders how India, that has assimilated so many heterogeneous races into its system, can be stigmatised as utterly lacking the virility of national life. But there is an obvious reason for this misunderstanding.

In Europe the ideal of national progress is always associated with certain outward activities. In the eyes of the Europeans no people can claim to be called a nation or to occupy a place in the comity of nations unless they establish their right at the point of the sword. The blood of the enemy serves as the cement of their national edifice. An Alexander, a Julius Cæsar, a Peter, a Napoleon or a Frederick did more to establish the claims of Greece, Rome, Russia, France or Prussia as a nation than the myriads of saints, scholars, scientists or artists who flourished in those countries. This is more or less true of all European nations. Even in our living memory we find Japan acknowledged as a nation after it had come out successful in the late Russo-Japanese War. The claim to be called a nation has been conceded to some minor countries of Europe that came out victorious in the Great War. Europe is recognising the national claim of the Turks only after the victory of Mustafa Kemal Pasha. But because India cannot establish her claims on the strength of muscle and steel—through the march of triumphant

cohorts,—she must forego her claim to be a nation!

True it is that the development of Indian national life has never been outgoing in its character, and India never made her influence felt in the outside world except by the peaceful penetration of her culture. So far as outside activity is concerned, she made herself known to the foreign countries either through the monk—the Buddhist missionary of yore—with his begging bowl and staff ministering to the spiritual felicity of the people, or through the merchant who with the various products of art and industry, helped them to enjoy the prosperity of material life. Within her own boundaries, the ideal of India's national life and its working are wonderful and should arrest our attention.

The Hindus believe that it is God who has manifested Himself as the nation. The nation is nothing but the outward manifestation of that Virat Purusha. It is the same God who is hidden in our heart as the Antaryamin and again is manifested in the collective consciousness of the nation. The mother-land is the abode of God. Therefore in our sacred books India has been described as *Punya Bhumi* or the holy land, as *Karma Kshetra* or the place of activity, which affords the worker the greatest opportunity for the purification of his heart through selfless works, as a means to find out the Truth. All the activities of the people inhabiting this land should be considered as acts of sacrifice whose presiding deity—*Jajneswara*—is *Narayan* Himself. The political organisation of the country manifested in the forms of *Samrajya* or Empire is to be consecrated at the feet of the Lord who is the real Emperor of the land, the earthly king being his mere representative, a shepherd of the Master for looking after His flock.

The idea of God manifesting Himself as the nation is closely associated with the Indian nation-ideal. The division of people into four castes is due to this conception. The head of this *Vaiswanara Purusha*—the presiding deity of the nation—is the Brahmin; the *Kshatriya* is His arm, the *Vaishya* His thigh, and the *Sudra* His leg. As these four

limbs constitute the human body, in a similar manner these four classes of people constitute the Indian nation. Without any of these constituent parts the nation will be weak and rickety. The head of this Purusha,—the Brahmin of the nation—is to disseminate the ideals of knowledge, wisdom, morality and spirituality. His arm—the Kshatriya—is to protect the nation from the forces of internal disruption and external attack. His thigh—the Vaishya—is to look after the material prosperity of the country. And lastly, his leg—the Sudra—is to be entrusted with the work of production of food and crafts, the organisation of labour, thus serving a most important function for national welfare. The first and foremost desiderata for national progress are knowledge, wisdom and moral stamina. Therein lie the activities of the Brahmin. The second imperative factor is the organisation of national force; that has been assigned as the duty the Kshatriya. The third indispensable thing is the material resource, of which the Vaishya and the Sudra are the custodians. The duty of the Sudra is to produce articles of food and craft and the Vaishya is to take them for sale to distant lands. These are the four constituent parts of the nation. Each part should look upon the work assigned to it as a divinely appointed duty which, if carried out in a spirit of service, would confer on it the highest good. Each unit by the fulfilment of its duty should propitiate the God manifested as nation. This is the organisation of nation in India. Caste is never considered here as a water-tight compartment, and each is considered great in its own place. The Vaisyas and the Sudras are as precious assets of the nation as the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas. The crushing of the former has been one of the causes of India's downfall as a nation.

India has never accepted the bondage of society as an end in itself. Freedom, freedom from all bondage she always keeps in view in this journey through the wilderness of the world. The acceptance of enjoyment is to train the senses for ultimately embracing renunciation. The Indians accepted the many in order to realise, in the end, the One.

They embrace the universe in order to transcend it. This is the pivot of India's culture, the secret of her spiritual existence. This ideal has permeated the whole of the Indian mind, and hence one finds even the most cumbrous complexities of her national life always leaving a means of escape from their meshes. This ideal again is responsible for the exhibition of restraint and self-control by the different units in the national organisation. The Brahmin must be the embodiment of restraint, simplicity, rectitude and honesty. Though a man of the world, he is to be dead, to all intents and purposes, to its fleeting charms. So the king must be a man of character, must eschew all considerations of self in the discharge of his duties and should always look to the moral and spiritual welfare of his people. About administration he should be able to say like the king Aswapati of the Upanishad, "In my kingdom there is no thief, no miser, no drunkard, no man without an altar in his house, no ignorant person, no adulterer, much less an adulteress." Such rendering of an account for his administration makes a king more beloved to his subjects and to his Maker than the addition of territory by conquest. The Vaisyas and the Sudras, though they generally represent a lower scale of morality, are yet enjoined not to lose themselves in reckless enjoyment. These two classes, compared with the similar classes of European society, can boast of a much higher morality and greater simplicity of character.

Three things are conspicuous by their absence from the Indian national culture: Too much luxury, intoxication of power, and the inordinate hankering for self-gratification. Control of the passions is the chief duty of the guardians of the nation as well as of its subordinate members. Eschewing of luxury and recklessness is their great virtue. Realisation of God—Brahma-jnana—is the one ultimate goal of everybody. Actuated by a common love for God and the country, the different units are to advance towards the realisation of a common ideal in which there is no clash of interests, all being parts of the same organism. The nation as a whole has only one aspiration viz., the harmonious development

of the latent faculties of the different members, so that in the end the whole nation may be blessed with the realisation of the highest ideal of human existence. Therefore there is no scope for mutual fighting regarding the ultimate goal. Its strength lies in the acquirement of knowledge. The Omnipresent Lord is the sustaining force behind the nation. Therefore the ancient bard of India sings, “जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी”—“The mother and the motherland are superior even to heaven.” The country is a manifestation of God. By serving the country, therefore, one gets the highest results. It purifies the heart and removes all dross from it. This awakens knowledge and ultimately confers immortality upon the aspirant.

The love of the mother-country is deep-rooted in the heart of all Hindus, men or women. It is a religion with them and manifests itself in their daily prayers. Therefore no special effort need be made to-day, at this critical period of Indian history, for the evolution of a new national ideal. It is already there. It is in our very blood. Our forefathers knew that the worship of the country and the nation (Virat) bestows the highest spiritual results. If the worship of God in the plant and the stone can constitute religion, there can be no doubt that the service to the country and the nation can also bestow the same religious merit, if not higher. The Sadhaka worshipping an image in the spirit of God gets his desired boon. Why should not a devotee, sincerely worshipping the nation—the collective manifestation of Divinity—with the idea that it is God, attain to his cherished ideal? Worship of man is certainly better than the worship of plant or stone. This ancient ideal should be made known to all Indians. They should feel it in every act. To-day the idea should be preached that all Indians, irrespective of caste, creed and religion, are units of the one Indian nation and citizens of a sacred land. All units have equal utility in the economy of the national life. Everybody must be made to understand that the united service of all can alone resuscitate the nation to its pristine glory. Everyone,

in every grade of society, must bring his or her offering for the worship of the Mother. Consciousness of mutual help and co-operation and a spirit of sincere self-consecration for the service of the mother-land can alone save the nation from its imminent peril. The national edifice of India must be based on the consciousness of this ideal.

ANANDA.

THOMAS A KEMPIS.

II.

(THE IMITATION OF CHRIST.)

OF the many writings that have come to us from the pen of Thomas à Kempis, "The Imitation of Christ" is by far the best known and most popular. And rightly so, for in point of excellence it stands far above all the rest. It is his purest and most finished production. Written originally in Latin it has now been translated into all the modern languages of Europe; and, after the Bible, it is the most read book in the Christian world.

How many years and which periods of his life Thomas devoted to the composition of his great work is not known with certitude. But it is generally believed that it was composed part by part during the first forty years of his life at the monastery of Agnetenberg, and that it was completed when the author was sixty years old.

"The Imitation of Christ" cannot be called an altogether original work. The author knew the Bible thoroughly, and his masterpiece contains more than eleven hundred quotations from the Bible. Thomas loved devotional books, and he took a lively interest in their collection, preservation and use. The monastery-library contained a large collection of mystical treatises by the Christian Fathers and also ancient classics. From these sources Thomas drew what was best.

Along with his own experiences he consulted the experiences of others. He had, as "The Imitation" shows, a first-hand acquaintance with Seneca, Cicero, Horace, Virgil, Marcus Aurelius and Aristotle. And there are many passages which indicate the influence of the Fathers of the Christian Church, notably of St. Augustine and St. Bernard besides a great many others.

The material which Thomas found ready at hand he enriched and fortified with his own realisations and knowledge of human nature, blending them into a lovely whole, giving them new life. In "The Imitation" Thomas à Kempis speaks from his own heart to the heart of all humanity. The lettered and the unlettered, the monk and the man living in the world, and devotees of all creeds find in his little book a true guidance for a spiritual life. It is essentially a practical book.

Thomas à Kempis did not, as did the Scholars of his time, advocate intellectualism as a means toward spirituality. Scholasticism he strips of its vain glory, knowing quite well that instead of assisting it more often hampers spiritual growth. In his strong and simple way he denounces excess of controversy and discussions. His practical mind was imbued with a pious horror of purely theoretical and speculative arguments. The opening book of the "Imitation" is a series of protests against mere philosophical thought and scholarly wisdom. It is an exhortation to live the life as Jesus Christ lived it. "Whoever would fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ," he says, "must endeavour to conform his life wholly to the life of Christ." "Truly profound words do not make a man holy and just; but a virtuous life makes him dear to God." "Better indeed is a humble peasant that serves God than a proud philosopher that neglects himself." "If thou wilt know or learn anything to profit, desire to be unknown and to be little esteemed."

Wholly intent upon the conversion of heart and growth in holiness, à Kempis cries out: "What have we to do with genera and species? He to whom the Eternal Word speaks,

is delivered from many questionings." "O God, who art the truth, make me one with Thee in everlasting love." "It wearies me often to read and hear many things; in Thee is all I want and desire. Let all teachers hold their peace, let all creatures keep silent in Thy sight; speak Thou alone to me" for "* * * no knowledge of ours is without some darkness."

Still, à Kempis does not condemn an ordinate development of the understanding and the study of good books. He says repeatedly that "Learning is not to be blamed * * * but a good conscience and a virtuous life are always to be preferred." Knowledge may have its place as a means to an end, but the great endeavour should be to live a pure life, and to establish union with God.

Thomas à Kempis found no happiness in outward things. The world had no attraction for him. "Vanity of vanities," he calls out, "all is vanity, except to love God, and Him only to serve. This is the highest wisdom, by contempt of the world to tend toward the kingdom of God." "The eye is not satisfied with seeing nor the ear filled with hearing. Endeavour therefore to withdraw thy heart from the love of visible things and to turn thyself to the invisible." "He to whom all things are one, who reduces all things to one, and sees all things in one, may enjoy a quiet mind and remain at peace in God."

In "The Imitation" à Kempis lays down the rules of human conduct and thought that prepare man for mystical experiences. In his own busy life he experienced that "A pure, simple, and steadfast spirit is not distracted, though it be employed in many works; for it does all for the honour of God, and being at rest within, seeks not itself in anything it does." If one would live a spiritual life one should remember that "True peace of heart is got by resisting our passions, not by obeying them." And peace of heart is necessary for progress; and that "Unfailing peace is with the humble."

"We must have love towards all, but familiarity with all is not expedient." "Oftentimes I could wish that I had held

my peace and that I had not been in company." But conversation on spiritual subjects with godly persons does further our spiritual growth.

It is better to live in obedience to a superior than to follow our own inclinations. "It is much safer to obey than to govern." We must mind our own affairs and correct our shortcomings.

"It is good that we have sometimes troubles and crosses, for they often make a man enter into himself and consider that he is here in banishment and ought not to place his trust in any worldly thing." Temptations must not only be shunned but fought with the weapons of patience and humility. Resist evil in the beginning, "For first there comes to the mind a bare thought of evil, then a strong imagination thereof, afterwards delight and evil motion, and then consent."

Whatever one undertakes to do should be done well and charitably. "He does much who loves much." In dealing with others we must be charitable. But, "How seldom we weigh our neighbour in the same balance with ourselves!"

The true followers of Christ labour hard to imitate Him. They spare not themselves. "The saints and friends of Christ served the Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in labour and weariness, in watchings and fastings, in prayer and holy meditation, in many persecutions and reproaches." "All day they laboured, and in the night they found time for long prayer, although, even while they laboured, they never ceased from mental prayer. They spent all their time with profit; every hour seemed short waiting upon God." To imitate them is to imitate Christ.

"Bodily exercises," says à Kempis, "must be used with discretion, neither are they to be practised equally by all." And "All cannot use one kind of spiritual exercises, but one is more useful for this person, another for that."

In the twentieth chapter of the first book Thomas à Kempis gives us the golden rules of solitude and silence. "In silence and in stillness the religious soul grows and learns the mysteries of Holy Writ." "Shut thy door upon

thee, and call unto thee Jesus, thy Beloved. Stay with Him in thy cell; for thou shalt not find so great peace anywhere else." "Woe to them that love this miserable and corruptible life."

Thomas à Kempis reminds us that life is uncertain. "To-day man is; to-morrow he is gone." Therefore, "Thou oughtest so to order thyself in all thy thoughts and actions as if to-day thou wert to die." "Labour now so to live, that at the hour of death thou mayest rather rejoice than fear." "Think on nothing but the salvation of thy soul, care for nothing but the things of God." "Keep thyself as a stranger and pilgrim upon the earth." If we are spiritually one with God there is nothing to fear. We shall acquiesce in all His works. "For he that loves God with all his heart fears neither death nor punishment nor judgment nor hell; for perfect love gives secure access to God."

In the last chapter of the first book we have a final practical exhortation for the regulation of our whole life. "Remember always the end, and that time lost never returns."

The second book deals with the interior life. "O faithful soul, make ready thy heart for the Bridegroom, that He may vouchsafe to come unto thee and to dwell within thee." For "When thou hast Christ thou art rich and hast enough." To have Jesus as our friend is true blessedness. For "When Jesus is present, all is well and nothing seems difficult; but when Jesus is absent everything is hard." "To be without Jesus is a grievous hell; to be with Jesus, a sweet paradise." The kingdom of God is within. Within our own heart Christ can be realised. It is a subjective experience which becomes possible when the outer or objective life is lived according to the highest standard of morality. Without moral and spiritual discipline no man can be a true follower of Christ.

The third book of "The Imitation" deals with the Sacrament: how in Holy Communion the soul through symbolism may attain God-union. This book is in the form of a colloquy between Christ and the Devout Soul.

The fourth book, the last and longest, the Book of Internal Consolation, gives us the full mystical significance of "The Imitation of Christ." Here we find the Soul dwelling in the Inner Kingdom of God. God within, speaks to the Soul within. "Blessed is the soul which hears the Lord speaking within her. * * * Blessed indeed are the ears that listen * * * to the Truth which teaches within. Blessed are the eyes which are shut to outward things, but open to things interior. Blessed are they that enter far into inward things." The Truth speaks inwardly without noise of words. "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth; for Thou hast the words of Eternal Life."

"Nothing," says a Kempis, "is sweeter than love, * * * nothing fuller nor better in heaven and earth; because love is born of God. * * * Enlarge me in love that with the inner mouth of my heart I may taste how sweet it is to love and to be dissolved and bathed in love. Let me be possessed by love, mounting above myself through excessive fervour and ecstasy." But many warnings follow. Devotion is the outcome of divine grace and grace comes to the humble. We must think lowly of ourselves remembering that all things come from God. To despise the world and serve God is sweet, for true comfort is found in God alone. Trust in Him, for He carries our burden; be patient in misfortune, for He knows what is best for us.

For things there are which bring great interior peace: "Be desirous, my son, to do the will of another rather than thine own; choose always to have less rather than more; seek always the lowest place and to be beneath every one; wish always and pray that the will of God may be fulfilled in thee."

Freedom consists in the annihilation of all worldly desires. "Forsake all and thou shalt find all; forego desires and thou shalt find rest." But, "O Lord, this is not the work of a day, nor children's sport; yea, rather in this short word is included all perfection. * * * O thou everlasting Light, surpassing all created lights, dart the beams of Thy brightness

from above and penetrate all the corners of my heart. Purify, enlighten, beautify and enliven my spirit with all its powers, that I may cleave unto Thee with transport of joy. O, when will that blessed and desired hour come, when Thou wilt satisfy me with Thy Presence and be unto me all in all?"

And then comes the answer. "Give all for all; seek nothing, ask for nothing; abide purely and with a firm confidence in Me, and thou shalt possess Me; thou shalt be free in heart, and darkness shall not overwhelm thee. Let this be thy whole aim, let this be thy prayer, this thy desire, that, being stripped of all selfishness, and naked, thou mayest with entire simplicity follow Jesus only, and dying to thyself, mayest live eternally to Me."

Be like the saints, "For being ravished above self and self-love, they are wholly absorbed in the love of Me. * * * Nothing can turn them back or hold them down; for being full of the eternal Truth, they burn with the fire of unquenchable charity."

In "The Imitation of Christ" a Kempis leads us by the path of renunciation to that Pearl without Price, which is God Himself. He shows us how we may gain personal intercourse with God.

SWAMI ATULANANDA.

NEW CHANGES IN WESTERN CHRISTIANITY.

The following letter addressed to us will, we are sure, be highly appreciated by our readers:

Dear Sir,

I think the changes that are occurring here in America in the dogmatology of certain Christian denominations are worth the while for your readers to examine,

Recently the Presbyterian churches here through their Presbyters agreed to ordain two young men who do not believe in the Virgin birth of Jesus Christ. These young

ministers are now going on to preach the gospels, and shepherd the flock of believers though they do not believe in the Immaculate Conception.

Add to those Mr. Fosdick and Mr. P. S. Grant, the former a Presbyterian I think, the latter an Episcopalian, both of whom preach that Christ was the *most divine* man but not of supernatural origin. Then I am told that Mr. Grant does not believe in the miracles mentioned in the Gospels. Of course, there are many more of the kind of Mr. Fosdick who have not yet been reported in the papers.

I think the slow broadening of the outlook of these Christians means that a new life is making itself felt among the Protestants in this country. And if a drop of it could be injected into Christian missionaries in Asia, they may be benefited by it. But the point that I have in mind is that we Hindus must study the present reforms vigilantly. For this may mark a new departure in the spiritual advance of the West. And since the East and the West are closely knit together with economic and political relations we must try to unite their spiritual interests. If the Christians give up miracles and Immaculate Conception as essential articles of their faith, I fail to see them different from Hindus. From now on Christ can be called one of the many sons of God. The moment that is agreed to we have removed another obstacle in the way of forming a Universal Religion which reads thus—"In every religion there is Universality, if you attain that you have found the Universal which is in all religions." So, to my thinking, the above-mentioned change and broadening of the outlook of the Christians at home, if it can be made a part of the missionaries in Asia, will really do some authentic good.

However, there is another movement diametrically opposed to the above that is also in full swing in the Western world. I refer to the new Catholics, Giovanni Papini and his collaborators in Italy, Michael Williams and his co-workers in America, Chesterton and his associates in England, and Frenchmen like the late Helo, Paul Claudel, Barres and

others. The majority of those men were Catholics who turned on their church once. Now they have come back to the fold of Rome with an overpowering fanaticism. They believe and wish to make others believe in the Immaculate Conception, Papacy, and Confessionals. Those men are not isolated names but heads of large groups who think as they do. What do they signify? They signify the same thing as the liberalised Protestants like Grant and Fosdick do: namely, New Life is being injected into their religion too. So if those two forces are at all authentic, we expect to see as their result a revitalised Christianity taking the centre of the world-stage within the next quarter of a century. There is naught but ground for rejoicing in what is happening to the religion of the West. At last it is turning away from the materialism of the past hundred years and is casting its glance toward the true source of life and happiness—Religion. We Hindus who enjoy the reputation of being the most religious people in the world should help these Western movements, the best we can, to reach God toward Whom they are moving. For He will receive them at their journey's end as He has promised to receive us—ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम्—“In whatever way men worship Me, in the same way do I fulfil their desires.” (Bhagavad-Gita).

Allow me to thank you for sending two more Swamis to America to live the life of Truth which will help in its own silent unnoticed way all the other truth-seekers on their pathway. For every man who seeks after God is automatically helping another seeker; though the two may never meet. This is a law of the spiritual world. The reason why I thank you for sending the new Swamis is that religion does not consist in fighting for or changing dogma but in living the life. As a man lives so is his religion. I feel our monks and preachers have the deepest talent for living the Truth. So in this epoch of battling contraries a peaceful life may be the thing that will help religion the most, whether in America or in Asia.

New York City, U. S. A.
20th June, 1923.

Yours sincerely,
DHAN G. MUKERJI.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 312.)

स मामचिन्तयद्देवः प्रश्नपारतितीर्षया ।

तस्याहं हंसरूपेण सकाशमगमं तदा ॥१९॥

19. The god, with a view to answering the question effectively, reflected on Me. I then repaired to him in the form of a swan.¹

[¹ *Swan*—which is believed to have the potency of separating the milk from a mixture of milk and water.]

दृष्ट्वा मां त उपव्रज्य कृत्वा पादाभिवन्दनम् ।

ब्रह्माणमग्रतः कृत्वा पप्रच्छुः को भवानिति ॥२०॥

20. Seeing Me they came forward, touched My feet, and making Brahmâ their leader asked Me, 'Who art Thou?'

इत्यहं मुनिभिः पृष्टस्तत्त्वजिज्ञासुभिस्तदा ।

यदवोचमहं तेष्यस्तदुद्धव निबोध मे ॥२१॥

21. Being thus asked by the sages, all eager to know the truth, I answered them. Learn from Me, O Uddhava, what I said on that occasion.

वस्तुनो यद्यनानात्वमात्मनः प्रश्न ईदृशः ।

कथं घटेत वो विप्रा वक्तुर्वा मे क आश्रयः ॥२२॥

22. O sages, if your question refers to the Atman, then that Reality being one and undivided, such a question is inadmissible. On what grounds¹ also shall I, the speaker, stand?

[In Slokas 22-25 the Lord teaches them to discriminate between the Self and non-Self. If they have this Supreme Knowledge they will naturally be free from all attachment, and the

dissociation of mind and sense-objects will follow as a matter of course. He begins by showing the incongruity of the question itself.

¹ *Grounds &c.*—Since there is but one Atman, what differentiation as to species or attributes etc. is there to make the answer possible?]

पञ्चात्मकेषु भूतेषु समानेषु च वस्तुतः ।

को भवानिति वः प्रश्नो वाचारम्भो ह्यनर्थकः ॥२३॥

23. Since the bodies¹ of all beings are composed of the five elements, and since they are the same in reality,² your question 'who art Thou' is a mere effort³ of speech and is altogether meaningless.

[¹ *Bodies &c.*—If the question refers to the body, then also the question is absurd, because here also there is no ground for differentiation.

² *In reality*—i. e. as Atman.

³ *Effort &c.*—an echo of Chhandogya Upa. VI.]

मनसा वचसा दृष्ट्या गृह्यतेऽन्यैरपीन्द्रियैः ।

अहमेव न मत्तोऽन्यदिति बुध्यध्वमञ्जसा ॥२४॥

24. Understand this rightly¹ that by mind, speech, sight and the other organs I alone² am cognised, and nothing else.

[¹ *Rightly*—i. e. by discrimination.

² *I alone &c.*: The Universe is Brahman + mind. The mind and the senses may misread Brahman, but that does not affect Its nature. This indirectly furnishes the answer—'I am the All.']

गुणोष्वाविशते चेतो गुणाश्चेतसि च प्रजाः ।

जीवस्य देह उभयं गुणाश्चेतो महात्मनः ॥२५॥

25. Yes, My sons, the mind is attached to the sense-objects and the sense-objects influence the mind. Thus the sense-objects and the mind both

(intertwined) form the body¹ of the Jiva, who is ever identified with Me,

[From this Sloka up to the end of the chapter the answer to the problem is given. The idea is this: If the mind, which is connected with the sense-objects as agent and enjoyer etc. and is variously named as intellect, egoism and so forth, were the reality of the Jiva, then there might be a dissolution of the connection between the Jiva and the sense-objects. But the Jiva is eternally identified with Brahman, and his *apparent* connection with the sense-objects is due to the superimposition of the mind on him. Hence by considering oneself as Brahman and reflecting on the unreality of the sense-objects, one should turn away from them and worship the Lord, whereby one can remain in one's true nature as the Infinite Self.

¹ *Body*—a superimposition, not the reality about him.]

गुणेषु चाविशच्चित्तमभीक्ष्णं गुणास्त्रेवया ।
गुणाश्च चित्तप्रभवा मद्रूप उभयं त्यजेत् ॥२६॥

26. The mind which through constant dwelling on sense-objects is attached to them, and the sense-objects which influence¹ the mind, one should give up both, being identified with Me.

[¹ *Influence*—as desires.]

जाग्रत्स्वप्नः सुषुप्तं च गुणतो बुद्धिवृत्तयः ।
तासां विवक्ष्यो जीवः साच्चित्त्वेन विनिश्चितः ॥२७॥

27. Wakefulness, dream and profound sleep are attributes of the intellect, being due to the Gunas.¹ The Self is distinct from them, since It is conclusively proved to be their Witness.²

[¹ *Gunas*—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas respectively.

² *Witness*—as the Eternal subject.]

यर्हि संसृतिबन्धोऽयमात्मनो गुणावृत्तिदः ।
मयि तुर्ये षितो ज्ञात्यागस्तद्गुणचेतसाम् ॥२८॥

28. Because the entanglement with the¹ intellect¹ sets the Gunas in motion in the Jiva, therefore one should give it up resting on Me, the Transcendent. Then the sense-objects and mind come to be dissociated.

[¹ *Intellect*—The commentator Sridhara Swami takes the word *Samsriti* (*Samsara* of Sloka 29) or transmigration to mean that which causes it,—hence it refers to the Buddhi.]

अहंकारकृतं बन्धमात्मनोऽर्थविपर्ययम् ।

विद्वान्निर्विद्य संसारचिन्तां तुर्ये स्थितस्त्यजेत् ॥२६॥

29. Knowing the bondage due to egoism to be the source of all trouble¹ for the Jiva, one should be averse to it and give up one's identification with the intellect,—resting on the Transcendent.

[¹ *Trouble*—by veiling his blissful nature and so on.]

यावन्नानार्थधीः पुंसो न निवर्तेत युक्तिभिः ।

जागर्त्यपि स्वपन्नन्नः स्वप्ने जागरणं यथा ॥३०॥

30. Till a man's notion of multiplicity is put a stop to by reasoning, he is as good as asleep even though awake—for he is ignorant—as one fancies oneself awake in dream.

(To be continued.)

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

Swami Premanander Patravali (Bengali). With an introduction by Srimat Swami Shivananda. Published by Swami Mahadevananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Dacca. Pp. x + 133. Price As. 10.

It is a nice collection of some of the inspiring letters of Srimat Swami Premananda written to a select group of lay and monastic followers of Sri Ramakrishna. Coming from the pen of one who realised in his life the lofty ideals

as set forth by the Prophet of Dakshineswar, the book needs no introduction from us. We have every hope that the valuable teachings, as embodied in the epistles, so simple and so full of life and fire, will naturally touch all devout hearts.

Indian Teachers of Buddhist Universities.—By Phanindranath Bose, M. A. Published by The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 162. Price Rs. 2.

This neat little volume of the Asian Library Series is “an attempt * * to bring together the accounts of the Indian Pandits of the Buddhist Universities of Nalanda, Vikramsila, Odantapura and Jagaddala.” The author has “tried to show how most of them were associated with Tibet, and how they influenced Tibetan literature and religion.” The book is divided into five chapters: I. Students of Tibetan Buddhism; II. Buddhist Universities; III. Pandits of Vikramasila; IV. Pandits of Nalanda; V. Pandits of Jagaddala and Odantapura. Those interested in the subject will find in this book a great deal of valuable information. The learned author has evidently spared neither time nor labour in gathering his interesting data.

The Coins of India.—By C. J. Brown. The Heritage of India Series. Published by the Association Press, 5 Russel Street, Calcutta. Pp. 120. Price—Paper Cover Re. 1; Cloth Re. 1-8.

The little book contains a short but valuable history of Indian coins, early, mediæval and modern. It has been written mainly with a view “to arouse in Indians an interest in their country’s coinage, in the study of which so many fields of research lie as yet almost untouched.” Besides describing the evolution of Indian coinage, the author also shows its importance as a source of history. The book is written in an easy and popular style, and contains twelve plates.

Leprosy in India.—By T. S. Krishnamurthi Iyer. Published by Tagore & Co., Madras. Pp. vii + 62. Price As. 8.

This instructive booklet deals with the leper problem in India and its solution. "There is nothing for Hindu and Mohamedan India," justly observes the writer, "to glory in the fact that it is serenely harbouring about 150,000 lepers in its midst with no thought about them, and that its temples and mosques serve only as breeding places of, not as relief centres to, these afflicted."

Humane segregation, medical care and kind sympathy alone can alleviate the misery of the people suffering from leprosy and also stop the spread of the disease, ultimately stamping it out from the country. To achieve this object determined efforts should be put forth. But both the people and the Government of India are quite indifferent in this respect. What little is being done is by the Mission to Lepers. This Christian organisation, with its limited funds collected mostly from Great Britain and Ireland, supports directly or indirectly about 56 Asylums, benefiting about 6000 lepers.

The pathetic appeal of the writer on behalf of "the most helpless of human sufferers" should meet with a ready response from our countrymen.

Djawa.—A Quarterly Journal in the Dutch language. Published by the Java-Instituut at Weltevreden, Java.

This beautifully printed journal contains interesting articles on art, science, history and culture, illustrated by plates and photographs. The March number opens with "East and West" in which Dr. Nieuwenhuis refutes the idea of an independent East and West. Kipling's oft-quoted and misapplied 'East is East' etc. is not only superficial but wrong. East and West have always met and always will meet. What was purely Eastern a thousand years ago, is purely Western to-day and may become Eastern again in the future. Dr. Martha A. Muusses points out in an article that the object of the Hindu Javanese sculptor differed altogether from that of the Greek. His object was not to imitate or improve on nature. He wanted

to express in stone the inner qualities of the god Siva, or of the perfect man Buddha who was worshipped as a god. The images show a meditative inward expression of face and attitude. Boedihardja writes on different names of Arjuna. A long and learned article by Mr. J. Kunst and C. J. A. Kunst-van Wely deals with musical scales and instruments of West-Java. R. Hadiwidjana gives a short account of his visit to the grave of Seh Domba on top of Mt. Tjarakan. There are other articles also, dealing with the Javanese culture movement.

Sree Krishna Parabrahma Vicharana. Books I & II.—By Ch. Gopinatham, B. A., Vakil. Published by the author from Ellore, Kistna Dt., Madras Presy. Pp. 194 and 58. Price Re. 1 and 8 as. respectively.

Food and Health.—By Chandra Chakravarty. Published by Ramchandra Chakravarty, 58 Cornwallis Strees, Calcutta. Pp. 214. Price Re. 1-8.

Dyspepsia and Diabetes.—By the same. Pp. 84. Price Re. 1.

Principles of Freedom.—By Terence Macswiney. Published by S. Ganesan, Publisher, Triplicane, Madras. Pp. 196.

The National Being.—Some Thoughts on an Irish Polity. By A. E. Published by S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras.

The Political Philosophy of Mr. Gandhi.—By M. Ruthnaswamy, M. A., M. L. C., Bar-at-law. Published by Tagore & Co., Madras. Pp. 99. Price Re. 1.

The Philosophy of Non-co-operation and of Spiritual-political Swaraj.—By Bhagavan Das. Published by Tagore & Co., Madras. Pp. xv + 118. Price Re. 1.

Reform of the Hindu Mutts.—By D. V. Gundappa. Published by the Karnataka Prakatanalaya, Basavangudi, Bangalore City. Pp. 29.

REPORTS AND APPEALS.

The Second Annual Report of the Sri Ramakrishna Sevasrama, Charitable Hospital and Dispensary, Rangoon, for the year 1922.

This Sevasrama is 'an asylum to those who are helpless when the dark days of starvation, old age and disease overtake them and make them feel the want of a helping hand.' It gives outdoor and indoor relief to the sick of all nationalities, castes and creeds. During the year under review altogether 1001 and 32,315 patients were treated in the indoor and the outdoor hospitals respectively. The steady progress of the Sevasrama is evident from the increase in the number of indoor and outdoor patients by 52·59 and 59·6 per cent. respectively over that of the last year. As the increasing demands mean a heavy strain on its finances, we hope that the generous public will extend a more liberal support to the institution.

The Fourth Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevasrama, Narayanganj, from April, 1920 to Dec. 1921.

This Sevasrama has been doing many works of public utility. It has got a Pathsala where poor boys receive education free and a library that is open to the public. Amongst its other works the outdoor hospital relief, medical aid and nursing in private houses, cremation of the dead, service in epidemic seasons and in Melas and the like deserve special mention. The total receipts during the year including the last year's balance amounted to Rs. 3148-2-3 and the total expenditure to Rs. 1509-8-0.

This noble institution deserves the support of our generous countrymen.

The Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Branch Centre, Barisal, from 1909 to 1918.

The report is a good record of various philanthropic works

done by the centre. Since its inception the institution has been trying its best to serve the sick with medicine and diet, help poor students with money and books and relieve distressed people in times of famine and epidemic. It is badly in need of a suitable and permanent home of its own.

We hope the munificence of the public, that has been unstinted so long, will put the centre on a stable basis.

The Fourteenth Annual Report of the Sri Ramakrishna Asrama, Bharukati—Narayanpur, Barisal, from 1921 to 1922.

This charitable institution is serving society in many ways. Besides medical relief to the sick it gives pecuniary help to deserving indigent persons. The Asrama conducts a free primary school for educating poor boys. It appeals to the generous public for funds for the construction of a much needed pucca building to be used as its shrine.

NEWS AND NOTES.

The All-India Hindu Mahasabha

The seventh session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha was held at Benares for four days beginning from the 19th August last. The rules of the Sabha define a Hindu as "any person professing to be a Hindu or following any religion of Indian origin." They include the Sanatanists, Arya-samajists, Jains, Sikhs, Buddhists, Brahmos and others in the Hindu Community. Actuated by a very liberal spirit the Mahasabha invited all sects and creeds to take part in the deliberations of its Benares session. There was a large number of delegates representing all provinces. The gathering was a representative one, and consisted of over five thousand people of all castes, creeds and denominations.

The proceedings of the Mahasabha were conducted in Hindi, and were carried on with great enthusiasm and earnestness. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was unanimously elected president. In the course of his eloquent address the Pandit maintained that Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism were not separate from Hinduism, but were included in it as were the sects worshipping Shiva or Vishnu, or those believing in the philosophy of the Vedanta. He deplored the present weakness and disunion of Hindu society, and referred to many of the indignities it suffered at the hands of misguided and fanatic Mohammedans. He emphasised that the Hindus

must not forget that the interests of their country would never be promoted if there was lasting estrangement among the Hindus, Mohammedans and other communities. They must adopt such means as might lead ultimately to perfect Hindu-Moslem unity. That such a unity had not been already accomplished was due mainly to the weakness of the Hindu community. Friendship could exist only between equals. If the Hindus could organise and strengthen themselves, and could convince the rowdy section among the Mohammedans that they could not safely rob and dishonour Hindus, unity would be established on a stabler basis.

He spoke with great feeling on the important problem of the removal of untouchability and moved his audience. He observed that the so-called depressed classes formed an important part of Hindu Society. These classes contained men at whose feet he would unhesitatingly bow his head. At Panipat it was a Chamar who saved the Hindu temple from the hands of Mohammedan rowdies. The work of some of the depressed classes, such as the sweepers, could be said to be degrading. Even if it was so, the pollution was merely physical and could be removed by proper washing. But were there not worse forms of pollution—the pollutions of the mind—from which even high caste men, including himself, were not free? Therefore, they must allow the untouchables to come to their meetings, to send their children to their schools, to draw water from their wells and to worship in their temples. Let the upper class Hindus try to teach their humbler brethren higher ideas of physical cleanliness, but let them not for any reason refuse to associate with the latter—their own flesh and blood.

In conclusion, the president touched on the Suddhi movement. He said the Mohammedans and Christians were actively converting the Hindus, and even occasionally employed unfair means to gain their end. But as long as fair methods were employed none had any right to complain. The Hindus must adopt proper means to prevent the continual decline in their numbers. They must, therefore, be willing to take back into their fold those Hindus who by compulsion or by mistake adopted any other religion, but now wanted to come back. Even the Mohammedans should be allowed to become Hindus if they had faith in Hinduism. In ancient times the Aryan Rishis freely allowed non-Aryans into their religion. If modern Hindus could adopt the same policy, the Hindu community would be saved from the menace that was threatening it, and would again become strong and powerful as in the past.

A number of important resolutions were passed by the Mahasabha. It urged the starting of leagues for both

social service and self-protection. It recommended the reclamation of the Malkana Rajputs who were willing to come back into the faith of their forefathers, and to follow Hindu rites and customs. Another resolution expressed the Mahasabha's intention of forming a society of Hindu leaders and Pandits for opening the doors of Hinduism to non-Hindus wishing to come into it.

It is unfortunate that in spite of the exhortations and piteous appeal of the president, the Mahasabha failed to give a firm and favourable decision on the question of untouchability, and the matter had to be referred to a committee of Pandits. Let us hope that the majority of the orthodox Hindus who could not be unanimous on the point, will soon come to realise that untouchability is a disgrace to the spirit of Hinduism, and that its removal is one of the essential conditions of the revival of Hindu Society. We believe that they will ere long be awakened to the full sense of their responsibility and duty to the depressed classes, and will render a better account of themselves at the coming session of the Mahasabha to be held next winter at Benares.

Child Welfare Research in America

Children play an important part in moulding the destiny of a nation. In them lie hidden the potentialities of what is noble and great. They are the future poets, artists, scholars, statesmen, patriots, saints and prophets. Hence the rearing of a fine breed of boys and girls is an important question deserving special attention. But unfortunately how often it happens that in spite of their inherent parts a large number of our children turn out hopeless failures physically, intellectually and morally owing to our neglect and carelessness! Far from proving useful citizens some become burdens, others pests to the country. This means a regrettable loss both to individuals and society.

To remedy this evil the State of Iowa (U. S. A.) has taken the lead in establishing a Child Welfare Research Station that hopes to conserve and develop the normal child. The institution is six years old and is incorporated with the State University there. Some other States of America are also going fast to follow this example. Dr. Sudhindra Bose, lecturer, State University of Iowa, has given a beautiful account of the work of this Child Welfare Research Station in an illustrated article in the August issue of the "Welfare."

Mainly speaking, the Station (1) investigates and finds out the factors that conduce to the well-being of children, (2) serves the community, specially parents by spreading the results of its research and (3) sends out trained child welfare

workers with sound knowledge in psychology, sociology, hygiene, nursing and the like.

It gets normal children for research in the Children's Hospital, in the University Observation Schools and in private homes and institutions. To facilitate work it has got several departments with specialists and experts in each. One department studies psychologically the mental growth of children and their perception, constructive imagination, emotion and volition, and gathers data for establishing developmental standards. Another investigates how society can be utilised for helping the normal growth of children with special reference to such social virtues as love, fellow-feeling and sympathy. A third conducts research with the help of anthropological statistics and discovers how children grow. A fourth enquires into the food requirements and finds out by experiments on guinea pigs, rats and pigeons the diet that stimulates growth and prevents malnutrition. Lastly, a fifth carries on research in lines suggested by the modern science of eugenics that aims at developing 'the maximum child and the minimum parent' by an intelligent modification of the specific conditions of heredity and environment.

The Pre-school Laboratory which is a part of the department of psychology is an important feature of the station. It is "an experimental school for observation of the habits and faculties of little children, not yet old enough to go to school and whose reactions cannot be observed at home." Standing in a restful green interspersed with rows of flowering plants it is a beautiful four-room building and has in it all the equipments of the modern kindergarten system. Besides, to delight the hearts of tiny tots it is furnished with small chairs and tables, portable swings, a see-saw, a slide, a phonograph and a set of building blocks for making houses. The training given there has nothing of the rigour and hard discipline of ordinary schools. The teachers mix freely with their little pupils and make the lessons and tests as interesting as games. It is natural, therefore, that children have an independent, all-round growth there.

The institution is the first of its kind and has taken "a tremendous step to develop a stronger nation by insuring stronger and healthier children." India will do well to adopt these up to date scientific methods of training, and combine them with her lofty spiritual vision in educating her children.

Ramree Flood and the Ramakrishna Mission

(Burma Branch)

A heavy flood has devastated Ramree, a township in Burma. Houses and stores of paddy having been washed away most

of the people of the locality, especially the labouring classes, have been thrown into an acute distress. The sufferers are in urgent want of foodstuffs as well as of money to rebuild their huts. Relief work has been started by the Ramakrishna Mission. For want of sufficient funds, the Mission workers have now to confine their relief only to the distribution of rice. They distributed 55 mds. and 27 srs. of rice among 95 families on the 7th July last. A similar distribution of rice was made also on the 18th July. The relief work is to be continued for at least 4 or 5 months until the next harvest is reaped. The Mission appeals to the generous public for sufficient funds to provide the distressed with the necessary food and shelter.

Any contribution, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by (1) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur, Dt. Howrah. (2) The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, 1 Mukherjee Lane, P. O. Baghbazar, Calcutta.



MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY.

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The Dispensary is badly in need of help from the generous public. Any contributions will be thankfully accepted at the following address : The President, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Dt. Almora.