

# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निवोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## REMINISCENCES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.\*

BY THE LATE ASWINI KUMAR DUTT.

It was perhaps during the Puja holidays of 1881 that I met Sri Ramakrishna for the first time. Keshab Babu was to come that day. I arrived at Dakshineswar by boat, and going up the steps of the landing ghat asked someone where the Paramahansa was living. "There is the Paramahansa!"—the man replied, pointing to one reclining against a bolster in the northern verandah facing the garden. When I saw that he wore a black-bordered cloth and reclined in a somewhat queer way, I thought, "What kind of a Paramahansa can he be?" There he sat leaning against the bolster with his hands clasped across his drawn-up knees. Then I thought, "He

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\* Rendered from Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita, Part I, by M.

evidently is not accustomed to the use of pillows as gentlemen are, so perhaps he is a Paramahansa." At his right, very near the pillow, sat a gentleman whose name, I learned, was Rajendra Lal Mitra, who afterwards became Assistant Secretary to the Government of Bengal. A little further off sat some other gentlemen.

After a few moments the Master said to Rajendra Babu, "Please see if Keshab is coming." Someone went to look and coming back said, "No!" After a brief interval, hearing a sound outside he again said, "Please look once more." Again someone went and came back with the same reply. Then Sri Ramakrishna smiled and said, "The rustling of leaves makes Radha exclaim, 'Oh! Here comes my Beloved!' You see, Keshab always tantalises like this!" After some time, at twilight Keshab came with his party.

When Keshab bowed before him touching the ground with his forehead, the Master returned the salutation in the same manner. Shortly after he raised his head and in a state of semi-consciousness said addressing the Mother, "Thou hast brought the entire population of Calcutta—as if I am going to deliver a lecture! I can't do that! Do it Thyself if Thou likest. I can't do these things!" Then, still in that ecstatic mood, with a divine smile, he said, "I am Thy child. I'll simply live and move. I'll eat, sleep and do such trifles. I can't give lectures." Keshab Babu's heart was overflowing with emotion as he looked at Sri Ramakrishna. Seeing this state of the Master I thought, "Is this

only a pretence?" I had never seen anything like it before, and I was not a credulous man.

Coming back from this exalted state the Master addressing Keshab said, "Keshab, once when I went to your temple, I heard you say, 'Plunging into the river of devotion we shall be carried straight to the ocean of Sat-chit-ananda.' Then I looked up (at the gallery where Keshab's wife and other ladies were sitting) and thought, 'What shall then become of these ladies?' You are householders, how can you reach the ocean of Sat-chit-ananda all at once? You are like the mongoose that has a stone tied to its tail. If something happens, it runs up and sits in a niche in the wall. But how can it remain there? The stone pulls it and with a thud it lands on the floor. You may practise a little meditation, but the weight of wife and children will drag you down. You may dive into the river of devotion, but you must come up again,—dive and come up again. It will be like that. How can you dive down once for all?"

"Is it altogether impossible for householders?" Keshab Babu asked.

Sri Ramakrishna: "You see, so long as man is under the sway of Maya, he is like a green cocoanut. If you take the tender part of it out, you can't help scraping a little of the shell with it. But the man who has gone beyond Maya is like a ripe cocoanut. The kernel is free from the shell—when you shake it you hear that it is so. The soul then gets loose from the body. It is no longer attached to it.

“It is the ego that is the cause of all trouble! The wretched ‘I’ is almost indestructible. It is like the peepul tree that grows from the rubbish of a dilapidated house. You may cut it down to-day, but to-morrow you will find it growing from the roots again. The same is the case with the ego. You may wash a cup in which onions have been kept, several times, but the strong odour remains.”

In the course of the conversation he said to Keshab Babu, “Well, Keshab, is it true that your Calcutta Babus deny the existence of God? One such Babu was going up the stairs. He took one step, but while taking the next one he said, ‘Oh, my side! My side!’ and fell unconscious. There was a hue and cry for a doctor. But before he came the man was dead. And such people say, ‘There is no God!’”

After an hour or so the Kirtan commenced. What I then saw I shall probably never forget in this life or in the life to come. All began to dance, Keshab included, with the Master in the centre and the others in a circle around him. In the course of the dance the Master suddenly stood motionless. He was in Samadhi! It continued for a long time. Hearing and seeing all this I understood that he was a real Paramahansa.

Another day, perhaps in 1883, I went to see him with a few young men of Serampore. Seeing them he asked, “Why have they come?”

“To see you,” I replied.

Sri Ramakrishna: “What is there to see in

me? Why don't they go and see the buildings and temples?"

Myself: "Sir, they have not come to see these things. They have come to see you."

Sri Ramakrishna: "Ah! They must be flints then. There's fire in them. You may keep a flint under water for a thousand years, but the moment you strike it, it emits fire. They must be of that type. But if you strike us, it will be in vain."

At this last remark we smiled.

I went another day. When I bowed down to him and took my seat, he said, "Can you bring me some of that thing—half-sour, half-sweet—that begins to fizz when you push down the cork?" "You mean lemonade?"—I asked. "Yes," he said, "Will you bring me that?" I think I brought him a bottle. So far as I remember, he was alone that day. I asked him a few questions.

Myself: "Do you observe caste?"

Sri Ramakrishna: "Well, not much to boast of. I ate a curry at Keshab Sen's house. Let me tell you what happened once. A man with a long beard (a Mussalman) brought, ice for sale, but I didn't feel inclined to take it. A little later, some one brought me a piece of ice from that very man and I chewed it up. You see, caste restrictions fall away by themselves. When cocoanut trees and palm trees grow up, the leaves drop off by themselves. Caste observances also go like that. But don't tear them off."

Myself: "What do you think of Keshab Babu?"

Sri Ramakrishna : "Oh, he is a saintly man."

Myself : "And Trailokya Babu?"

Sri Ramakrishna : "A nice man and a good singer."

Myself : "And Shivanath Babu?"

Sri Ramakrishna : "A good man. But he argues so much!"

Myself : "What difference is there between the Hindus and the Brahmos?"

Sri Ramakrishna : "Not much. When they play on oboes here, one man holds the same note right along, while another plays different melodies. The Brahmos are keeping on the same note—the formless aspect of God; but the Hindus enjoy His various aspects.

"God without form and God with form are like water and ice. Water when cold enough becomes ice. The heat of knowledge melts ice into water, and the cold of devotion freezes water into ice. It is the same thing, called by different names."

I told the Master that I had met Achalananda Tirthavadhuta of Barisal. This led to the following conversation :

Sri Ramakrishna : "Isn't that Ramkumar of Kotrang?"

Myself : "Yes, sir."

Sri Ramakrishna : "How did you like him?"

Myself : "I liked him very much."

Sri Ramakrishna : "Well, whom do you like better, him or me?"

Myself : "How can you draw a comparison? He is a scholar, but are you one?"

The Master was a little puzzled and became silent. A moment later I said, "He may be a scholar, but you are an interesting man. There is a great fun in your company. Then he smiled and remarked, "Well said! Well said!"

He asked me, "Have you seen my Panchavati?"

"Yes, sir," I replied.

He told me a little of his religious practices there. He also spoke about Totapuri. Then I asked him, "How can I realise God?"

"Well," he replied, "He is always drawing us as a magnet draws iron. Only when the iron is covered with dirt, it is not attracted. As soon as the dirt is washed off the mind by weeping, it is instantly drawn to Him."

As I was noting down his words, he remarked, "Look here, only crying 'hemp' will not bring intoxication. You must get the hemp, rub it in water and drink it." Later he said, "You have to live in the world. So have your mind highly intoxicated with the thought of God. While you are at work, let that feeling of inebriation be with you. You cannot of course be like Sukadeva and drink and drink till you lose all consciousness of the body.

"If you will be in the world, give Him power of attorney, make over all your responsibilities to Him. Let Him do as He likes."

All this time the Master was seated on the floor. Now he got up and stretched himself on his cot. Then he said, "Please fan me." I began to fan him and he was silent. After a while he said, "Oh!

It's so hot! Why don't you just dip the fan in water?" I remarked, "Ah, you have also your likings!" The Master smiled and said, "Yes, why not?" "Very well," I said, "have your full measure of them." I cannot express in words the immense pleasure I derived from his company that day.

When I paid my last visit to him (23rd. May, 1885) the Head-master of our school—who had then just graduated—was with me. As soon as Sri Ramakrishna saw him, he asked me, "Ah, where did you pick him up? A fine fellow!" Then he continued, "You are a lawyer. And you are so clever! Can you give me a little of that cleverness? The other day your father came and stayed here for three days."

"How did you like him?" I asked.

"A nice man," the Master replied. "But sometimes he speaks irrelevantly."

I said, "Please help him to get over this tendency when you next meet him." The Master smiled. I asked him to give us some advice. He said, "Do you know Hriday?"

"Your nephew?" I inquired. "I know him only by name." Then he said, "Hriday used to tell me, 'Uncle, please don't exhaust your stock of instructions all at once. Why should you repeat the same thing over and over?' I would reply, 'You fool! What's that to you? These are my words, and I shall repeat them a hundred thousand times if I like. You keep quiet.'" I smiled and said, "Exactly so."

A little later he got up, and after repeating Om several times commenced to sing a song that began :



“Dive deep, dive deep, my mind, in the ocean of divine beauty.” Scarcely had he rendered a few lines when he himself dived deep and fell into Samadhi!

When the Samadhi was over he began to pace the room and with both hands began to pull up his wearing cloth till it reached the waist. One end of it was trailing on the floor and the other end was hanging loose. Nudging my companion, I whispered, “See, how nicely he wears his cloth!” A moment later he threw away the cloth with the words, “Ugh! What a nuisance! Off with it!” He began to pace up and down the room. From the northern end he brought a stick and an umbrella and asked, “Do these belong to you?” Scarcely had I replied “No”, when he said, “I knew it! I can judge a man by his stick and umbrella. They must belong to that man who was here some time ago and swallowed a lot of food.”

He sat down, still nude, on the northern end of his cot, facing the west and began the following conversation :

Sri Ramakrishna : “Well, do you consider me ungentlemanly?”

Myself : “Of course not. Why do you ask that?”

Sri Ramakrishna : “Well, Shivanath and others think otherwise. When they come I have to wrap a cloth somehow. Do you know Girish Ghosh?”

Myself : “Which Girish Ghosh? He who conducts a theatre?”

Sri Ramakrishna : "Yes."

Myself : "I have never seen him, but I have heard about him."

Sri Ramakrishna : "A good man."

Myself : "They say he drinks."

Sri Ramakrishna : "Let him ! How long will he continue that ?

"Do you know Narendra ?"

Myself : "No, sir."

Sri Ramakrishna : "I wish very much that you meet him. He has passed the B. A. examination and is unmarried."

Myself : "Very well, I shall meet him."

Sri Ramakrishna : "To-day there will be a Kirtan at Ram Dutt's house. You may meet him there. Please go there this evening."

Myself : "All right."

Sri Ramakrishna : "Yes, do. And don't forget."

Myself : "It is your command and I must obey it. Surely I'll go."

He showed us the pictures in his room and asked if a picture of Lord Buddha could be had. I answered, "Very likely."

Sri Ramakrishna : "Please let me have one."

Myself : "Yes, I'll bring one when I come again."

But, alas ! I never had the opportunity.

That evening I went to Ram Babu's house and met Narendra there. In one of the rooms Sri Ramakrishna sat reclining against a pillow. Narendra sat at his right. I sat in front. He asked Narendra to

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talk with me. But the latter said, "I have a nasty headache to-day. I don't feel like talking." "Then let us postpone it," I said, "we shall have a chat some other day." And that came to pass in May or June, 1897, at Almora.

Ah! How happily I spent those few days with him. I never met him again after that. It was only the Master's wish that brought us together at Almora.

I met the Master only four or five times. But in such a short time we became so intimate that I felt as if we had been class-mates. How many liberties I took when speaking with him! But no sooner did I leave his presence than it flashed on me, "Great God! Whom had I been speaking with?" My whole life has been sweetened by what I got from him in those few days I saw him. The memory of that elysian smile is still with me, shedding unending bliss.

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## OCCASIONAL NOTES.

Two distinct principles, says the celebrated Greek philosopher, Empedocles, are constantly working throughout the universe. Love—the principle of union, and discord—the principle of separation, wage on a continuous war with each other, and produce through their struggle different beings—animals as well as men. The process of evolution, which is a conflict between the two opposite forces, transforms the indefinite and the rudimentary into the

highly definite and developed beings. In the case of social systems, too, we find the same two warring forces at work. Love and sympathy for the members of one's own community, and hatred and hostility towards aliens have been the chief motive-powers in the formation and growth of social institutions in different parts of the world. The life-history of nations is, therefore, more or less a long pathetic tale of the conflict of interests, bringing into existence diversities of class, caste and so on. As an inevitable result of this struggle, there arise the privileged and the non-privileged, the dominating and the dominated communities in human society. Those that are strong and powerful, whether physically or intellectually, arrogate to themselves certain privileges, and these their descendants come to claim as their birth-right, the slightest infringement of which they regard as criminal and sinful. This is the origin of the so-called divine right of kings, castes and classes.

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Love in its lower or personal aspect expresses itself as an inordinate attachment towards one's own self, family or community. It becomes an ally of discord, and helps in giving rise to social inequality, to the exclusive privileges of a race, caste or class. While in its universal form it works for equality. It does away with all kinds of exclusive rights, and thus serves as a great unifying factor among dissentient individuals and communities. In every social system there is seen a conflict between these two forces. In the primitive state of society the biological laws of

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“struggle for existence” and “survival of the fittest” hold their sway. But as the animal man is more and more transformed into a human being, nobler sentiments and ideals become the motive-force of all his endeavours and activities. The higher laws of life come into play. And gradually competition yields place to co-operation, self-aggrandisement to self-sacrifice, and discord to harmony. Love is shifted from the lower self to the Self of all. And “seeing the Lord equally existent everywhere, the man of knowledge injures not self by self, and so goes to the highest Goal.” This is the spiritual scheme of life which has been proclaimed by all true saints and prophets of Aryan India, ancient and modern.



The fathers of the ancient Hindu civilisation tried to base their social system on higher ideals of life. They recognised at the very dawn of human civilisation that so long as man was man, he would create the diversity of caste or class, under the impulse of the herd instinct implanted in him. They therefore placed before him a socio-religious system which aimed at making men belonging to various grades of culture pass through the varied duties and disciplines of their respective Varnas or castes and Ashramas or stages of life. This grand system, actuated as it was by an all-embracing spirit, enabled even communities belonging to the lowest grade of civilisation to come under the potent influence of higher ideals of life, settle down within the fold of Aryan society as its integral part, and thereby gradually rise in the scale of

culture. "The system of division into different Varnas," says Swami Vivekananda, "is the stepping stone to civilisation, making one rise higher and higher in proportion to one's learning and culture. .... The command is that every one in this country has to try and become the ideal Brahmin..... Such is our ideal of caste, as meant for raising all humanity slowly and gently towards the realisation of that great ideal of the spiritual man, who is non-resisting, calm, steady, worshipful, pure and meditative. In that ideal there is God." The ultimate object of the caste system was to put an end to all caste distinctions,— a fact which we have entirely forgotten in modern times. It was to lead all individuals and communities higher and higher until they reached the state of the Brahmin who in the primary sense of the term implies a "Knower of Brahman," who sees the One in the many, and rises above all distinctions of name and form.

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However high might have been its goal the Varnashrama Dharma fell far short of its ideals in actual practice. The different castes which primarily stood for culture, became in course of time hide-bound, and claimed exclusive privileges and rights, without taking any great trouble for fulfilling the duties and responsibilities allotted to them. Right by culture was replaced by right by birth. The true spirit of the Hindu social organisation was inclusion and assimilation. But a virulent form of caste-prejudice came to reign in its place. In the Hindu

social system the Brahmin possessed intellectual power, the Kshatriya military strength, and the Vaisya the power of wealth. But power, intellectual or physical, became an instrument of oppression in course of time. And all the upper classes began to tyrannise over the Sudra who was illiterate, helpless and poor at the same time. He was treated with contempt, and humiliating laws were invented to keep his body and soul in perpetual slavery. At times the higher castes went so far as to prescribe barbarous injunctions with a view to keep the religious culture within the bounds of these privileged communities alone. The lot of the Sudra became certainly hard, but that of the "untouchable" was harder still. The most cruel treatment was reserved for these outcaste communities, sometimes euphemistically called the Panchama or fifth caste. They were segregated, and in the most caste-ridden places they were not even permitted to pass through the same streets as the higher caste man. Not only their touch but also their presence was considered a pollution. And even to-day this is the case. It is no wonder that in South India—the hotbed of caste prejudice—the feeling of revulsion is to some extent reciprocated by the Pariah. He looks upon the presence of the Brahmin in the locality inhabited by him as nothing short of inauspicious, and goes so far as to purify his quarters with water mixed with cow-dung if a Brahmin happens to enter into it. This is just what an orthodox Hindu would do when a corpse is removed from his home. The orthodox Brahmin looks upon the Pariah a "living corpse," and the

Pariah, too, in his turn pays the highest caste man in his own coin! Such is the travesty of the grand socio-religious system that was primarily meant to be based on culture and spiritual attainments!

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Had Hindu society been always guided by this gospel of hate, it would have perished long ago. But fortunately side by side with this force tending to create social inequality, there was another force which sought to sweep away all invidious distinctions and exclusive privileges of caste. The main section of the Hindus endeavoured to make certain rights and privileges hereditary and inviolable. While the other, though a comparatively small one, strove to be true to the central theme of Hindu civilisation, and paid the highest tribute to ethical and spiritual culture in whichever caste it might be found. From the early Vedic period down to the present age, this true spirit has never been completely lost sight of. "O Gargi, he alone is a Brahmin who departs from this world after having realised the Imperishable Brahman." This is the definition of the word Brahmin as given by the great Rishi Yajnavalkya, and recorded in one of the oldest of the Vedic literature—the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. The Apastamba Samhita, too, speaks in the same strain when it says—"By doing religious acts men of a lower Varna rise to a higher one, and they should be considered as such. By doing irreligious acts men of a higher Varna fall down to the state of a lower, and these should



be treated accordingly.” The Mahabharata also preaches the same idea—“He alone is a Brahmin in whom are found truthfulness, charity, forgiveness, good conduct, non-injury, penance and mercy...Not by heredity, nor by caste, but by deeds alone does one become a Brahmin. Even a Chandala, O Yudhishtira, becomes a Brahmin by conduct.” This revolt against the common tendency “to tread blindly in the foot-steps of the forefathers” saved the Indo-Aryan society from imminent disasters again and again. It is the devotion to its true spirit rather than to its forms that prevented Hinduism from being completely fixed and fossilised. It further endowed it with the power both to adapt itself to changing conditions and to give birth to revivalistic movements whenever the necessity arose.

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Most of the great reformers in Hinduism tried to eliminate the exclusiveness of caste from the field of religion proper, and at the same time laid stress on the highest spiritual ideals of the Hindu race. This was very much pronounced in the life of the Vaishnavite teachers, Ramananda, Kabir, Chaitanya, and others. They received into their folds even the members of the lowest classes, some of whom distinguished themselves as great religious teachers. “Even a Chandala is to be regarded as the greatest of Brahmins, in case he possesses true devotion to the Lord.”—This was the essential teaching of most of the Vaishnavite reformers of this period. It is quite natural that many of the Buddhist communities

which tenaciously resisted their absorption into Hinduism, and were in consequence treated as out-castes, heartily responded to the brotherly call of the Vaishnavite teachers and found their salvation in the doctrine of Divine Love and social equality that formed the special feature of almost all the schools of Bhakti. This spirit of equality is still working in our midst and is fighting hard against the present degenerated and hide-bound caste system. It is breaking down the exclusive privileges of caste and is proclaiming to us the glory of the Atman which dwells equally in all beings, in the high caste and the low caste alike.

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Perfect social and religious equality has been attained only in the lives of a few noble souls who realised that the Self does not belong to any particular Varna or Ashrama, creed or religion. But with the vast majority this has remained only as an ideal. So long as such a state lasts, in some form or other social distinction will continue to cleave society. Various reform movements have tried to obliterate the distinctions of caste. But almost all of them have failed egregiously. Some have succeeded only in manufacturing a new sect in which the old caste-prejudice has taken a new form as sectarian bigotry. Others again in a similar attempt have been able to found only a new class movement, and in this caste hatred has yielded place to a fresh and greater evil of class-snobbery. The idea of inequality has its roots deep in the heart of man. And social distinc-

tion seems to be a necessary evil. For in the relative plane diversity can never be destroyed. It is sure to exist in some form or other. Such being the case the only course left to us is first to do away with all exclusiveness of privilege. For it is this which while denying the barest necessities of life and the least chance for self-development to the main bulk of the people, unstintedly gives to the few the sole right to all enjoyments and every scope for progress which enables them to dominate over the dumb millions all over the world.

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To wipe away all inequality of privilege we should try our utmost to put an end to the difference in culture between class and class,—which gives rise to all invidious distinctions in our social life. This is to be achieved not by pulling down the higher caste to the level of the lower, as some of our reform movements have vainly attempted to do, but by raising the lower to the cultural level of the higher. It is the latter method which the Hindu social system aims to follow. “The ideal of this world,” says Swami Vivekananda, “is that state when the whole world will again be Brahmin in nature. When there will be no necessity of the Sudra, Vaisya and Kshatriya powers; when spiritual force will completely triumph over material force; when love will be the only motive-power in all actions on this earth,—then only the whole mankind will be endowed with Brahminical qualities and attain Brahminhood. Then only distinction of caste will be at an end, ushering

the Golden Age visualised by the ancient Rishis. We must adopt only that kind of caste-division which gradually leads to that goal. That division into caste which is the best way to the abolition of caste should be most cordially welcome." This is the right method of putting an end to caste. It is, as Sri Ramakrishna says, like taking out a thorn that has entered deep into the flesh by another thorn, and then casting both of them away.

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### CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE WEST TO WORLD CULTURE.

The following is in response to the editor's invitation to write of contributions of Western civilization to a possible world culture and world civilization. And in this magazine, devoted to the cherishing and preparation of India's gifts to the world, it is a pleasure to say something of what one feels the Occident may give to the Future of East and West together. The oft-quoted—"never the twain shall meet" was said of warring races; need it be so if men should seek peace and ensue it? The future alone can show; yet there is a feeling that the discovery of the earth's boundness foreshadowed a like discovery for the world of mind. So that if the Westerner but steer straightly and boldly enough westwards, he may in time reach the Land of the Rising Sun. And so the Oriental, sailing East, may yet rediscover the West. And should they pass in mid-ocean they may hail each other as they go.

In himself attempting such an ambitious subject

as this, however, the writer shares a little the feelings of his Indian friend who, in Naples for a day, found himself acclaimed as a fortune-teller, simply on the strength of the Oriental renown for wizardry. He was in fact obliged to tell fortunes, by sheer weight of insistence,—he married in, and borrowed wealth from, the airy future to his clients' delight,—and then escaped thankfully on board ship for India and home, so that, when the hollowness of his prophecies was found out, he might not be pursued and knifed, in the Neapolitan way. The writer however has no such escape and must therefore proceed with greater caution.

In seeking to observe the essentials of culture in "Western Civilization" these must be sharply disengaged from the present welter, by which they are in too great danger of being submerged. For the truth is that that which we misname our civilization,—meaning generally its power and barbarism, its commerce and its wars,—is far more like a sea in storm than like the ship of true culture that rides perilously upon it, its decks awash, its gear tangled, helmsman and crew strained and anxious, with bearings all but lost,—yet battling for all they hold dear. What is the freight they bear? Some answers are suggested here.

"You in the West," said an Indian friend, "may still be far from realising the highest of the three Gunas,—the Sattvic, but your age has yet something of the Rajasic; you are leaving the Tamasic behind." Just how far these generous words are fully justified brings sad doubts. Yet this can per-

haps be said,—as an ideal the Rajasic is set before us, more and more. For the last generation was brought up to “manliness,” by which was meant fitness (on the continent specially mental, in the public schools of England more physical), with some code of honour, and good “team” work, whether in debate or games. The coming generation has set before it, not to the loss of these, the use of fitness no more for self only, nor even for “one’s side,” but for service. And “service” no longer meaning a “soft job” in navy, army or government for the “upper”, or slaveydom for the “lower”, classes, but the “good turn” to-day and a worthy part in the world’s work to-morrow. In boyhood and girlhood this has taken shape in scouting and guiding, in maturity as dedication to human service of many kinds.

As to “Industrial civilization” most of us are agreed that it has “come to stay.” But not necessarily to swallow up everything else nor to stay on unchanged. For on one hand there is growing a strong reaction against the spreading “tentacles of the town” towards “Rural Reconstruction”. The West is recognising that the industrial revolution hastened “Rural Decay”, and indeed brought on “Rural Destruction”, to give the exploitation of the country by the town its truest name; while in India the effort of Tagore towards village revival round his little university is most noteworthy. And on the other hand not only have palliatives of mechanical industry been multiplying, such as social and welfare work of many kinds, but “Industrialism” shows

signs of reforming from within. For there is beginning in the West, not merely a spawning and multiplication of the existing man-devouring horrors that began in the first machine towns requiring "hands", and careless of human hearts or heads,—there is also an increase of finer, cleaner and more skilled industry. Electricity is replacing coal, material resources are increasingly conserved instead of destroyed and wasted, and this is leading on to a "Conservation of Human Material,"—of "Hands" and Heads too, and so even of Hearts.

True, this is as yet too little understood in Britain, though in the United States,—despite the devilries of the Steel Trust and others of the same kidney,—there is a notable advance in "efficiency organisation" with the respect for, and saving of, human work that this implies. And it is a shock to the traveller to realise that in India this idea has hardly touched the schemes of industrial "development", of which so much is said; still less made itself known among the captains of industry, European or Indian, or felt by their unhappy workers in factory and slum. As among the foremost social workers of India the brothers of the Ramakrishna order are deeply concerned with these wider questions. For to the inefficiency and folly of the directing classes, far more than to that of the people, is due the tragic wastage in pain and disease which it is the sad task of the brothers to repair, in their dispensaries and hospitals. Why then should they not grasp at these ideas, spiritualising them further, and be, not merely the devoted helpers of the poor, but their trusted

leaders in thought? Not merely picking up the wounded on the stricken fields of India but riding out to battle in the vanguard, or,—a higher purpose still,—peace-making among warring “interests,” and converting these to nobler and nobler human service?

There still remains unanswered the question, not now of the plain citizen nor even of the social worker, but of the religious thinker,—“What may the West bring to World-culture?” Indeed does not “Re-ligion” mean the rejoining of that which has fallen asunder, as has the thought of East and West? So deep an issue can only be touched on here, for space forbids a concrete working out. Enough here to suggest that, in spite of the lamentable destruction of hopes and the continuing manufacture of de-civilization, there is preparing in the West some answer to this. For the Mediterranean heritage, with its renewal in the North and expansion westwards across the Atlantic, embodies much, not only of the “glory” that was Rome—its trade and spoliation, that India too well knows,—but of Palestine and Greece, of Hellas and the Holy Land. And though, in history, they became but minor provinces of the Roman empire, and still their heritage seems the mere trappings of Western power, yet their cultures stir again. For, free of the boundaries of place, they are moving abroad and within, transforming and themselves transformed anew.

From Hellas comes the eager search of the sciences, no longer of things alone, but of life, of mind, of men and of mankind,—drawn together by



the Hebrew Unity. And from Zion and the city of Athena together reappear the dreams of a wise and harmonious rebuilding of a New Jerusalem and of "Greece Again!"—but now more thoughtfully, more concretely, than for long since. The Galilean's gentle love and simple ways, (long felt in India, and now re-expressed by her great Jain leader) may again move the hearts of men,—this time not content with a love of solitary souls alone, but seeking to realise that Civic Oversoul of which A. E. speaks, that nations may join in a World Brotherhood of lands towards a fulfilment of our united hopes, which the Westerners call "the Kingdom of Heaven" on Earth.

ARTHUR GEDDES.

CONVERSATIONS WITH SWAMI  
TURIYANANDA.

9TH JULY, 1920 (*continued*).

न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं  
नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः ।  
तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं  
तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥

"There the sun does not shine, not the moon, nor stars, nor even lightning. So fire is nowhere. It shining, everything else shines. Through Its lustre all this is shining."

We have mixed up the subject and the object. They can be separated. I am the subject—not the object. The whole universe up to Buddhi (intellect) falls under the category of the object. मूले मूलाभावात् अमूलं मूलम्—'There being no further cause, the First Cause is uncaused.'

How much must they have thought who first discovered these truths!

Discrimination must be thorough, or it is of no use. Children often say, 'Heaven bear witness!' What a funny idea! They have picked up the phrase from someone. They do not reason on the idea, so they say it.

"As a bird flies to the sky with its two wings, so we must have the two wings of discrimination and renunciation to climb to the edifice of liberation." If one has real discrimination and renunciation, one is safe. A man runs after water in a mirage only so long as he mistakes the mirage for real water. Once the delusion is broken, nobody goes to a mirage for water. The truth about it is that he only escapes whom the Mother Herself holds by the hand.

Girish Babu used to say, "My younger brother would walk taking hold of my father's hand, but I used to be on his lap. I would say all sorts of things to Sri Ramakrishna, but he was never displeased with me. Often, when I was dreadfully intoxicated, I would go to him. Even then he would cordially receive me and say to Latu, 'See if there is anything in the carriage. If he feels inclined to drink here, where am I to get anything?' He knew that there must be a bottle in the carriage. Then he would gaze on my eyes and completely destroy the effect of the intoxication. I would say, 'Why, you have spoilt the effect of a whole bottle!' He used to inquire into the previous history of everyone, but he never asked me anything about my past life. Yet I had disclosed to him the whole story. He never forbade me to do anything. It is not for nothing that I adore him so much."

At Lakshmanjholā, one day in the month of October we took a lot of Bhang. We passed the whole night in talking of Sri Ramakrishna, and there was not the least sign of intoxication. It was all counteracted by a contrary influence.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "If a water-snake bites

a frog, it produces no effect, but if it is a cobra, before it can croak thrice, the poor thing expires.”

He would say when Pundit Sasadhar came, “There the sun does not shine,” etc.

Do clouds ever cover the sun? It is ever manifest. It is only our eyes that get covered.

About a certain gentleman the Swami said, “What he has heard, he has firmly clung to. It has been possible for him as he has got discrimination. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, ‘A finger-print is clear when the ink is all right, and if it is bad the impression also is bad. Spiritual instructions make a lasting impression on the mind that is possessed of discrimination and renunciation, and when there is a deficiency in these the impression produced is proportionately small.

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*Afternoon.*

Alluding to spiritual exercises such as concentration and meditation the Swami said, ‘तत्र प्रत्ययैकतानता ध्यानम् ।’ When the mind is withdrawn from all other objects except one and fixed on the latter, then the succession of similar impressions on that object is called meditation. And, as Swami Vivekananda used to say, ‘Pinning the mind to some particular object like a lump of dough is called concentration.’

Nothing drops from the skies all of a sudden. Why don't all have concentration? Because they don't fulfil the condition for it, *viz.* absolute continence. This is known as strength. What can you expect of one who lacks this strength? The long and short of it is that one must have full self-control. The Gita says—

“In My opinion, Yoga is impossible for one who has no self-control. But one who has controlled his senses may, if he tries, get at it by adopting the proper means.”

People follow their own whims and fail to get good results. The scriptures are there, but they won't turn to them. Nor would they listen to the teacher. In the end they become unfit for Yoga.

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥

“One who is moderate in food and pastime, who is moderately engaged in work, and who divides his time proportionately between sleep and wakefulness,—for such a man Yoga puts an end to all miseries.”

If one has some disease, it will pass off ; but one must keep his spiritual practices going.

10TH JULY, 1920. *Afternoon.*

The Swami was singing, “Everything depends on Thy will, Mother, Thou actest as Thou pleasest.” After singing for a while he said :

Nowadays I am intensely liking this idea. The more time passes, the more this idea appeals to me. Good and evil—both art Thou. Through Thy will they come to pass. The Lord has good work done by those whom He will raise, and again, bad work by others whom He will degrade. “Thou makest the lame scale mountains and the elephant stick in a quagmire.” “The mind—poor thing!—is not to blame. Kali is the juggler’s daughter that makes it dance as She pleases.” There is a relief in the thought itself, that behind all this there is a Power which guides everything. But the rationalists won’t admit this view. They will say, “Can an effect be produced without a cause?” But the other party will reply, “He is the Cause of cause itself.”

Formerly I, too, would not admit this and had great fights over it with Latur Maharaja in particular. I used to say, “If God acts at His sweet will, He becomes a despot. Is He an autocrat like the Czar of Russia? He is just, merciful and benign.” Latur Maharaj would reply, “Well, it is good that you are thus protecting your God from all blemish. It is excellent.” What a nice answer! He spoke from the superrational standpoint. But from the rationalistic standpoint it is open to much criticism. It strikes at the root of free-will. So long as one has only theoretical knowledge, such a view is dangerous. The test for one really qualified to take that standpoint is that he will never make a false step.

In my boyhood, when I saw a puppet-show and heard perhaps a puppet scream, I at once thought that it actually made that sound. The puppets seemed to move of their own accord. But later on I was disillusioned to find that some one pulled the wires from behind the scene.

Nowadays the theory of the Mahamaya, or a Universal Force manipulating everything, appeals to me very much. I haven't words to tell you how I like it. It is because the mind has accepted the truth of it. Swamiji, also, in his later days, used to have great faith in the Mahamaya. To be like an automaton in Her hands is easier said than done. If we are submissive to Her, She never fails to protect us. With the advance of age there comes a time when, instead of leaning on the theory of causation, we naturally resign ourselves to the Divine Mother.

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## WORSHIP.

Worship is based on two principles. The first principle is: As we think so we become; the second: Like alone can know like.

The more we think of God the more God-like we become. The more we think of worldly things the more worldly we become.

We can really know a person only in so far as we become like that person. We can understand the nature of God only in so far as we become Godlike.

The object of worship, therefore, is to train the mind to think of God and thus gradually to become Godlike. The Shastras say: In so far as during worship man becomes like the object of his worship, in so far will he reap the fruits of his devotions. Worship performed absentmindedly will bring little result. But when during worship the mind is concentrated on God, the result will be great, as then the mind becomes, for the time being at least, Godlike.

Our nature depends on our feelings and our feelings depend on our thoughts. When our thoughts are spiritual our feelings will be spiritual and thus also our nature. The object of worship is to raise our thoughts, our feelings, our nature, to the spiritual plane. Men of holy natures have holy thoughts and holy feelings. And to become like them we must follow their example, we must practise devotion and worship, for during these practices we raise ourselves to their plane of thought and feeling.

Worship brings about a gradual change in our mental life, in our thought-world. What these gradual changes—the different feelings aroused by worship—are can be better experienced than described. What the feelings of a devotee are can only be understood by those who have these same feelings. And these feelings, or Bhavas, as they are called, can be experienced only by those who practise devotion.

We cannot truly understand any feeling—love, hatred, jealousy or anger—until we experience it for ourselves, just as we cannot know the flavour of a fruit without tasting the fruit. Words cannot define a feeling any more than they can define a taste. So the different mental states of the devotee can be known only by experiencing them, not by hearing or reading about them. The sweetness of devotion cannot be tasted except by experiencing it. And experience comes with practice.

It is therefore wrong for anyone who has not practised to condemn any form of worship. People condemn idolatry but they do not understand the true meaning of image worship. They speak of what they do not know. Unless one has practised this form of worship how can one know the effect it has on the mind? How can one know what feelings it arouses? When a devotee bows down before an idol he worships his ideal conception of God ; he tries to see God in the image, to commune with Him, to sink his own individuality into the Divine Presence. This certainly is a worthy effort. The method may not appeal to all, but the motive is that of all spiri-

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tual persons. For does not religion mean losing one's self in God?

The Shastras state that we must first hear about God ; then we must try to understand what we have heard ; then we must meditate on what we have understood ; and we must realize what we meditate upon. That means, we must identify ourselves with God through a series of practices.

A religious life is a life in which the thought of God is uppermost in the mind. To create and sustain this state of mind constant practice is advocated. And image worship at regular times, according to scriptural rules, is one of the practices. But it should be remembered that external worship is only a means to an end. Internal worship, mental worship, is what really counts. Only in so far as external worship stimulates the mind, in so far as it calls up holy thoughts, in so far as it arouses divine feelings and aspirations and helps to concentrate the mind on God, is image-worship of value. Worship performed mechanically and thoughtlessly is worthless.

The image must represent an ideal. By worshipping the image we worship that ideal, that is, we try to realize that of which the image is a symbol. We try to fill the mind with thoughts concerning the ideal. And to the extent we can do that, to the extent all other thoughts are kept in abeyance and the mind takes the shape of the ideal and thoughts become feeling, to that extent are we united with our ideal, do we realize our ideal. Realization is identification, and identification is becoming. What we think we become. The moment we can really identify ourselves with the object of our worship, we become mentally the object of worship. We lose our own identity and become the ideal. So it is written : He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman.

In the lives of different saints we read that at the height of their devotions they actually forgot themselves, they felt themselves merged in their ideal, they were transformed, they became the God they worshipped. The Gopis in the forest of Brindaban thought themselves

to be Krishna. St. Theresa, the Christian saint and mystic, losing consciousness of the external world, felt her own identity melt into that of Christ. Lord Gauranga, in an excess of ecstasy, occupied the seat reserved for the Deity.

This is the aim, the end, the crown of perfection in worship—total identification. External worship is the preparatory stage to train the mind, to increase devotional feeling, to transform man's nature, to purify and strengthen the mind and the nerves, so that they may be able to withstand the reaction of intense emotions.

Now there is another principle that must be remembered in worship. Though we Hindus are said to worship thirty-three million gods and goddesses, it is always remembered that each of those gods or goddesses represents a certain quality or characteristic of God; that there really is only one God. So in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad it is written: And when they say, sacrifice to this or to that god, each god is but His manifestation, for He is all gods.

We see then that each god represents but an aspect of the one God. God is perfection, in Him all good qualities are united. He is all-good, all-merciful, all-loving, all-knowing, all-blissful and omnipresent. He is infinite, and as such He has no form.

We know how difficult it is for the human mind to form an idea of, to think of, to meditate on such a Being. The mind cannot grasp, cannot embrace such a God. He remains foreign to us, far distant, beyond our reach and comprehension. Therefore the devotee cries out for a God more human, more easy to approach, a God whom he can imagine, whom to some extent he can comprehend, whom he can love and commune with. He wants to simplify his idea of God. And so, though knowing Him to be infinite and formless in His absolute aspect, he wants to worship God in a manifested form.

God being omnipotent is capable of taking any form. He, the Lord, actually takes forms. He who created the universe has manifested Himself endless times through



all ages in different forms in this universe. He has taken and still takes superhuman as well as human forms for the benefit of His creatures that they may love and worship Him and finally be united with Him. Some of His forms are permanent, others temporary. As Kali, the Mother of the Universe, He is eternally watching over His creation. As Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, He is manifested on earth. And temporarily He manifests in the heart of the devotee, now in one form, then in another, in whatever form the devotee worships Him or can best recognise Him. It may be the form of Kali, or Krishna, or Jesus, or an ocean of Bliss, or any luminous form, a dazzling Light, or a symbol, or any form best suited to the temperament of the devotee.

But in whatever form God appears to him, the devotee is requested to remember that these forms are not all there is of God. The God whom he worships in the idol is also within himself. This is beautifully expressed by the devotee who asked God's pardon for limiting Him who is infinite. "Forgive me, O Lord," he says, "for the three-fold error of having ventured to visualize in contemplation the form of Thee who art formless ; of having praised, in hymns and psalms, Thee who art beyond all speech and description ; by seeming to limit Thy presence by visiting sacred shrines."

In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad it is written : If a man worships another deity thinking the deity is one and he another, he does not know. He is like a beast for the Devas. Thus the realization of the One is the final object of all forms of worship. This the devotee is told never to lose sight of during his spiritual practices. Forms are taken up to assist our weak intellects. There comes a time when worship is all spiritual. Then external helps are no longer necessary. Then the devotee realizes that God is within, that God is his own Divine Self and that He is reflected everywhere in the universe.

SWAMI ATULANANDA.

## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

## CHAPTER X.

## श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

जितेन्द्रियस्य युक्तस्य जितश्वासस्य योगिनः ॥

मयि धारयतश्चेत उपतिष्ठन्ति सिद्धयः ॥ १ ॥

1. The Lord said, "To the Yogin who has controlled his senses and Pranas, who is balanced and concentrates the mind on Me, various powers come."

[The mention of the various powers in this chapter is simply to create a distaste for them in the mind of the aspirant, since they are hindrances to realisation, which alone is the goal.]

## उद्धव उवाच ।

कया धारणया कास्वित्कथंस्वित्सिद्धिरच्युत ॥

कति वा सिद्धयो ब्रूहि योगिनां सिद्धिदो भवान् ॥ २ ॥

2. Uddhava said, "Tell me, O Krishna, what kind of power comes by any particular kind of concentration, and how. How many are these powers? It is Thou<sup>1</sup> who conferest them on the Yogis."

[1 *Thou &c.*—Hence Thou art the best authority on the subject.]

## श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

सिद्धयोऽष्टादश प्रोक्ता धारणायोगपारमैः ॥

तासामष्टौ मत्प्रधाना दशैव गुणहेतवः ॥ ३ ॥

The Lord said :

3. Those who are experts in concentration and Yoga call the powers eighteen in number. Eight of these are pertaining<sup>1</sup> to Me, and the remaining ten are due to a perfection of Sattva.<sup>2</sup>

[1 *Pertaining &c.*—These are higher ones.

<sup>2</sup> *Sattva*—that element of the mind which leads to illumination.]

अणिमा महिमा मूर्तेर्लघिमा प्राप्तिरिन्द्रियैः ॥

प्राकाम्यं श्रुतदृष्टेषु शक्तिप्रेरणमीशिता ॥ ४ ॥

4. Minuteness,<sup>1</sup> immensity and lightness of the body ; the connection<sup>2</sup> of a being with his organs, known as a tainment ; capacity<sup>3</sup> to derive enjoyment from everything heard or seen<sup>4</sup> ; exerting an influence on all, known as rulership.<sup>5</sup>

[1 *Minuteness &c.*—These three are powers belonging to the body.

2 *Connection &c.*—i.e. as their presiding deity. This (Prâpti) is the fourth power.

3 *Capacity &c.*—Prâkâmya. This is the fifth.

4 *Heard or seen.*—i.e. superphysical and physical. The former is known only from scriptures.

5 *Rulership.*—Ishitâ. This is the sixth power.]

गुणेष्वसङ्गो वशिता यत्कामस्तदवस्यति ॥

एता मे सिद्धयः सौम्य अष्टावौत्पत्तिका मताः ॥ ५ ॥

5. Non-attachment to sense-objects, called self-control<sup>1</sup> ; and consummation<sup>2</sup> of any and every desire ;—these, O friend, are considered My<sup>3</sup> eight natural powers.

[1 *Self-control* : Vashitâ. This is the seventh.

2 *Consummation &c.*—Kâmasâvasâyitâ. This is the eighth.

3 *My &c.*—These are naturally in the Lord in infinite proportions, and by Him conferred in varying degrees on the Yogi.]

अनूर्मिमत्त्वं देहेऽस्मिन्दूरश्रवणदर्शनम् ॥

मनोजवः कामरूपं परकायप्रवेशनम् ॥ ६ ॥

6. Being unruffled by the necessary evils<sup>1</sup> of the body ; hearing and seeing<sup>2</sup> things from a distance ; swiftness like that of the mind ; assuming any form at will ; entering into anyone's body :

[Verses 6 and 7 enumerate the ten secondary powers.

1 *Necessary evils &c.*—Such as hunger and thirst etc.

2 *Hearing and seeing &c.*—These constitute two powers.]

स्वच्छन्दमृत्युर्देवानां सहक्रीडानुदर्शनम् ॥

यथा संकल्पसंसिद्धिराज्ञाप्रतिहता गतिः ॥ ७ ॥

7. Dying according to one's wish ; joining in the re-

creation of the gods ; fulfilment<sup>1</sup> of the wished for object ; having one's command obeyed everywhere without fail :

[1 *Fulfilment &c.*—This requires just a little physical effort on the part of the Yogi,—which distinguishes it from 'Kamavasayita'.]

त्रिकालज्ञत्वमद्वन्द्वं परचित्ताद्यभिज्ञता ॥

अग्न्यर्काम्बुविषादीनां प्रतिष्टम्भोऽपराजयः ॥ ८ ॥

8. Knowledge of past, present and future ; not being affected by the pairs<sup>1</sup> of opposites ; reading others' thoughts ; counteracting the influences of fire, sun, water, poison and the like ; and not being overcome by anybody :

[This verse enumerates five petty powers.

1 *Pairs &c.*—Such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain.]

एताश्चोद्देशतः प्रोक्ता योगधारणसिद्धयः ॥

यया धारणया या स्याद्यथा वा स्यान्निबोध मे ॥ ९ ॥

9. These, in brief, are the powers that come out of concentration in Yoga. Now learn from Me what powers come out of particular concentrations, and the way they come.

[From this up to the end of the chapter, details are given. In each case, it will be noted, concentration is made on a special aspect of the Lord and the resulting power is in accordance with that.

भूतसूक्ष्मात्मनि मयि तन्मात्रं धारयेन्मनः ॥

अणिमानमवाप्नोति तन्मात्रोपासको मम ॥ १० ॥

10. Concentrating on Me as possessing the supervening adjunct<sup>1</sup> of subtle matter, the mind which is also of that nature,—the worshipper of subtle matter attains to My power of minuteness.<sup>2</sup>

1 *Supervening adjunct*—Upâdhi, that is, something extraneous that is superimposed.

2 *Minuteness*—So that he can easily penetrate a rock.]

महत्यात्मन्मयि परे यथासंस्थं मनो दधत् ॥

महिमानमवाप्नोति भूतानां च पृथक् पृथक् ॥ ११ ॥

11. Fixing on Me as possessing the supervening adjunct of the intelligent cosmic mind, one's mind which is

characterised by a similar attribute<sup>1</sup>,—one attains the power of immensity, and concentrating on Me as possessed of the adjunct of ether and the other elements<sup>2</sup>, one attains<sup>3</sup> the respective immensities of those elements.

[1 *Similar attribute*—i.e. intelligence.

2 *Other elements*—Wind, fire, water and earth.

3 *Attains &c.*—One can be as vast as one likes.]

परमाणुमये चित्तं भूतानां मयि रञ्जयन् ॥

कालसूक्ष्मात्मतां योगी लघिमानमवाप्नुयात् ॥ १२ ॥

12. Attaching the mind to Me as possessing the adjunct of the atomic state of the elements, the Yogi attains to the lightness of points<sup>1</sup> of time, so to say.

[1 *Points &c.*—Which are imponderable. He can ascend the sun along its rays.]

धारयन्मय्यहंतत्त्वे मनो वैकारिकेऽखिलम् ॥

सर्वेन्द्रियाणामात्मत्वं प्राप्तिं प्राप्नोति मन्मनाः ॥ १३ ॥

13. Concentrating the entire mind on Me as possessing the adjunct of pure ego, one becomes, by this absorption in Me, the presiding deity<sup>1</sup> of each of the organs. This is known as the power of attainment.

[1 *Presiding deity &c.*—Hence he can direct them any way he likes; e.g. he can touch the moon with his finger.]

महत्यात्मनि यः सूत्रे धारयेन्मयि मानसम् ॥

प्राकाश्यं पारमेष्ठ्यं मे विन्दतेऽव्यक्तजन्मनः ॥ १४ ॥

14. One who concentrates the mind on Me as possessing the adjunct of the active cosmic mind, which is born of the Undifferentiated,<sup>1</sup> obtains My rare power of the capacity<sup>2</sup> to derive enjoyment from everything.

[1 *Undifferentiated*—The Lord's inscrutable Power, out of which the universe springs.

2 *Capacity &c.*—i.e. infallible will-power; e.g. he can swim on land.]

विष्णौ न्यधीश्वरे चित्तं धारयेत्कालविग्रहे ॥

स ईशित्वमवाप्नोति क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञचोदनाम् ॥ १५ ॥

15. One who concentrates the mind on Vishnu, the

Ruler of Maya, whose form is Time,—obtains rulership, consisting of the power<sup>1</sup> to control the Jivas and their bodies and minds.

[1 *Power &c.*—not that of controlling the cosmic processes, which belongs to the Lord alone.]

नारायणे तुरीयाख्ये भगवच्छब्दशब्दिते ॥

मनो मय्यादधयोगी मद्धर्मा वशितामियात् ॥ १६ ॥

16. Fixing the mind on Narayana, the Transcendent One<sup>1</sup>, called also Bhagavan, the Yogi, like Me, attains to the power of self-control.

[1 *Transcendent One &c.*—One must concentrate on both aspects. 'Bhagavan' means the repository of all lordly virtues.]

निर्गुणे ब्रह्मणि मयि धारयन्विशदं मनः ॥

परमानन्दमाप्नोति यत्र कामोऽवसीयते ॥ १७ ॥

17. Concentrating the clean mind on Me, the Brahman beyond attributes, one attains<sup>1</sup> to supreme Bliss, which is the consummation of all pleasures.

[1 *Attains &c.*—by being indentified with Brahman.]

(To be continued).

## REPORTS AND APPEALS.

*The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Muthiganj, Allahabad.*

The Sevashrama was started in 1910 in response to the call for relieving the sufferings of the diseased among the poor people of the surrounding locality, as well as of the large concourse of pilgrims from every part of India, who frequent the holy confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna throughout the year.

The work is now conducted in the form of an out-door dispensary, where medicines, both Homœopathic and Allopathic, as well as medical advice are given free to poor patients, irrespective of caste and creed, and the same

supplied at their homes, in case they are incapable of coming to the Sevashrama, and have none to help them. The dispensary has proved to be of immense benefit to the poor and the needy. To meet the growing demand of the people requiring medical aid, it is necessary to extend the present building. A separate shelter for the patients, who are either homeless or require treatment in a hospital, is urgently needed. A plot of land has been purchased for the purpose. A hospital with six beds and a surgery attached to it, as also a separate room for infectious cases, might serve the present requirements of the Sevashrama. The estimated cost is approximately Rs. 10,000.

This year the Sevashrama will have to conduct special relief works in connection with the Ardha Kumbha mela which attracts a very large number of pilgrims from all parts of India. The slender resources of the charitable institution are quite unable to cope with the increased demand for service. We hope the public will come forward to help the Sevashrama in serving efficiently the suffering humanity. Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received by—Swami Vijnanananda, Hony. Secretary.

*The Sixteenth Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban.*

The report speaks in glowing terms of the valuable service rendered by the charitable institution to the suffering Narayanas of the holy city of Brindaban during the year 1922. Altogether there were treated 172 indoor cases and 20,029 outdoor cases—of which 3,963 were new and the rest repeated numbers.

It is a great pity that this philanthropic institution, which has been ministering to the relief of thousands of men, women and children irrespective of caste and creed since the year 1907, is suffering greatly for want of funds. And so great is the demand on its service that the Sevashrama has often to meet the necessary expenses even by running into debt which came up to Rs. 863 during the year under report. We earnestly hope that the generous public will come forward to help the institution to pay off

its debt, as also to support it liberally—thus removing its great financial stress which is a serious menace to its proper working.

The Sevashrama is also in urgent need of funds for completing its Male Ward, now left in an unfinished condition, as well as for constructing its outdoor dispensary with a decent hall and a separate operation room attached to it.

Another crying need of this charitable institution is quarters for the workers who are at present accommodated in a thatched mud hovel.

Persons desirous of perpetuating the memory of their departed dear relatives may have wards erected or beds endowed in their names.

Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by—

(1) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur P.O., Dt. Howrah, Bengal. (2) The Hony. Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban P.O., Dt. Muttra, U. P.

*Sree Ramakrishna Vidyapith, Deoghar.*

The Vidyapith is a residential school for Hindu boys, conducted by the monks of the Ramakrishna Mission. It aims at giving the boys ample facilities for a harmonious development by imparting to them physical, mental and moral education based on improved and up-to-date methods. At present the institution has got on its rolls 27 students with 8 teachers. But unfortunately it is handicapped for want of a suitable building of its own.

The authorities have the pleasure to announce that Kumar Arun Chandra Singha, the large-hearted Zemindar of Paikpara, Bengal, has very magnanimously presented a valuable plot of land measuring 60 bighas to the Vidyapith. The revered President of the Ramakrishna Mission now appeals to our generous countrymen for funds necessary for the erection of the School buildings, as also for putting the Vidyapith on a stable basis. We earnestly hope that all lovers of education will come forward with their liberal support to this ideal educational institution.



A rupee from twenty thousand people each, may help the Vidyapith to start its building operations immediately. Any contributions, however small, will be gratefully received and acknowledged by—(1) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur, Howrah, Bengal. (2) The Adhyaksha (Rector), Ramakrishna Vidyapith, Deoghar, Behar.

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## NEWS AND NOTES.

### THE AGE OF THE VEDA.

The age of the Veda is one of the most difficult subjects in the history of Indian thought. The Vedic literature consists of three distinct classes of literary works. These are—the Samhitas or collections of hymns and prayers; the Brahmanas or prose treatises consisting mainly of discussions on sacrifices and the significance of the rites and ceremonies connected with them; and lastly the Aranyakas and Upanishads, dealing with the profound doctrines both of ritual and philosophy, some of which are either included or attached to the Brahmanas, while others are independent of them.

Taking their stand sometimes on purely hypothetical and arbitrary points, different scholars have assigned different dates to the Vedic literature. Prof. Max Muller fixed 1200 to 1000 B. C. as the beginning of Vedic poetry. The Indian scholar Bal Gangadhar Tilak concluded from his astronomical calculations that some Vedic texts go back to 6000 B. C. While the German Scholar Jacobi assumed that the Vedic hymns belonged to about 4500 B. C., and that the Vedic age extended from about 4500 to 2500 B.C.

Prof. M. Winternitz discusses this important topic in his Calcutta University Readership lecture published in the *Calcutta Review* for November. He attaches greater importance to historical arguments than to astronomical calculations, and arrives at the following conclusions—“It is not possible to give any definite date for the beginning

of Vedic poetry. We do not know more for certain than that Vedic literature began at some unknown time in the past and extended up to the 8th century. But it is more probable that this unknown time of the beginning of the Vedic literature was nearer 2500 or 2000 B. C. than to 1500 or 1200 B. C."

Prof. Winternitz very frankly confesses that these dates are after all probable guesses. He concludes—"Personally I should prefer to mention no figures at all. We simply do not know anything more than what I said. This may be very disappointing to those of you who expected a definite answer to the question regarding the age of the oldest monument of Indian literature. But it is a greater service to Science to confess our ignorance than to deceive ourselves and others by producing dates, which are no dates. And after all, it is some comfort to know that we can set up at least some limits not only of our knowledge but also of our ignorance."

#### SELF-SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL LABOUR-COLONIES.

One of the great tragedies of our modern educational system is that it imparts to the students only a theoretical knowledge of certain subjects, but does not care to prepare them for life and teach them to earn their daily bread. The sufferings of unemployment have brought home to us the defects of our system of education as also the great question of reforming it, by making it practical and self-supporting as far as possible. Captain J. W. Petavel in a thoughtful article—"How the children could save our civilisation," contributed to the Modern Review for December, 1923, speaks of the great possibilities of educational labour-colonies for children. He observes—"Unemployment has roused us at least to the fact that we must reform our education system, and make it much more practical. There appears to be only one way by which this can be done, and that is by organizing labour-colonies for children in which they will work half the day producing various necessaries to take home with them, the other half at their lessons—

without depriving them of time for their games which are of vital importance. The children, it seems, are thus going to lead us in the direction in which there is really hope."

Poverty in India stands to no small extent in the way of the education of children. Many poor parents cannot send their boys and girls to school simply because they have not the means to do so. While others have to stop, much against their will, the educational career of their children, even when they are quite young, for reasons of poverty alone. There is also a third class of parents who, although they can afford to educate their children to some extent, do not do so simply because they look down upon the "profitless" education which cannot give to the children a sound practical training. Most of these parents will be anxious to avail themselves of the opportunities afforded by the proposed educational labour-colonies which, by making education greatly or fully self-supporting, are calculated to solve the problem of education, and at the same time to enable the children to help the parents considerably. Observes Captain Petavel—"We should not, therefore, have to trouble ourselves with the question whether the school years would be prolonged by this plan or not. The children would have a much healthier life, much better and more practical education than they have now, and be wholly or nearly self-supporting very early."

#### INDIAN MELODY.

Music in India had its birth at a very hoary antiquity when the fathers of the ancient Hindu civilisation first sang the ritual songs of the Vedas, particularly the Samas. Since then it has been mainly wedded to the spiritual life and culture of the Indian people. And not only that, it has been one of the most potent factors for sweetening and inspiring the varied life of the housewife and the labourer, the boat-man and the cart-driver, the cooly and the beggar, the priest and the worshipper alike.

Indian music is the expression of the distinctive genius and inner life of the Indian people. First it has its *svaras* or the salient seven notes. Then there are the *ragas* which are neither scales nor modes but really melody-types forming the basis of all melodies. Besides this, there is *tala* or rhythm. In addition to these, there is one important element, *gamaka*, which is not only grace-notes or ornament, but the ornamental method of approaching notes and bridging intervals. It is this which mainly distinguishes the music of India from that of the West, and stands in the place of harmony in the latter. "I suppose," says Mr. H. A. Popley in a highly appreciative article on 'Indian Melody' contributed to the *Shama'a* for October, 1923, "there is no country in the world which has exploited as India has done the illimitable possibilities of melody. Each *raga* has its own peculiar combinations, its salient notes and distinctive flavour. If we take all the musical works of the West we shall only have heard one-tenth or one-thirtieth of the possibilities that lie before Indian Melody. Even the old classical modes, some of which are still in use in the Roman Church, comprise but a few of the possible modes of Indian Music."

Music has a great possibility to serve as a unifying factor in Indian life. In spite of the difference in language or form, its theme is one and the same throughout the land. Observes Mr. Popley—"The music of India sings to us of the heroes and heroines of our land, of Rama and Krishna, of Mirabai and Harischandra. It speaks to us of one India from the Himalaya to Kanya Kumari. However different the expression, the nomenclature or the system may be, there is a unity in Indian music which strikes one continually. Music may still be made one of the main cultural channels by means of which India will realise her essential unity."

Indian music to be truly Indian must now outgrow both individual prejudice and provincial spirit. It is of absolute importance to devise a system of notation which may be used by people of all provinces in common and

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at the same time may be easily understood by the rest of the musical world. The spirit of renaissance is passing over the country, and the province of music too is not left unaffected. Something is being done. But it must be done with greater energy and co-operation.

“ON TO THE LAND.”

“India’s future,” says a thoughtful writer, Mr. H. George Franks, in the December issue of the Poona Agricultural College Magazine, “undoubtedly lies in the hands of the farmer ; this is a platitude which needs neither emphasising nor elaborating. To train farmers, therefore, and to give them the scientific touch is a work of national importance ; but for results the work depends entirely on the attitude of those being trained. The only way in which India’s traditional foes, such as famine and drought, can be defeated, is by the mobilisation of Science, by literally making the soil and the weather do what they are told.” The writer has indeed touched one of the greatest problems of the land, that are crying for solution at present.

It is true that India is pre-eminently an agricultural country. But at the same time it is a lamentable fact that agriculture is looked upon as an undignified occupation. And its present neglect is one of the main causes of the country’s recurring famines and perpetual scarcity. Vast tracts of arable land are lying idle. These, in the words of the poet, “would have yielded gold had they been properly cultivated.” But we in our thoughtlessness are neglecting the soil, and are, in consequence, suffering beyond measure.

Under the impulse of a disintegrating force sweeping over the country, the poor agricultural classes have imbibed a tendency to forsake the plough, and rush to the city to work as wage-earners there, while almost all sections of the middle class people, whose forefathers were thriving farmers, are quitting their ancestral homesteads in order to earn a starvation salary at the office desk in industrial and commercial towns. The result has been

misery. "The gift of science plus labour," says the writer quoted above, "was the gift of the town and the factory, but it was also the gift of a cloud of misery and hideousness which was darker by far than the pall which hung over the factories after the belching out of the forest of chimney stacks. Just as all is not gold that glitters, even so all is not perfection in the towns. 'Back to the land' movements are being conducted in nearly all countries to-day ; and India needs a similar campaign, unless a slight change to 'On to the land' be made. After serious thought, it is becoming increasingly plain that the best possible way to assist India to stand on its own feet, is to popularise agriculture." Rural India needs bands of missionaries to spread broadcast all up-to-date knowledge about scientific farming and improved methods of agriculture.

SWAMI KAMALESWARANANDA AT THE BISHOP'S COLLEGE,  
CALCUTTA.

We hope the following interesting news from a correspondent will be highly appreciated by our readers :

Swami Kamaleswarananda of the Belur Math is at present in charge of the Gadadhar Ashrama, a branch of the mother institution at Bhowanipore, Calcutta. He is now holding there regular classes on the Gita and the Upanishads. His lucid presentation of the Vedantic truths is attracting a number of sincere students, among whom is Rev. Mr. Pelly, Professor of the Bishop's College, Calcutta.

The professors and the students of the Bishop's College staged on the 6th December last the story of Yama and Nachiketa in the famous Katha-Upanishad. Mr. Pelly invited Swami Kamaleswarananda to see the drama, and also to perform the Yajna ceremony forming an important part of the play.

Before the drama commenced, Mr. Pelly explained briefly the main story of the Upanishad,—the subject of the play. He also introduced Swami Kamaleswarananda to the audience, and requested him to deliver at the end

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a short discourse on the Vedic sacrifice and worship, the real significance of which was never properly understood by the average European.

The play began at 7 p.m. Mr. Pelly played the part of Yama, while an English student of the Bishop's College enacted the part of Nachiketa. In the course of the play when Nachiketa asked Yama for his second boon and wanted to know about the secret of worshipping the "Divine Fire," the occasion arose for Swami Kamaleswara-nanda to appear on the stage and perform the Yajna ceremony. The Swami took with him all the materials necessary for the purpose, and did his part exceedingly well, to the admiration of all present. The ceremony being over, the play went on and was brought to a successful close.

Then came the turn of the Swami to deliver a short address on the Hindu religious symbology and the significance of sacrifice and worship. The lecture lasted half an hour. The Swami first spoke of the two aspects of Brahman—the relative and the absolute, and said that the ultimate object of all was to merge in the Absolute, Non-qualified Brahman, by transcending the limitations of name and form. But to attain to this it was necessary for the aspirant to pass through certain preliminary stages, when symbols, sacrifices and worships proved to be of great help to him. That was why these had been introduced into the spiritual culture of the Hindus. The beginner was to proceed step by step on his way to the realisation of the Supreme Spirit as the inmost soul of all things he saw around him. Such a vision was sure to enable him to give up the gross physical aspect of objects, and gradually lead him on to a state when he would go beyond the limits of time, space and causation—the basis of the world-dream, and thus be one with the Paramatman—the Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute.

The lecture brought a new light to many unacquainted with the inner significance of the religion of the Vedas, and was much appreciated by the audience.

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VEDANTA WORK IN SAN FRANCISCO (U. S. A.).

Srimat Swami Prakashananda is delivering public lectures at the Hindu Temple on every Sunday, both morning and evening. He is also holding an Upanishad class on Thursdays. Swami Prabhavananda is conducting a Gita class on Tuesdays. All the lectures and classes are well-attended. We are glad to learn that since the return of Srimat Swami Prakashananda to San Francisco the Vedanta work is rapidly growing and many new members have joined the Vedanta centre there.

IN MEMORIAM.

We are extremely grieved to learn about the passing away on the 7th December last of Srijut Akshay Kumar Sen, one of the most devoted householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. The deceased had a great poetic genius, and was the author of the celebrated work "Sri Sri Ramakrishna Punthi"—an elaborate biography of Sri Ramakrishna in verse. Srijut Akshay Kumar has now entered the abode of Eternal Peace, but his immortal work will ever continue to help us in understanding the divine life and teachings of the Prophet of Dakshineswar, and also to inspire us in our spiritual strivings and endeavours.

THE BIRTHDAY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

The *tithi* of Sri Ramakrishna's nativity falls this year on Friday, the 7th March, 1924. We request all Maths, Ashramas and Societies observing the birthday to send us the reports of their celebrations at an early date.

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