

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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TALKS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA AT BENARES.

9th January, 1921.

“Do not ruffle the mind. Did you not, only the other day, come from Calcutta? If you go now, it will be setting a bad example. Control the mind, be not controlled by it. Surrender yourself to Him alone, your everything,—your body, mind and soul.”—Thus said the Swami to one who sat before him, and then sang a song of Ram-prasad, which said: ‘O my Mind-bird, why fly from tree to tree tasting different fruits? Make thy eternal nest on One who can offer thee the Greatest Fruit.’

The conversation then turned on the power of the Mantra. The Swami said: “Yes, one can cure disease by the power of the mystic formulas. But by His will, I have learnt to have greater faith in Him who is back of that power.”

D— said: “Kindly so make my mind that I may not feel even the difference of her sex when I see a woman.”

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He replied: "Look to the Atman, not to the body. Practise to have the mind ever fixed on the Atman." He then quoted from the Gita: 'One gets attached to objects by constantly thinking of them. From attachment comes longing, and from longing anger.'

And he said: "Anger is a concentrated form of lust. It makes one lose one's head completely. Lust does not so absolutely overwhelm the mind. Never think of transient things. That way you can escape attachment.

"The books say that a woman has eight times more lust than a man. If it be so, it is perhaps due to her being dependent on man. She has to please her husband; and having no other means, she takes to that alone. Once I mentioned this to an American lady. She flared up and said: 'It is men who force us to such things. They are the least spiritual.'

"Once in America, a lady came to see me. I at once divined her mind and asked her if she had anything to tell me. She was very glad that I understood her. I took her aside. She told me that her husband was very sensual, but she herself had not the least inclination for that sort of life. She said: 'I allow my husband freedom to go to whomsoever he likes; only let him not trouble me.' To that I replied: 'You are very nice! You started life together, and now you want to drive him away! Live with him and try to reform him by your advice.' She burst out crying at my words,—she understood. And though for a time they lived together, she could not hold on to the last, she separated, but never married again.

"In America men work very hard; they necessarily seek enjoyment in reaction. And they have no other idea of enjoyment than that. Hence it is that they are so excessively lustful. The women labour less and are more intellectual. Therefore perhaps they have less of the sex impulse.

"There, I was once repeatedly sent for by a woman. She was the mistress of a man who was a perfect rogue



and would not allow her to go out. She begged me earnestly to go and see her once. She persuaded the man to allow my visit. He agreed on the express understanding that the interview would take place in his presence. He sat a little apart, and the woman came out of her room and shook hands with me. I stood up, and holding her by the hand for about five minutes, I *willed* that her mind be purified and have pure tendencies. We then sat down side by side and chatted for sometime without minding the least the man. The man became furious and exclaimed: 'You should know this is America.' 'What of that?' I said, 'I know it is America.' The effect of this visit was astonishing. The woman overcame his influence and having extricated herself from his hold, went and lived apart. She had said after the handshake: 'I am filled, my difficulties are solved. I feel that I am pure, I have known what woman is.'

"The Lord endows religious teachers with a special power which descends through the succession of disciples. Or why, if they are only like common men, should people seek them? It is to do His own work that He so endows the preachers. But if they utilise the power for selfish purposes, they are deprived of it. Other powers such as oratory and the like may remain, but the saving power departs from them."

To a question, the Swami replied: "Yes, the power survives even the completion of the work for which God granted it. Only it wanes a little. But by misuse it is completely lost. Oh the tremendous will power I used to feel then! It is all His wondrous play!"

He quoted from the sixth chapter of the Gita, interspersing the recitation with beautiful and illuminating comments:

" 'Having in a cleanly spot established his seat,—firm, neither too high nor low, made of a cloth, a skin and Kusha grass, arranged in consecution,—and having seated on that seat, making the mind one-pointed and subduing the action of the imagining faculty and the senses, let him practise Yoga for the purification of the heart.' 'Through

whatever reason, the restless, unsteady mind wanders away, let him, curbing it from that, bring it under the subjugation of the Self alone.'

"With unflagging perseverance the mind must be again and again brought back to the Atman. It is the nature of the mind to be fickle and restless, like a naughty child that has to be pulled back by the ear to its studies. The mind must be carried even beyond the Buddhi, the determinative faculty, directly to the Atman. Of course, repeated and incessant efforts are necessary, but at last the mind will come under your control and remain calmly fixed on the Atman. At first you are to transcend Tamas, then Rajas, and finally you are to go beyond even Sattwa itself. Then you realise the Self as pervading everything. You find that He alone exists, nothing else. And that is called the state of Transcendental Consciousness.

"The senses, the mind and the intellect,—we shall have to capture all these outposts of consciousness, and thereby conquer lust. Lust, anger and avarice, these are but different forms of the same thing. They are the eternal enemies of the Jnani and destroyers of knowledge and wisdom.

"Join the senses to the Lord: the eyes shall see His image only, and whatever has to be eaten, must be His Prasad. That is the way to teach the senses their right lesson.

"Medicine is doing me little good. The fact is I am fulfilling my own Karma, and when that will end, this body also will perish."

D—referred to the stories of Sri Ramakrishna bringing about sudden transformations in the lives of drunkards and characterless men. At that the Swami said: "Yes, these are all true. To some, however, he would allow an interval, as to Girish Babu. 'Enjoy yourself,' he would say to him, 'you won't croak long now that you have been bitten by a poisonous serpent.' There is the story of Suresh Babu, long after he had known Sri Ramakrishna, being tempted one evening, on his way from his office, to visit a public woman. He went upstairs and entered



the woman's room. But lo, there was no woman, but Sri Ramakrishna himself standing there! In great shame, he fled from the place."

This reminded the Swami of the episode of Jaimini and Vyasa: "Jaimini, as a precaution, had warned the girl that the place was haunted by a ghost, and she must on no account open the door, even though the voice calling her might be his own. Thus it was that though he, in his passion, entreated her to admit him into her room, the door never opened. All night he stood sleepless at the door, and in the morning he found no girl but Vyasadeva himself within the room.

"If you touch the Atman, you are safe."

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### OCCASIONAL NOTES.

Those who read newspapers and keep abreast with the current of world-events might have heard about the famous trial of Tennessee, U. S. A. It has created quite a stir and sensation all over the civilised world and has become a topic of the day. It has given a rude shock to the sentiments of all scientists and of those who advocate the freedom of thought and opinion. In these days of scientific advancement and the progress of democratic and liberal ideas, it is not only astounding but extremely deplorable that a school teacher should be arrested and convicted on a charge of teaching children the theory of evolution that forms one of the corner-stones of modern science. The long and short of the case is as follows: Mr. John Scopes, the accused, who fell a victim to the fanaticism and bigotry of an orthodox section of the Christian church, was a teacher in a high school at Dayton, a town in the Tennessee state. He was prosecuted on the grounds that he used a text-book called 'A Civic Biology' that deals among others with the theory of evolution. Taking advantage of a preposterous law of the state which nobody thought would ever be enforced like many other dead

letter laws, the fundamentalists, that conservative section of Christians who consider the Bible to be a revelation and as such every word of it to be literally true, prosecuted the innocent school teacher. There was the farce of a trial in a court of law, and the man was found guilty and fined 100 dollars.

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Before we enter into any academical discussion as to the scientific and philosophical validity of the doctrine of evolution, what strikes us most is that this trial is one of those instances that are a menace to the freedom of men. For, this trial betrays a spirit that will not allow a man to think independently and give expression to his ideas. It proves conclusively that a man is not safe if his ways of thinking happen to differ from the accepted notions. And if he persists in presenting things that are strange and thus not palatable to many—at least the influential majority, he will have a bad time of it. Does not this forebode a very bad future for original research and thinking? So far as we understand, freedom is the primary condition of growth. But for its development, individual and collective, is sure to become stunted. Every unit of a social organism must be given the legitimate scope to grow, of course not in violation of the general health of the system as a whole. Otherwise, there is every chance that the organism itself will become diseased and atrophied. A state entrusted with the welfare of its citizens should not curb the freedom of individuals, if this freedom does not prove to be positively injurious. It should rather see that all its individual members get full opportunities for a free expression of their respective talents. Sometimes it may happen that a man will come out who will appear abnormal in his views and opinions. But that is no reason why he should not be encouraged and allowed to have his own way. He may differ from the majority. But who knows that what he wants to propound and present before society is not correct and beneficial? Only time can prove that.



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Perhaps the students of sociology will agree when we say that the mass mind is generally conservative and is lazy to move save in its old grooves. Hence it rebels at anything that seems to be new to it. Thus there has always been a war between the genius and the multitude, in which the former being in the minority has often had to suffer an apparent defeat at the outset. Let us look at the pages of history for the illustration of our point. We find there copious instances of intellectual and spiritual giants who have been flouted, persecuted and even put to death, because of their special messages which the people were not ready to accept at the time. Socrates, the wisest man of his times, was made to drink the fatal cup of hemlock, because he promulgated doctrines that were much ahead of his age. Galileo, the great scientist, was compelled to withdraw his statement that the earth is not stationary but moves round the sun. Copernicus, the celebrated astronomer, had to run for his life for stating some scientific truths which were unintelligible to his contemporaries. Columbus was hooted out as a madman by the Council of Padua 'for pretending that it is possible to circumnavigate the globe.' Above all, Jesus, the Nazarene, the founder of Christianity, was crucified by his countrymen for his divine message. We need not multiply instances. What we have already cited will be enough to show the psychology of the generality of people. They lack in breadth of vision and proceed at a snail's pace in their ideas. They cannot tolerate others who seem to be peculiar to them. But as it has always happened, truth under all circumstances is bound to triumph in the end. Nothing on earth can thwart its progress. As it is impossible to cover the rays of the blazing sun by the palm of one's hand, truth cannot be suppressed. Against countless odds it will have its way and shine by its own light illumining everything that falls on its path. Hence if there be any truth in the message of a genius, it cannot be lost by any temporary check or persecution. Perhaps it will gain all the more by the very sufferings and sacrifice of its master and overcome all difficulties.

Orthodoxy, bigotry and superstition had their days in the past in the dark ages. Now at this twentieth century when we are at the height of civilisation, culture and scientific progress, one naturally expects that they will have less sway over the minds of the people. But the Tennessee case, implying as it does an organised attempt to obstruct individual growth by putting all sorts of meaningless conventions and dogmas as barriers in the paths of young people receiving education in schools, has belied our expectation. It shows that even a progressive country like America has not as yet been able to free herself of ecclesiastical fanatics who taking advantage of the influential position they hold in the state, are exploiting the credulity of the ignorant people by asking them to believe all sorts of dogmas that have no scientific basis. Of course, the party, viz. the fundamentalists, who are responsible for the introduction of the preposterous law at Tennessee and the prosecution of the school master, have their own arguments, however plausible and specious, to justify their conduct. The doctrine of evolution, they say, is a theory that goes against the teachings of the Bible and is thus inimical to the religion preached by Jesus. Now, if it is taught in schools, children will learn to question the inerrancy of the Bible and refuse to take every word of it as gospel truth without due examination and critical analysis. It will in this way undermine the very foundation of Christianity. Christian schools maintained by Christian tax-payers have no right to train Christian boys and girls into heretics. Thus do the fundamentalists plead their cause.

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But what does the theory of evolution say, and how is it in conflict with the Bible? According to it, the present world with all the varieties of plant and animal species it contains is the result of a slow process of development covering a period of millions of years and has not been made as it is all at once. And this process has been on the whole from lower to higher, from homo-



geneous to heterogeneous, from inorganic to organic, from lifeless to living, forms. Thus interpreted, man who may be called the acme of the evolutionary process and the highest manifestation of life and consciousness, is not made in the image of God, complete and full-grown, but has come to be what he is from a crude state. As a species, perhaps, he has for his immediate ancestor the monkey or the anthropoid ape. This doctrine of the gradual genesis of the world and the species of living creatures inhabiting it contradicts the theory of special creation as given in the Bible, according to which everything, lifeless or living, has been fashioned by the Almighty as it is all at once out of nothing. The Biblical representation of a series of special acts of creation being contradicted, the whole system of doctrines built on the fall of Adam and Eve, the first ancestors of man, is destroyed. The fundamentalists argue: "No fall, no real problem of sin; no sin, no need of salvation; no salvation, no Divine Redeemer; and so no Christianity." Hence it is that the fundamentalists, eager to hold their own position, are up in arms against the evolutionists.



The idea of this world being manufactured out of nothing all at once is neither scientific nor philosophically tenable. Although there is a difference of opinion as to the details of the theory of evolution, almost all scientists agree that the history of the world is a history of a slow and gradual development. Evidences of this are to be found in the structure of the earth and the remains of extinct species of plants and animals which had appeared on earth and lived for ages, but died out being supplanted by more highly organised types. A vast period of time must have elapsed before this earth and its inhabitants could attain their present forms. The condensation of the suns and planets, the cooling and hardening of the earth into a solid sphere, the formation of the earth's surface into mountains, valleys, rivers, seas and oceans, and the appearance and disappearance of the different species of

plants and animals—all these changes that are supposed to have taken place are possible only if we recognise a slow process of evolution going on for a long period of time. As it is not within our province, we shall leave this scientific aspect of the question to experts and consider next the philosophical validity of the theory of evolution as distinguished from the crude conception of the doctrine of special creation.

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*Ex nihilo nihil fit*—is a logical dictum full of sense. It means that something cannot come out of nothing. A positive entity cannot have void for its cause. The law of causation which governs the phenomenal world requires that every effect must have a cause. A causeless effect or an accident that we loosely use for a phenomenon whose origin cannot be traced, is a chimera. It has no place in the economy of nature. It has neither subjective nor objective existence. Thus understood what we call an effect is nothing but the cause reproduced. In other words, what was at first involved as a cause becomes evolved as an effect. The huge oak, with its big trunk, spreading branches and innumerable leaves that can give shelter to thousands of people under its shade, was present in a subtle form in the acorn. It has nothing in it that was not in the acorn, though this fact may appear physically impossible to a man of ordinary understanding. Not only is this law of causation applicable to individual cases, it holds equally good collectively to species and to the group of phenomena called the world. This world that is a conglomeration of manifold types of plants and animals is, collectively speaking, a product and must therefore have a cause from which it has evolved step by step. To say that it has come out of nothing is to deny an axiomatic truth the validity of which cannot be doubted even as the fact that 2 plus 2 makes 4.

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Besides, there is a strong theological proof in support of the theory of evolution. Let us take for example the



human race. It contains individuals of such varied types and grades of mental and spiritual growth that it becomes inexplicable unless we bring in the doctrine of Karma and the law of gradual progress. How are we to account for the fact that one man is a saint and another a scoundrel, one an intellectual prodigy and another an idiot, one miserable and another happy? To say that this differentiation is all due to the sweet will and caprice of God, the Creator, is no answer. If you make God responsible for this differentiation, He becomes an imperfect God, guilty of partiality and inequality of treatment, and all the attributes of supreme love, truth, justice etc. that we apply to Him become meaningless. Such a God is no better than a human autocrat ruling by whims and as such is not an ideal worth striving for. Under the rule of such a God there will be a regular anarchy. No man will have any faith in the moral and spiritual laws, and the ascendancy of the forces of evil will make this world a hell. The doctrine of Karma which is nothing but an aspect of the law of causation satisfactorily explains this differentiation as no other theory does. Every man is the architect of his own present state as well as of his future. By good Karma, perhaps done in previous lives, a saint has simply unfolded the saintly potentialities that he had. He is not a freak of nature or an accident. All these proofs go to invalidate the theory of special creation.

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But can we not interpret the Bible in a different light, so as to make it consistent with the accepted principles of science? The words of the Bible, we think, need not be taken literally, giving equal emphasis upon everything that it contains. Like all other scriptures it has essentials and non-essentials, eternal truths and changing forms and dogmas, fundamental principles of morality and religion as well as mythologies. Thus one portion of it is infallible and useful for all times, the other is not so. Like all other literatures, revealed or man-made, the Bible has passed through a process of evolution. For, in it

we find so many things that cannot otherwise be reconciled and put together consistently. The primitive picture of the ancient Hebrew traditions, the ethical doctrines of the prophets, the religion of temple and sacrifice, the sublime message of Jesus, the elaborate theology as promulgated by St. Paul, Christianity as represented in the fourth gospel and so forth—all these occur there. It is impossible to combine all these into a systematic whole unless we recognise that the Bible is a complex literature that has issued out of the long development of the Hebrew and Christian religions, having in it elements varying from the naive, grotesque and crude forms of worship and ritual to the superb life and teachings of Jesus.



The life and teachings of Jesus may be said to be the highest fulfilment of the Bible and are the foundations on which has been built the superstructure called Christianity. Hence by Christianity is meant, truly speaking, that great ethical religion which may be summed up as the practice of those cardinal virtues, which is essential to a strictly moral and spiritual life, and it is exemplified in the unique personality of Jesus. It consists, in other words, in realising our perfect nature by a true knowledge of our place and function in the world-order and our relation to God, the Heavenly Father. The God preached by Jesus is not a *deus ex machina*, for He is our very life and essence. "In Him we live and move and have our being." The anthropomorphic idea of an extra-cosmic God creating this world out of nothing by a single act of volition and ruling His creatures by rewards and punishments, as it occurs in the Book of Genesis, cannot be fathered upon Christianity. It is noticeable that in the New Testament there has been a regular evolution of the idea of God from a crude deism to panentheism, and this panentheism means that God is immanent and at the same time transcendent. "I and the Father are one"—says Christ. This statement clearly indicates a relation subsisting between



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God and ourselves which may be called unity in variety. Hence not only is it possible with regard to Christ, the chosen man of God, it can be realised by every one of us in a supreme state of blessedness and communion. "Be ye perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect," says the Bible. It signifies that perfection that we are to attain to is our birthright. It is our essence, the very part and parcel of our life. Not that something extra will be superadded to us when we shall be perfect, but there will be an unfoldment of our real nature, which is veiled by ignorance. This is what we understand by Christianity.

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The time has come when religion should shake hands with science in a spirit of fellowship. The feeling of enmity and quarrel that has created to-day a yawning gulf separating the one from the other must give way to one of mutual confidence, and they should unite as friends and help each other towards the realisation of a common end which is Truth. So far as we understand, the whole conflict is due to a misconception that is bound to disappear with a better knowledge and understanding of each other's function and province. Though there may be a difference as to their methods, both science and religion, it may be proved, aim at one thing, viz. Truth. The goal that religion places before us is, truly speaking, not different from the final conclusion arrived at by science. They are but different views of the same thing from different perspectives. The recent discoveries of science establishing the unity of life and consciousness and the existence of one Ultimate Principle permeating the whole universe conclusively prove what we say. When the Vedic seers declared with a voice of thunder that the Reality is one, and It is Absolute Existence, Knowledge and Bliss, they simply foreshadowed by their intuitive vision the final synthesis of science yet to be made. Hence what we want to emphasise is that no religion which is based upon a rational basis and is progressive and liberal

has any reason to be afraid of science. It is only the dogmatic and hide-bound religion of the church and the temple that considers itself to be at stake and raises a false note of alarm at the progress of science.

PRACTICAL VEDANTA.*

BY SWAMI SHARVANANDA.

श्लोकाद्धेण प्रवक्ष्यामि यदुक्तं ग्रन्थकोटिभिः
ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरः ॥

—“What has been spoken in volumes, I shall express in half a verse: Brahman alone is true, the phenomenal world is false, and the Jiva or the individual soul is no other than Brahman.” Thus did one of our ancient sages put in a nutshell the entire truth of the Vedanta philosophy. You may say that it is easy to declare in so many words the unreality of this world and the reality of a strange entity called Brahman, but to the majority of people Brahman is only a word having no significance in life. For, it is unknown and unknowable to them, whereas the world of phenomena which is said to have no permanence is so very real and tangible, yielding the satisfaction of the senses. The aforesaid statement of Vedanta is thus against the evidence of direct experience. It is something like asking one to believe a thing which one does not see to exist and to deny the existence of that which one does actually see or feel. In reply the scriptures will say that this is the Truth, nay the only Truth, though hard to realise. “The path to realisation is as perilous as walking upon the sharp edge of a razor blade.” One among millions succeeds and gets a vision of the Ideal after countless births of strenuous Sadhana. As the Lord Sri Krishna says in the Gita—“One, perchance in thousands of men, strives for perfection; one,

* Notes of a lecture delivered in Bombay.

perchance among the blessed few who strive, knows Me in reality.”

It is a fact of common experience that this world which we consider to be so real cannot give us any permanent satisfaction or joy. In this big city of Bombay which has got a population of about eleven lacs of men and women, if you go from house to house and ask individually every inmate whether he is happy—whether he is perfectly satisfied with his life, I dare say you will not get half a dozen people who would say ‘Yes.’ Almost everyone has something to complain of and being dissatisfied with his present position is trying to improve his lot, so that he may be happy. Happiness, pure and unmixed, is indeed very rare in this world. Earthly objects that contribute to our pleasure are short-lived and evanescent. As it is, how can we say that this worldly life will have an abiding interest for man? Only that may be said to have a permanent value which lasts through eternity and does not undergo any change or modification at any time. The human mind naturally wants something which remains unchanged in this world of flux, which endures while all other things go to decay. This Unchanged Reality is what we call Brahman or Truth by realising which we can transcend the limitations of the phenomenal life and attain Immortality.

While speaking of the truth of Vedanta, of course I mean Advaita Vedanta, I believe it is the culmination of human knowledge and aspiration. Beyond that we cannot go or hope to go. Not only is it theoretically the rationale of all philosophy, it is also extremely practical, for it comes within the scope of direct experience. That Brahman alone is real and the world false is a matter not of mere intellectual interest but of actual realisation. There may be persons who are well-versed in the Vedantic lore and can establish to others the Vedantic doctrine by the force of arguments. But it is all useless unless one lives the actual life. Intellectually it may be easy to grasp the truths of the Vedanta philosophy, but to make them the part and parcel of our life is very difficult. This is why

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a systematic course of intense Sadhana or spiritual discipline is necessary. What happens ordinarily is that when the subconscious mind is not tinged with the same hue as that of the conscious mind, a particular thought cannot have any lasting effect upon our practical life. Many of us are conscious of this truth, but cannot bring the Ideal to bear upon our actual life, because the impressions that are latent in our subconscious mind-stuff are too strong for us to overcome. It is Sadhana by means of which we can hope to do it. Sadhana is the process by which the entire mind, conscious or subconscious, can be brought within our control and directed towards the realisation of the Ideal.

The Vedanta prescribes a fourfold course of Sadhana to be gone through systematically under the guidance of an able teacher who has got the Illumination. First is the practice of dispassion and renunciation of enjoyment, here and hereafter. It is the desire for enjoyment that takes us away from the Ideal and makes us run for temporal things. We want what is pleasing to our senses, we seek wealth, we long for name and fame, and we look forward to a happy, enjoyable life after death. But all these, however attractive, are vanities ; they cannot give us permanent satisfaction which is obtainable only in the unchangeable Brahman. It is a truth that darkness and light cannot live together. If you want light, you must give up darkness. If you want to go to the east, you must recede from the west. In a cinematograph you must withdraw your gaze from the moving pictures if you want to have a full idea of the background that holds the shifting scenes. Similarly, in the spiritual life the renunciation of desire, the root-cause of all mental distractions, is essential, and one cannot renounce unless there be a dispassion for the objects of desire.

The second course is the practice of discrimination of the Real from what is unreal. It is essential in order to strengthen our dispassion. Many get disgusted with life when they get hard blows from nature in the shape of trials and difficulties, misfortunes and bereave-



ments. They then feel that this world with all its wealth of enjoyment is shallow and worthless and cannot give them the strength and peace they stand most in need of. But this feeling will not be lasting until and unless it were established on a clear conception of what is permanent and what is impermanent. It often happens that the mother loses all her interest for the world and becomes disconsolate when her dearest child is snatched away by the cruel hand of death. But this grief and dispassion pass away in course of time, and she seems to forget everything and reconciling herself to her lot reverts to the worldly ways.

The third course consists in the practice of the six ethical virtues of mental equanimity, self-control and so forth. Balance is essential to the disciplining of the mind which is so restless and wayward in its nature. We should try to remain unruffled under all circumstances, in pain or pleasure, misery or happiness. We lose our mental equipoise and feel miserable or happy, because we identify ourselves with our body and the environment with which we are surrounded. The mental balance requires a full restraint of the senses which have a natural tendency to go out and create distraction. What makes a man different from a brute is this virtue of self-control. Of all animals it is man who has the power to curb his senses and engage them as he wills. Therein lies his speciality. But it cannot be denied that the majority of mankind have become dehumanised by becoming slaves to their passions and allowing their senses to lead them as they like. This internal slavery is worse than physical bondage, for it is more painful. Next comes the practice of forbearance. So long as we are in this world, we cannot avoid unpleasant or adverse circumstances. They upset us and make our life miserable unless we put up with them and struggle calmly and patiently for the realisation of the Ideal. Along with the practice of forbearance we must also have the virtue of withdrawing the mind from external objects and fixing it on the Ideal. The mind of an ordinary sense-bound man is full of dross and

impurity ; it cannot reflect the Truth until and unless it is made pure. We cannot see the bottom of a lake if its water is turbid and its surface is agitated by waves. The sixth ethical virtue is Sraddha or faith in the words\* of the Guru and the scriptures . I think I need not speak much to you on the importance of Sraddha in spiritual life, for it is one of the greatest requisites for the realisation of the Ideal. The position of a sceptic who questions his Guru or the authority of the scriptures at every step is miserable. He has none to show him the path ; he stumbles and fails to reach the Goal.

The last course is the desire for emancipation. Everyone is more or less instinctively conscious of his bondage from his very birth. That is why he cries when he sees the light of day, and as he grows in years he complains when he is put under any restraint. Freedom is the birth-right of man, and he wants to be free in all ways. But as he often does not know the right channel, he goes here and there and suffers till at last experience and the longing for freedom bring him round to the real path. We must intensify this hankering after liberation and struggle to get beyond the pale of ignorance which is at the root of all evil. As I have said, mere intellectual knowledge will not help. We must undergo the course of Sadhana—the fourfold spiritual discipline, of which the desire for emancipation is the primary requisite for making the Vedantic ideal real in life.

The Vedanta philosophy demands that it should be practised in life along with a theoretical knowledge of it. Herein lies the difference between the Indian and Western systems of thought. The latter is merely of speculative interest and tries to establish truth by force of intellect or reason. But man's reason as such is limited like his body ; so how can one expect to grasp the Unlimited by means of what is limited? It is therefore that philosophers like Kant, Herbert Spencer and others who followed the path of reason have reached an admantine wall which they could not cross and see the Reality behind. Nowadays a new school of thought has come to the forefront



in the West, I mean the school inaugurated by Bergson, the French philosopher, who has brought the doctrine of intuition in the domain of philosophy.

But we must say even Bergson with his theory of intuition is not very explicit. His intuition is simply a finer modification of feeling or emotion and can only see things directly as such and do nothing more. It works under all the limitations as the reason does. Let us see what Bergson has to say on the subject. If you take all the possible photographs of Bombay and arrange them in a panoramic way, the series of pictures would not be Bombay itself. Similarly, the senses bring impressions from the external world, and the mind like a negative plate receives them. The universe we know of is simply a representation and not the Reality, however faithful it may be. The Reality to be truly perceived must be seen through a different faculty of the human mind which is intuition. The Reality being dynamic cannot come within the cognizance of the intellect which can only grasp things static in nature. It is the inner power of intuition that can see the Reality in its dynamic aspect. This is the sum and substance of Bergson's theory of intuition, and it is faulty and imperfect. Intuition if it be a modification of the mind cannot even give us a glimpse of what lies beyond mind—the consciousness itself. In order to realise that one must transcend mind and the categories of time, space and causation. It is not knowing but being and becoming where the individual and the Universal become one, and the duality of subject and object becomes annulled in the indivisible consciousness, called Samadhi. This supra-conscious state that will lead us to the realisation of Brahman is not an Utopian ideal. It has been realised in the past and can be verified to the letter here and now by any one whose mind has been perfectly disciplined and purified by a regular course of Sadhana as prescribed by the scriptures. Let us try to have that glorious state, and we shall get peace and blessedness that passeth all understanding.

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# THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT,

BY SWAMI ADWAITANANDA.

## II

The rebirth of the soul of India into a new national body must insist on the spiritual motive in every sphere of activity. Spirituality does not certainly mean that we shall regard mundane life as vanity, nor does it mean that the whole of the national mind will be moulded into a uniform shape. It does not mean belief in particular dogmas, or the observance of definite forms of worship. Such an attempt would be quite impossible in a country full of the most diverse religious opinions and harbouring three such varied general forms as Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. Spirituality is much wider than any particular religion, and all religions are, really speaking, but sects of the one eternal religion which consists in the perception of the Divine within us. Further, real spirituality does not exclude anything whatsoever from its all-embracing fold. It gives free activity to reason, to science and philosophy, to the full satisfaction of the æsthetic being, to the health and vigour of the body, to the material well-being of man, to opulence, ease and comfort. Bareness and squalor are not the indispensable accompaniments of spirituality. They betray, on the contrary, a sad lack of that precious commodity. Nor is military, political and social subservience compatible with genuine spirituality. Freedom means all-sided freedom, mental and physical.

There is a world of difference between the spiritual and the purely mental view of existence. The spiritual view holds that the mind and the body are the instruments of the Self, for Self-expression. It holds that the goal of life is the attainment of spotless freedom which consists in Self-realisation by self-transcendence. It does not look upon the development of mind and body as the



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final aim of man. This changes the whole outlook of man ; and although it preserves all the mundane aims of life, it gives them a different value and puts them in their proper places.

Spirituality aims at the full development of mental, emotional and æsthetic parts of man, because they too are the expressions of the Spirit, and by neglecting them it neglects the Spirit in manifestation. From a spiritual point of view philosophy and science are but different ways of approach to the same Reality, from two opposite poles of our being. It does not stop at mere intellectual beliefs, although they may be completely satisfying. It uses philosophy and science as helps and goes far beyond them. It aims at the full health and vigour of the body, but does so, because it is part of the Dharma of the complete human living. The body is the basis for the discovery and expression of the Divine in man. The primitive aim of art and poetry is to create realistic images of man and nature, but spiritually they become expressions of the deepest reality and of universal beauty. Politics, society and economy, from a spiritual point of view, become a frame work for the growth of the life within and an external embodiment of the law of spiritual being.

Europe is slowly but surely awakening to the idea that a mere rationalistic culture has no definite aim. It is taking in the Eastern ideas which are penetrating into her mentality, and trying to apply them to her conditions. It does not forswear science, democracy and progress, but aims at perfecting them by the light of this new knowledge. We too should be faithful to our traditions, and while receiving with open arms all that is best in Western culture should take care to see that our characteristic tendency and mode of thought are not abandoned. India can develop herself best and serve humanity by following scrupulously the law of her own nature. Religion means following the spiritual impulse in its fullness, seeing God everywhere, deifying everything, raising life in all its parts

to the divinest possible values. If we attach this meaning to the word religion, we shall find that there is not too much but too little of religion in this country. We have to give to the age-long ideal of India a wider field, a more synthetic meaning, so that each and every activity of the nation, each and every mode of expression, each and every noble and unifying motive becomes religion, and the whole life, internal and external, assumes the form of the manifestation of the national soul. The philosophy, poetry, art and science of the West are going in this direction more or less obscurely. India has the central key with her. She knows what spirituality is. She has got a clear conception of the goal, and she knows the ways and means of reaching it. She has only to undergo the necessary discipline on a more general scale and give a wider and a more comprehensive application to her ancient ideal, and she can be the light of the world and lead it out of the present mental chaos. This is her special mission. Her current literature, her religious and philosophical movements, and her art clearly indicate that the Indian mind has begun to realise the nature of its special function—the enlightenment of humanity on the ways and means of the attainment of freedom from the thralldom of matter.

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## MAHATMA GANDHI.

BY AN ADMIRER.

The Editor of the Prabuddha Bharata has laid upon the present writer the duty of writing out some reflections concerning Mahatma Gandhi. To release himself from this onerous responsibility all sorts of loopholes and excuses have been exhausted, and as the Editor remains adamant in his original command, there is no alternative left but to do the best in one's power. There are many obvious reasons for the diffidence. In the first place, to understand contemporary men and events in a dis-



passionate way is rarely, if ever at all, successfully accomplished, for these persons are themselves actors or at best interested spectators. Still more difficult is the task of weighing men's motives and achievements and pronounce judgments upon their worth. In the second place, if the personalities under discussion are of such a type as to be unique, complex and too far above the normal, as is that of the Mahatma, one might more easily hope for success in the accomplishment of the classical impossibles beginning with the attempt to extract oil out of sand, and so forth.

When we consider the opinions and judgments on the Mahatma by responsible critics, both Indian and Western, we find that they are extremely varied and conflicting. To illustrate our point we shall just refer to some of these. Some regard him as 'a knight of the impossible,' 'a beautiful but ineffectual angel beating his luminous wings in the void in vain,' 'a dangerous force playing with fire,' 'a faddist trying to imitate the prophet of old and bid the sun of progress stop in its course and go back.' One Governor of a British province in the East calls him 'a dangerous and misguided saint.' An American magazine describes him as 'a monk who imperils British rule in India.' Another looks upon him as 'one of the great *might-have-beens* of Indian history.' This is, of course, one side of the picture. Let us look at the other. The Lord Bishop of Madras speaks thus of Mahatmaji: "I see in Mr. Gandhi the patient sufferer for the cause of righteousness and mercy, a truer representative of the Crucified Saviour than the men who have thrown him into prison and yet call themselves by the name of Christ." Dr. Annie Besant, once a declared opponent of Mahatmaji's movement, writes: "Among us, as I write, is dwelling for a brief space one whose presence is a benediction, and whose feet sanctify every house into which he enters—Gandhi, our martyr and saint. \* \* \* As I stood for a moment facing him, hand clasped in hand, I saw in him that deathless spirit which redeems by suffering and in death wins life for others, one of those marked out for

the high service of becoming saviours and helpers of humanity." The Rt. Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Sastri observes : "His compassion and tenderness are infinite. The present writer stood by as he wiped the sores of a leper with the ends of his own garment. It is his complete mastery of the passions, his realisation of the ideal of a Sannyasin in all the rigour of its Eastern conception which has crowned him with the title of Mahatma or the 'Great Soul.'" The same writer says further on : "The writer of these lines is not one of Mr. Gandhi's political followers or a disciple of his in religion. But he claims to have known him for some years and to have been a sympathetic student of his teachings. He has felt when near him the chastening effects of a great personality. He has derived much strength from observing the workings of an iron will. He has learned from a living example something of the nature of Duty and the worship due to her. He has occasionally caught some dim perception of the great things that lie hidden below the surface and of the struggles and tribulations which invest life with its awe and grandeur. An ancient Sanskrit verse says : 'Do not tell me of holy waters, of stone images ; they may cleanse us if they do after a long period. A saintly person purifies us at sight.'" Everyone is familiar with the famous sermons of the Rev. J. H. Holmes on Mahatmaji, in one of which he says : "When I think of Gandhi, I think of Jesus Christ. He lives his life, he speaks his word ; he suffers, strives and will some day nobly die for his kingdom upon earth." In the course of a sermon after the arrest of the Mahatma he says : "Does not this prove him to be the Christ of our age? To-day, as in the olden times, it is no longer a question as to whether Christ is here or not. It is a question of who will recognise and follow." The sweet singer of India, Srimati Sarojini Devi writes thus : "Let us not follow the conventional mode of the world and wait for a man to be dead to canonise him ; but rather let our critical judgment confirm the unerring instinct of the people that recognises in Mahatma Gandhi a lineal descendant of those great sons of compassion who became



the servants of humanity—Gautama Buddha, Chaitanya, Ramanuja, Ramakrishna. He lacks, may be, the breadth and height and ecstasy of their mystical attainment ; but he is not less than them in his intensity of love, his sincerity of service and a lofty simplicity of life which is the austere flower of his renunciation and self-sacrifice.”

These are testimonies from persons whom all the world knows and respects, and who could by no means be considered prejudiced in his favour and called blind admirers. And they are enough to give one an idea of the vast complexity and the remarkable greatness of the personality of the Mahatma. After so much has been said on the subject, it would be as superfluous and foolish as to ‘paint the lilies and colour the rainbow’ to go about proving how closely the Mahatma answers to the definition of a ‘Great Soul.’ Nor is it necessary to discuss Mahatmaji’s personal conviction and achievements in Ahimsa or non-violence which is the first article of his faith as well as the last article of his creed. It may be said that to him Ahimsa is not merely the negative virtue of not injuring any living being, whether in mind, speech or body, but it stands for the largest love and the greatest charity, necessarily implying truth and fearlessness. This love is identical with truth and is a dynamic power of the soul. He often repeats: “God is, even though the world deny Him. Truth stands even though there be no public support. It is self-sustained.” His religion ‘is not formal religion or customary religion, but that which underlies all religions—a religion which brings man face to face with his Master.’ Perhaps, some wise readers would observe that all these are taught by our Sanatana Dharma, and for the matter of that by all the great religions of the world! Quite true! But they are only taught and seldom put in practice. The beauty of the life of the Mahatma lies in the fact that he applies these most rigorously to the details of everyday conduct and even to politics, in which field all the commandments of God—to judge by the actions of the statesmen and rulers of the civilised world—are not recognised at all, and if ever recognised are either

broken without any scruple or blandished forth to hood-wink the unwary.

Mahatmaji speaks of himself thus: "Most religious men are politicians in disguise. I, however, who wear the guise of a politician, am at heart a religious man." When he once accepts a principle, he will not yield an inch even to his dearest friends and not even when forced with the alternative of extreme unpopularity and a complete desertion by all his adherents. This much cannot be said of any public man or statesman of the past or in the present day. To what an extent he can carry his principles into practice is well illustrated by the following incident. When the late Mr. Gokhale was his guest in South Africa, the Mahatma insisted upon doing all the menial tasks including even that of sweeping, and when it was suggested that somebody else might be given the task the reply he gave was typical of his attitude. He said that regarding any piece of work which had to be done, there was no highness or lowness about it, and if any work was thought to be too dirty for him (Gandhi), it should be regarded equally dirty and low even for any poor sweeper who was just as much a human being as he himself. Similarly in the case of the removal of untouchability, long before he began to preach it to the public, he adopted as his own daughter the Pariah girl Lakshmi, and it is well-known how even in the Yerrowada prison, almost the first question he would be asking of the visitor was—'How Lakshmi is doing?' Regarding his extreme sense of duty, we are told, that during his serious illness some years ago, his youngest son, who was then at Madras entrusted with the duty of the Hindi Prachar, went to the Satyagraha Ashrama in his natural anxiety and eagerness to meet the father. And how was he treated? He was rebuked for deserting his post of duty and immediately ordered to go back and take up the task. Whether the boy actually went back to Madras or not, it is at least characteristic of Mahatmaji to say so.

An incident illustrative of the extreme coolness and presence of mind of the Mahatma is that when a cobra



fell upon him, he not only remained unmoved but asked others round him to do the same, and no wonder that the creature too quietly passed away. We have also heard people say as to what length he would carry his faith in Ahimsa. In the Ashrama, for example, if any inmate or member went wrong, far from punishing him what he would do was to pray, do penance, suffer and punish himself with the consequence that no member could dream of committing mistakes. Even if something untoward happened, the erring member would so entreat his 'Bapuji' or 'Father' (so he is affectionately called in the Ashrama and in most parts of Gujerat too) not to punish himself or prescribe some penance. There are so many such stories current about him, but space forbids any detailed recapitulation of them all here. We have simply contented ourselves by referring to a few only, and they reveal the most humane and soft sides of his wonderful personality.

How simple, natural and unaffected is Mahatmaji's conduct at all times can be judged from the following. The famous ultimatum to the Viceroy was being discussed at a meeting of the Working Committee of the Congress. The clock struck 5 p.m. which was his supper time. So all on a sudden with a sweet smile for an apology that the members might not mind it, he had his simple and frugal fare of a few slices of bread and goat's milk, and finishing that he resumed his discussion of the ultimatum. With one more and perhaps the crowning piece we must bring to a close these personal touches. It was a few months after the Nagpur Session of the Congress, where the capturing of the local bodies was adopted as one of the items of the programme. In the municipal elections of an important city in Gujerat, the non-co-operators captured as many as 80 per cent. of the seats, and the local leaders wanted to consult the Mahatma and take his advice as to what should be done. Forthwith a deputation of half a dozen of prominent leaders started for the Satyagraha Ashrama and reached the place in due time. It was early morning, and they learnt that 'Bapuji' was

in the gymnasium of the school with the boys. The leaders in their eagerness would not wait, and they marched on there. What a sight! The man who is recognised as one of the greatest personalities of the world, the Dictator of the Indian National Congress, was found sitting and playing on the sand surrounded by a group of tiny children, who not only took him to be one of their own but seemed so delighted and charmed with him as to forget all about the outside world. Most picturesque was the scene of a little urchin perched on the shoulders of the Mahatma. As soon as the leaders entered the sacred place, they were greeted by a sweet smile from Mahatmaji and were quietly but peremptorily ordered to clear away. And he added as if in explanation of this apparent rudeness that it was a sin to stand there as the children would feel shy and lose their delight. This shows the man, and comments are superfluous.

Perhaps it may not be known to all that in the Ashrama prayer at dawn one of the daily items is the recitation of the nineteen verses of the Gita beginning from verse 53 of Chap. II to the end. And we may not be wrong if we infer that the ideal placed before the Ashrama is that of the man of steady wisdom which the Lord explains to Arjuna. It would be an idle speculation as to the measure of success attained by the Mahatma himself toward this ideal. But one can safely assert without any fear of contradiction that among all the public men of the world few could ever hope to reach the stage which he has attained.

No other great religions of the world is so absolutely impersonal as the Hindu religion. But it is also tragically true that at the present day the followers of this very religion are everywhere found worshipping personalities and ignoring the principles which they all lived and embodied. Hence we find that there are many in this country who would preach the Mahatma as an incarnation of the Divinity, literally worship his feet and shower gold and gems upon him but would not raise their little finger for the principles he would die for. We are not at all



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suggesting that such things are bad in themselves, for it is but natural for man to pay his outward respect where such purity, love and renunciation are manifested, but the matter should not end there. For, after all such great men are nothing but the embodiments of the 'Time Spirit,' and it is by the spread of their principles among the masses is their mission fulfilled. We regard the Mahatma as this 'Time Spirit,' and it is the supreme duty of those who admire him and have faith in him, to do their best to live his ideals and principles in their daily life.

GOD'S HAND.

III

PROTECTING ANGELS.

When Von Asselt was sent to Sumatra, in the year 1856, he was the first European missionary to go among the wild Battaks. Twenty years prior two American missionaries had gone there, but they had been killed, and since then no effort had been made to preach among these people.

Von Asselt went alone. He was unable to make himself understood not knowing a single syllable of their language. But from their gestures and hostile looks it was only too evident that he was not welcome in their midst. However, trusting in God he stayed at his post, and before long his wife joined him. The first two years were years of terrible hardships, and it was only through prayer that they had the strength to continue their labour.

When they had lived in the same place for two years, they moved several hours' journey inland, among a tribe somewhat civilised, who received them more kindly. There they built a small house with three rooms, and life became a little more easy and cheerful.

When they had been in this new place for some months, a man came to them from the district where they had been, and whom they had known there. Von Asselt was sitting on a bench in front of his house, and the

visitor sat down beside him. For a while they talked of this, that and the other. Then the man said, "Now *Tuan* (teacher), I have a question to ask."

"And what is that?" said Von Asselt.

"I would like to know who are your watchmen."

"What watchmen do you mean? I have no watchmen."

"I mean the men whom you station around your house at night to protect you."

"But I have no watchmen," Von Asselt said again. "I have only a little herdboy and a little cook. They would make poor watchmen."

Then the visitor looked at him incredulously, as if he wished to say: "O, do not try to make me believe that, for I have seen them myself."

After a short silence the man said, "May I look through your house, to see if they are hid there?"

"Yes, certainly," Von Asselt said laughing. "You may look through the house. You will not find anybody." So he went in and searched everywhere, but, of course, found no one. He seemed very much disappointed and still incredulous.

Then Von Asselt curious to know what it all meant, asked the man to tell him about the watchmen of whom he spoke, and then he told the story.

"When you first came to us," the visitor said, "we were very angry at you. We did not want you to live among us, we did not trust you, and believed you had some design against us. Therefore we came together and resolved to kill you and your wife. Accordingly, we went to your house night after night, but when we came near, there always stood close around the house a double row of men with glittering weapons. So we did not dare to attack them to get into your house.

"Not willing to abandon our plan, we went to a professional assassin,* and asked him if he would undertake

* There still was among the savage Battaks at that time a special guild of assassins who killed for hire any one whom it was desired to get out of the way.

to kill you and your wife. The assassin laughed at us because of our cowardice and said, 'I fear no one. I will get through those watchmen.' So we came all together one evening, and the assassin swinging his weapon over his head went on before us. As we neared your house, we remained behind and let him go on alone. But in a short time he came running back, and said, 'No, I dare not go through alone. Two rows of big, strong men stand there, close together, and their weapons shine like fire.' Then he gave it up to kill you. But, now, tell me, *Tuan*, who are those watchmen? Have you never seen them? "

Then Von Asselt told him that neither he nor his wife had ever seen them, that they did not know even that they were there, that these men were angels sent by God to protect him and his wife, that God had promised in His Word that He would take care of His children, and that He had shown them His angels that they also might believe and worship Him.

IV

THE CLOCK STRUCK THIRTEEN.

It was the midnight hour, in the town of Plymouth, many years ago, when two men stood close to the great clock of the town. The men were strangers and had not spoken. But when the clock struck the midnight hour one of them said, addressing the other, "Did you notice that the clock struck thirteen instead of twelve?" "Yes," the other replied, "I noticed it. It is strange indeed. I wonder how it happened!" The men then bade each other "Good night," and parted. One of these men was a gentleman by the name of Captain Jarvis.

It was not very long afterwards that this same Captain Jarvis awoke very early one morning, and feeling a strange restlessness, got up, dressed, and went down to the front door of his house. When he opened the door, what was his surprise to find his groom standing

there with his horse saddled and bridled, ready for him to mount.

“Why did you bring my horse without my order?” the Captain said. “It is yet very early.”

“I had a strong feeling that you would be wanting your horse, Sir,” the groom replied. “It seemed impossible for me to stay longer in my bed. It was as if some one urged me to get your horse ready and bring it to you.”

The Captain was astonished and a little annoyed. But as it was a beautiful morning he mounted the horse and rode off. He had no special object in view, and he let his horse go wherever he chose. Down to the riverside they went, close to the spot where the ferryboat took passengers across. What, then, was the Captain’s amazement when he saw the ferryman there, waiting with his boat to ferry him across at that early hour.

“How are you here so early, my man?” he inquired at once.

“I couldn’t rest in my bed, Sir,” the ferryman replied, “for I had a feeling that I was wanted to ferry some one across.”

The Captain and horse both got into the boat, and were conveyed to the other side. Again the horse was given his own way as to where he should go. On and on they went, till at length they came to a large country town.

The Captain noticed some commotion in the town, and asked a passer-by if there was anything of interest going on.

“No, Sir,” the passer-by replied, “nothing but the trial of a man for murder.”

The Captain rode to the place where the trial was going on, dismounted, and entered the building. As he walked in, he heard the judge say, addressing the prisoner, “Have you anything to say for yourself? All the evidence is against you.”

“I have nothing to say, Sir, except that I am an innocent man. I was far away from the place where the crime was committed. But there is only one man in all

the world who could prove it. I don't know that man's name, nor where he lives. At the time the murder is said to have taken place, we stood together in the town of Plymouth when it was midnight, and we both heard the great town clock strike thirteen, instead of twelve, and remarked it to each other. If he were here, he could speak for me, but, unless God intervenes, my case is hopeless, as I cannot get him."

The Captain hearing this was thunder-struck. "I am here! I am here!" he shouted. "I was the man who stood at midnight beside the great Plymouth clock and heard it strike thirteen, instead of twelve. What the prisoner says is absolutely true. I identify him as the man. On the night of the murder, at the very time it was committed, that man was with me, at Plymouth, and we remarked to each other how remarkable it was that the clock should strike thirteen at the midnight hour."

The condemned man was thus proved innocent, and was at once set free. God's hand had saved him.

S. A.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from p. 514.)

योऽसौ गुणक्षोभकृतो विकारः प्रधानमूलान्महतः प्रसूतः ॥

अहं त्रिवृन्मोहविकल्पहेतुर्वैकारिकस्तामस ऐन्द्रियश्च ॥ ३२ ॥

32. This modification, due to God¹ who upsets the equilibrium of the Gunas, produced from the Mahat which, again, has for its cause the Prakriti, is known as egoism. It is threefold—Vaikarika,² Tamasa and Aindriya—and is the cause of doubt characterised by ignorance.

[1 God—as the operative cause.

² *Vaikarika* &c.—the same as Sattvika, Tamasa and Rajasa, representing the divisions of Adhidaiva, Adhibhuta and Adhyatma respectively.

One must realise the Atman by rooting out Egoism—this is the suggestion of this and the next verse.]

आत्मापरिज्ञानमयो विवादो ह्यस्तीति नास्तीति भिदार्थनिष्ठः ॥
व्यर्थोऽपि नैवोपरमेत पुंसां मत्तः परावृत्तधियां स्वलोकात् ॥३३॥

33. The dispute as to whether the Atman is or is not, hinges on a difference of views merely, and is due to the non-perception of the Atman. Even though it is baseless, it never ceases¹ for men who are averse to Me, their own self.

[1 *Never ceases*—and creates an endless round of births and deaths.]

उद्धव उवाच ॥

त्वत्तः परावृत्तधियः स्वकृतैः कर्मभिः प्रभो ॥

उच्चावचान्यथा देहान्गृह्णन्ति विसृजन्ति च ॥ ३४ ॥

तन्ममाख्याहि गोविन्द दुर्विभाव्यमनात्मभिः ॥

नह्येतत्प्रायशो लोके विद्वांसः सन्ति वञ्चिताः ॥ ३५ ॥

Uddhava said :

34-35. Tell me, O Lord, O Govinda, how¹ men averse to Thee obtain and give up, through their own actions, bodies high and low. It is inscrutable for those who are addicted to the senses. Few are the men who know it in the world,—the majority are deluded.

[1 *How &c.*—He asks about transmigration.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच ॥

मनः कर्ममयं नृणामिन्द्रियैः पञ्चभिर्युतम् ॥

लोकाल्लोकं प्रयात्यन्य आत्मा तदनुवर्तते ॥ ३६ ॥

The Lord said :

36. The mind¹ of man, swayed by past work, goes from one sphere to another, accompanied by the five² organs. The Atman, which is distinct from it, follows³ it.

[1 *Mind &c.*—The whole thing, says the Lord, is due to the subtle body.]

² *Five*—implies all the ten.

³ *Follows*—through identification.]

ध्यायन्मनोऽनुविषयान्दृष्टान्वानुश्रुतानथ ॥

उद्यत्सीदत्कर्मतन्त्रं स्मृतिस्तदनुशाम्यति ॥ ३७ ॥

37. The mind swayed by past work, as it dwells on sense-objects experienced or heard of, flashes¹ up with regard to these and sleeps over the past. After this memory is lost.

[1 *Flashes &c.*—It is all a question of memory. The new body is remembered and the old forgotten. The centre of identification is thus changed.]

विषयाभिनिवेशेन नात्मानं यत्स्मरेत्पुनः ॥

जन्तोर्वैकस्यचिद्धेतोमृत्युरत्यन्तविस्मृतिः ॥ ३८ ॥

38. Being engrossed in a particular sense-object,¹ man no more recollects himself. This utter self-forgetfulness of man, from any cause,² is verily his death.

[1 *Sense-object*—the new body produced by past work. So also in the next verse.

2 *Any cause*—either the intense enjoyment of an angelic body or the extreme pain of a low body undergoing tortures.]

जन्म त्वात्मतया पुंसः सर्वभावेन भूरिद ॥

विषयस्वीकृतिं प्राहुर्यथा स्वप्नमनोरथः ॥ ३९ ॥

39. O generous one, the acceptance¹ by a man of a particular sense-object completely as himself is called his birth—as in the case of dream and imagination.

[1 *Acceptance &c.*—It is all due to identification.]

स्वप्नं मनोरथं चैत्थं प्राक्तनं न स्मरत्यसौ ॥

तत्र पूर्वमिवात्मानमपूर्वं चानुपश्यति ॥ ४० ॥

40. In a similar way, he no more remembers the old dream¹ and imagination. In the new experience he considers his old self as just come into being.

[1 *Dream &c.*—of the body.]

इन्द्रियायनसृष्टयेदं त्रैविध्यं भाति वस्तुनि ॥

बहिरन्तर्भिदाहेतुर्जनोऽसज्जनकृद्यथा ॥ ४१ ॥

41. As a man creates phantom bodies in a dream, so this threefold division¹ which is the creation of mind appears in the Atman, which becomes² the cause of the division of interior and exterior.

[1 *Division*—into Adhidaiva, etc.

² *Becomes &c.*—in this instance, through identification. The man has subjective and objective experiences, that is.]

नित्यदा ह्यङ्ग भूतानि भवन्ति न भवन्ति च ॥

कालेनालक्ष्यवेगेन सूक्ष्मत्वात्तन्न दृश्यते ॥ ४२ ॥

42. My friend, through the imperceptible march of Time creatures are being continually born and dying. But this is not observed because of its subtlety.

[The Lord refers unasked to this constant molecular change in the body to stimulate a spirit of dispassion.]

(To be continued.)

REPORTS AND APPEALS.

THE THIRD GENERAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION FOR THE YEARS 1917-1922.

The above report contains a general survey of the activities in which the Mission has been engaged during the aforesaid years. The works of the Mission may be classified under three general heads: (1) *Missionary work*, including specially preaching and publication of religious literature; (2) *Philanthropic work*; (3) *Educational work*.

The missionary work has been done from the Maths and Ashramas where the members by living a life of practical spirituality and holding occasional classes, conversazioni and lectures directly or indirectly do preaching work. There are altogether 17 such institutions in India and 4 outside India. Under the second head fall all those activities of the Mission which go to ameliorate the physical sufferings of the people, giving relief in times of famine, flood and other scourges of nature and establishing dispensaries, nursing homes and the like. Temporary

relief works on the occasion of providential mishaps are generally organised from the head quarters of the Mission at Belur, and 19 such relief works have been done during the years under review in Bengal, Behar, United Provinces, Assam and Burma. There are altogether 12 permanent philanthropic centres affiliated to the Mission in various parts of India as well as Burma. Under the educational work come all those activities which are concerned with spreading education among the people, and they include the conducting of industrial schools, orphanages, residential schools and boarding houses for boys and girls. The report mentions the names of 10 such affiliated institutions besides those which are likely to be affiliated soon.

The appendix contains the summary of the Provident Fund account year by year, which was published in detail from time to time as occasions demanded. From a cursory glance at the names of those who contributed to the Mission fund, we find that though the Mission has got friends and sympathisers throughout the length and breadth of the country, its activities are mainly confined to a few provinces in India. We know that wherever a centre of the Mission has been started, it has originally grown out of the nucleus formed by the interested local people. So it is hoped that our friends of the unrepresented provinces will show a keener interest in the activity of the Mission by locally organising such works.

THE FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON, FOR THE YEAR 1924.

Within the short period of four years this institution seems to have grown in great usefulness as is shown by the report of its work under review. In the Indoor Hospital altogether 1,113 patients were treated, whereas in the Outdoor Hospital as many as 48,355 cases were attended to in the year. The total receipts of the year amounted to Rs. 25,274—14—3, including the balance of the previous year, and the expenditure came up to Rs. 23,291-9-3.

The Sevashrama is, however, labouring under a great disadvantage owing to a great financial burden as indicated by the outstanding loan of Rs. 8,500 at the end of the year. In view of the fact that this institution renders help to suffering humanity irrespective of caste, creed or nationality, it deserves the sympathy of all generous people, so that the financial handicap may soon be removed.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION BRANCH CENTRE, DACCA, FOR THE YEAR 1924.

This centre is engaged in useful works of various kinds. In the year under review, it conducted as many as 332 religious classes in different parts of the town and in the Mission house. In the Free School started and maintained by it boys of the locality get free elementary education, and there were altogether 89 boys in the roll at the end of the year. It has got a small Charitable Dispensary, in the outdoor department of which 3,379 cases were attended to, and the indoor department treated 20 patients.

This Mission centre also extended its activities outside the area of the town and sent relief parties to work in villages during epidemics in the districts of Dacca, Mymensingh and Sylhet. We wish the institution all success.

THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA, BALIATI, DACCA.

This Ashrama was started in 1910 and has since been conducting a Free Primary School for boys, another for girls and a Tol for Sanskrit study. It has also a Charitable Dispensary attached to it and undertook some temporary relief works. We thank the organisers of this Ashrama for the silent work of help and service they are doing.

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA SOCIETY, CALCUTTA, FOR 1924.

This Society was started by some enthusiastic members of the Calcutta public in 1923 with Srimat Swami

Abhedananda as its President to organise various works of public utility. During the year, as many as 150 religious classes were held, and in the industrial department, teaching various vocational arts, there were altogether 20 boys on the roll. The Society has extended its activities by starting branch centres at Darjeeling and Hajigunj (Comilla). At the latter place an M. E. School is being maintained with 80 boys on the roll. The Society has proved useful in various other ways.

THE MATRI MANDIR, JAYRAMBATI, BANKURA.

Jayrambati is an out of the way village in the district of Bankura, sanctified by the birth of the Holy Mother. The locality is generally infested with malaria, and the people are extremely backward in education. So the above Ashrama has been conducting a Charitable Dispensary, a Vidyapith teaching up to the Upper Primary Standard and a Night School for the benefit of the local people. But as the unostentatious works in a remote village fail to draw the attention of the wider public, the Ashrama has been struggling for funds to widen the scope of its activities which are so needful. Any contribution in the shape of money, medicine etc. will be thankfully received by Srimat Swami Saradananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, 1 Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

Besides, we are glad to receive the Reports of the following philanthropic institutions which also are doing much useful work in various ways :

- (1) The Ramakrishna Seva-Samity, Sylhet.
- (2) The Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Chittagong.
- (3) The Ramakrishna Seva-Samity, Kalma, Dacca.
- (4) The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Narayangunj, Dacca.
- (5) The Ramakrishna Mission Branch Centre, Sonargaon, Dacca.

NEWS AND NOTES.

ON SIR J. C. BOSE'S RESEARCHES.

The latest developments in the researches in plant-physiology which Sir J. C. Bose has been carrying on for the last quarter of a century in his laboratories, almost uncontestedly establish the truth of the uniformity of life between animals and plants. What exactly is meant by 'uniformity of life'? Life in common parlance is very loosely used for the Self (Atman) as well as for those finer actions and reactions or sensibilities which we find closely associated with the ego. In Indian philosophy and religion a fundamental difference is recognised between these aspects. Thus take the feelings of sorrow and gladness, sleep and wakefulness, pain and suffering. All these (as distinguished from, say, blood circulation or digestion) we generally consider to be signs of the existence of Life or Self. Philosophically and strictly speaking, they are nothing of the kind. They do not prove the existence of the Self. That which you can handle with and know through material instruments can only be material. Those feelings or sensibilities only *appear* as endowed with consciousness, or as manifestations of it, being in fact mere actions and reactions of matter in its subtler form. As the Gita tersely puts it: "All actions are wrought by the qualities of Nature only. The self, deluded by egoism, thinketh, 'I am the doer'." Thus the uniformity of life which the great scientist proves is not the uniform existence of the Atman or Self-consciousness in plants and animals, but only the identity and uniformity of their subtler actions and reactions which, like any other material phenomena, are capable of being handled and demonstrated in a laboratory. And inferentially he proves the truth of the Vedantic conception of *neti neti Atma*, i.e., this Atman is neither the senses, nor the desires, the mind, the ego or the Buddhi, but is beyond whatever is predicated of It.


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However, till Sir Jagadish made his discoveries known, even this uniformity of animals and plants was not recognised. They were supposed to represent two streams of life having nothing in common, the one restless and responsive with reflex movements and pulsating organs, and the other seemingly passive and irresponsive. The plant, it was considered, has no muscular tissue or nerve. But the results obtained in his laboratory prove that the plant is not a mere mass of vegetative growth, but that its every part is instinct with sensibility. We are able to record (with instruments constructed by Indian craftsmen under Sir J. C. Bose's direction, which are marvels of human ingenuity and accurate precision) the throbbings of its pulsating life, and find them wax and wane according to the life conditions of the plant and cease with its death. We find the different parts of the plant linked together by nervous threads, so that the tremor of excitation initiated at one place courses through the whole. In these and many other ways, the life-actions of the plant and man are alike. Thus is proved again through the cold mechanism of science what became patent to the intuitive vision of India's seers thousands of years ago, that all life is one and is governed by identical laws.

This synthetic vision is India's peculiar gift to the fund of world's knowledge. In all departments of her life and activity, this has been her one unceasing effort,—the discovery of the underlying unity of apparently conflicting and unrelated phenomena. And so it is not mere coincidence that her greatest scientist to-day is striving after the same synthetic realisation in the realms of the Western science and has achieved such a conspicuous success. This success has been due not a little to his following India's ancient method of knowledge, which is concentration and self-control. This has been declared to be the direct pathway to the heart of things. Before the concentrated gaze of a purified mind, things reveal their inner secrets. Hence it is that not only the philosophers and religious teachers, but also the teachers of such secular

knowledge as astronomy or medicine, are looked upon as Rishis or seers. A Hindu boy enters the student life with initiation into the process of concentration and meditation. What a contrast to the Western method of education, which is primarily based on observation and experience! Not that the latter method is futile. They are rather complementary. As Sir J. C. Bose himself observes in course of his recent address at Darjeeling:

“What is the specific gift which India offers for the advancement of knowledge? It is first in the training of mind by habits of concentration after years of discipline; the mind then apprehends truth almost instinctively. The second is the gift of great imagination held in check by wisdom. Our mind is the true laboratory where every step of the experiment has first to be visualised and afterwards verified by instruments of surpassing sensitiveness and accuracy. In order to discover the invisible mechanism in the interior of the tree, one has to become the tree and feel the pulsation of its beating heart. It is then necessary to get access to the smallest unit of life, the ‘life atom,’ and record its throbbing pulsations. When microscopic vision fails, we have still to follow the invisible. Every layer in the hidden interior of the tree has to be explored by means of the Electric Probe invented for the purpose. It is then only that we realise the ineffable wonder that has hitherto been hidden from us. For the little we can see is nothing compared with the vastness of that which we cannot. Out of the very imperfection of our senses we have to build a raft of thought to make daring adventures on the great seas of the unknown. I am glad that the importance of the Indian method is being appreciated in the West. ‘The Times,’ in a leading article, speaks of the work pursued in my Institute as the fertile union of the introspective method of the East with the experimental method of the Western science. It proceeds to say in regard to the work carried out by the speaker that ‘whilst we in Europe were still steeped in imperialism, the subtle Eastern had swept the whole universe into a synthesis and had seen the one in all its changing manifestations.’ The



greatest contribution to knowledge would be made when the East and the West can unite their genius for common benefit of humanity."

This happy union, we are glad to note, has been already realised considerably in the Institute which Sir J. C. Bose founded some years ago, and we unite ourselves with him in his fervent prayer for the fulfilment of its glorious future. "In founding my Institute seven years ago, I hoped to be able to revive the great traditions of my country, which so far back as twenty-five centuries ago, welcomed all scholars from different parts of the world, within the precincts of its ancient seats of learning at Nalanda and at Taxilla. That dream is coming true, for applications have been received from Professors and Post-graduate Scholars from the West, for being enrolled in my Institute to receive special training in the new methods initiated in India for the advancement of world's knowledge. I may still live to see the fulfilment of my dream, the foundation of a true International University."

May his dream come true!

#### ON THE BRINK OF A PRECIPICE.

Men who have climbed mountains and have seen huge precipices, alone can guess what a slip of the foot would mean from such stupendous heights. And one could better imagine than describe what the fate would be of a fully intoxicated man venturing to tread those narrow paths over the staggering heights.

Intoxicated with the false ideas of nationalism and patriotism, Europe has been marching through the course of centuries with banners afloat in the name of culture and civilisation. With the power of her dollar and machine, she has been conquering peoples and exterminating races throughout the world. This mad rush after materialism and commercialism reacted on her own self, and the result of this organised brute force was seen in the great European tragedy of 1914-1919. Still she has not, it would seem, learnt her lesson. Still, her race-pride

and race-hatred, the basis of all her nationalism and patriotism, seem not dead. And this state of things threatens the civilisation which she has been building up during the past centuries. This civilisation is essentially materialistic. The science it developed always marched with a Bible in one hand and a sword in the other.

With the growing idea of a narrow nationalism, suspicion and jealousy have grown among the peoples of Europe, and instead of creating one humanity and one Christian brotherhood, it has tended to make the gulf between man and man wider and wider. And science has helped the politician in his suicidal ambitions. The Western nations have not yet realised that war cannot end war. In spite of the terrible sufferings undergone they have not yet realised with Lord Haldane that an army organised for keeping peace cannot keep peace. They have not realised that until they stop their mad rush after this pelf and power there cannot be peace. "He who raises the sword shall perish by the sword." It would look as if this is coming to pass in the near future.

An interesting article on "The Future of Warfare: Western and Eastern possibilities," in the *New Orient* by Lieut. Commander Kenworthy, M.P., gives us some idea of the preparations that are going on behind the League of Nations, the Courts of Arbitrations and Treaties of Mutual Assistance. Britain is busy in her naval dockyards, building her Nelson and Rodnez, the new battle-ships which are to cost her about ten to twelve crores of rupees each. France, Italy, Germany, Japan and America are not behind Great Britain in building cruisers. Lieut. Kenworthy points out that most deadly weapons are being made in the laboratories of chemists and physicists, and the next war in its destructiveness would absolutely dwarf the last great war. These are the days of the wireless, and the aeroplane would be able to cause devastation and havoc by the use of various kinds of bombs laden with fatal gas and disease germs, being operated by the wireless. The result would be that the peace-loving population will be assailed.



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In the days of the Mahabharata, for that matter, even in later historical times, the Indian warfare never allowed the tiller of the soil, or the woman or the child to be murdered in the name of war. The Kshatriya Dharma requires men to fight only with their equals. Even Ravana, the story goes, in his fight with Sri Ramachandra stopped fighting once when Sri Ramachandra was uncharioted and even offered a chariot to his opponent before starting the fight again. But what could such moral codes have for a civilisation which holds, "All is fair in love and war"?

If the terrible possibilities pointed out by the writer are to become real, even in a partial measure, who can deny that the Western civilisation is on the brink of a precipice?

#### THE PROBLEM OF ALL PROBLEMS.

A great problem which is seriously facing all who have got the good of the country at heart, is the slow and gradual deterioration of the health of our student community. The Welfare Committee formed by the Calcutta University, on examining about a thousand students of Bengal, found that 60 p.c. of them had defective health. The case is no better in other provinces. The sunken eyes and weak, emaciated figures are the general characteristics of the majority of students. It is but natural, with such a poor resource of health, our young men will find themselves totally handicapped in the struggle of life—not to speak of their helplessness in the desire of fulfilling any higher ambition. When they go out into the world, they invariably seek some easy life of routine work, where no initiative is necessary and where they will not have to face much adverse circumstances. All their higher ambitions and idealism are frozen by the first touch of the cold reality of the world, and they count the days only to see the end of their miserable life, as they deem it. This state of things speaks but poorly of the future of our nation, and those who want to build a national fabric,

without remedying these defects, may as well hope to build a castle on quicksands.

The cause of this is not only the poor economic condition of our middle class people, as some are apt to suppose, but many other causes have combined to worsen the situation. The University examination, where a few hours' work determines the result of the whole year's labour and which to a great extent influences the future career of their life, costs the health and life of many of our students. From all quarters, our young men get a strong urge to cultivate their intellect, but no encouragement to develop their manliness. This makes them greatly timid and powerless, so much so that in their after-life they find it impossible even to protect their hearth and home in the hour of sore need. Then many of our students do not know the ordinary laws of hygiene, and a large number carelessly break them led by a kind of false philosophy that the body needs not much care. However dark may be the situation and however gloomy the future, we cannot deny that much of the responsibility lies with ourselves, and the situation can be greatly improved, if we put our best foot foremost. There are some factors over which we have no control, and until they are remedied, the students and their guardians should try to do what can be done in the matter. What is needed most is to create a strong public opinion, so that all concerned may be more particular about the health of our students.

The Calcutta University is to be congratulated on its having taken up the problem in right earnest. For some-time past it has been examining the health of the students to find out a solution, and recently the Senate by a resolution has made physical exercise binding upon the students. But mere compulsion in this matter will not help much ; for, when the students take to physical exercise as a matter of compulsion and not from a strong desire within to improve their health, much of the effect is sure to be lost.



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### UNDER WHICH FLAG?

Any one who reads through the legal columns of a daily newspaper can find that cases of moral delinquency are increasing in the world. Even in India cases of kidnaping and abduction, assault and rape, enticement and seduction are becoming more common than before. We are tempted to ask whether we are really advancing in civilisation or going back to a stage worse than savagery. For, as Havelock Ellis observes, some of the savages of African are more chaste than the Europeans.

The large number of divorce suits, sensationalisms and matters of the like kind that the English dailies are forced to provide to satisfy their readers and the mass evidence produced before the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases, ought to be an eye-opener for those who run after everything of the West. We shall not be far wrong in characterising this state of things as the inevitable consequences of a purely materialistic outlook on life. Nevertheless, reformers are not wanting in India who wish that our society should be modelled according to the European pattern.

We by no means depreciate the entire civilisation of the West. We believe that a happy union between the East and West is quite possible and desirable as well. Each will have to be enriched by a policy of give and take. A purely ascetic ideal is not for the ordinary run of humanity ; and in this world of activity a bit of worldliness is necessary. Some seem to think that the Indian outlook on life, at least in ancient times, was other-worldly, and this outlook is responsible for the present degeneration of India. This view shows a lack of historical knowledge. India's fall is rather to be attributed to her deviation from the true ideals of her own. Her miserable position is due to the fact that she refused to share with others what was valuable in her own. She buried herself in isolation with a contempt for the Mlechhas, instead of sowing broadcast the truths of Vedanta, she kept it under lock and key and thus brought ruin on herself.

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The present contact of India with the West has, however, brought her into the vortex of the world's struggles and interests. She has been roused from her age-long slumber. As one just got out of bed she does not see the way before her clearly. Divided counsels and want of resolution are the two dangers threatening her progress and advancement. She has a great mission to fulfil, namely, to prove to the world that permanent peace and happiness is possible only upon a recognition of the supremacy of the spiritual interests of humanity.

She has naturally a double duty to perform. She has to bring out the treasure of the Vedanta philosophy and scatter them broadcast amongst all the sons of India irrespective of caste, colour or creed. Also she has to send out the best representatives of her spiritual culture to the West and help them avert the menace of Mammon worship which is threatening her with extinction.

#### SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY.

The *Tithi* of Swami Vivekananda's sixty-fourth nativity falls on 6th January, 1926. We hope all public and private bodies celebrating this birthday will kindly send us their reports at an early date.

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