

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. th. 14.

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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MAHASAMADHI

It is with a heart overwhelmed with grief that we have to announce that Swami Saradananda, the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission entered into Mahasamadhi on the 19th August at 2-34 A.M. The melancholy event took place at the Ashrama at 1, Mukherjee Lane, Calcutta, where he was on the 6th ultimo attacked with apoplexy which ultimately ended fatally.

Swami Saradananda was one of those direct disciples, who at the sacred call of Sri Ramakrishna gave up the world and devoted their whole life to fulfil and spread the message of their Master. He came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna in the year 1882, and was one of the organisers of the Ramakrishna Mission, having been throughout its secretary from the very beginning.

The early life spent in severe austerities, later in obedience to the desire of Swami Vivekananda he applied himself to work and showed how the teachings of the Gita can be practicalised in the modern age. For whoever came in contact with the Swami, could find in him a living example of स्थितप्रज्ञः (one

steady in wisdom). Calm and quiet, 'resting in the Self,' though belonging ever to a higher plane of existence he could bestow his best thoughts on solving the minutest problems of the Mission unruffled and undisturbed and never has anyone seen his tranquility lost. Whoever observed this aspect of his character, would be forced to feel that behind the surface of the life he outwardly lived, there was a deeper life whose depth the whole world could not fathom.

To the public Swami Saradananda was known only as an organiser of social service and philanthropic activities. But to many, the spring from which his actions flowed was unknown. Newspaper readers did hardly know that hundreds of persons would look to him for the solace of their life—mundane and spiritual, and many a wearied soul would find rest under his feet who now feel like orphans at his passing away. To many he had been the life and soul, and his passing away has been much more than death to themselves.

May He who has made us heavy laden and forlorn change our deep woes into great courage and strength so that we may go forward in life with a firm determination to incorporate at least a particle of the ideal, the great Swami lived.

Om Shantih !

Om Shantih !!

Om Shantih !!!

REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE

I had the privilege of seeing the Holy Mother for the first time in 1907. During the rainy season of the next year I went to visit her for the second time. I reached Jayrambati* where she was living at that time, at 10-30 in the morning. After I had made by devoted obeisance at her feet, she asked me : "Are you a pupil of M.?"

"No, Mother," I replied, "but I often go to him."

"Is he well? Did you meet him lately?"

* Mother's native village in the Bankura district of Bengal.

“Yes, he is well. I saw him some eight days back.”

When I was taking my night meal, Mother enquired if I was staying at home. “Yes, Mother, I am,” I said in reply. “I had recently passed through a catastrophe,—I had been seriously ill. And then came marriage.”

Mother.—Are you married already?

Myself.—Yes, Mother.

Mother.—How old is the bride?

Myself.—About thirteen years.

Mother.—Whatever has been is for your good. It is no use worrying now.

Myself.—M. had forbidden me to marry.

Mother.—Ah! has he not himself suffered much in the householder’s life!—that is why he dissuaded you.

Myself.—The householder’s life is full of troubles. One loses one’s manhood in that life.

Mother.—Quite true. It is full of the clamours for money.

Myself.—And also of suffering.

Mother.—But the Master has also his householder devotees. Do not be cast down.

I remained silent.

Mother.—My brothers also are married.

Myself.—Did you permit them to marry?

Mother.—What else could I do? The Master used to say that worms that live and thrive in dirt will die if they are kept in a rice pot. . . . And the nieces now-a-days do not serve their uncles as carefully as we did in our days.

Myself.—Everything is changing by and by.

Mother.—For instance, formerly I could not kill even an ant; but now I sometimes give a blow even to a cat The Master said, “Do this and also that.” He would say, “‘Thou,’ ‘Thou,’ After long and great suffering, man learns to say, ‘Thou,’ ‘Thou’.”*

Do not fear. What if you are married? She also will prove spiritual through the Master’s will. May be she acquired merits in her former birth. The Master used to say, “Avidyâ

* *i.e.*, man learns complete self-surrender to God.

is more powerful than Vidyâ." That is to say, Avidya has infatuated the whole world.



In the morning of the 20th April, 1919, at about 10 o'clock, Manindra, Satu and Narayana (the last a gentleman from Madras) went to salute the Mother at the Jagadamba Ashrama at Koalpara in the Bankura district, (Bengal), where she had been staying for the last one month. There are two Ashramas at Koalpara, one for men and another for ladies. Mother was staying at the latter.

Mother's grandson,—son of her niece, Maku,—was seriously ill of Diphtheria at Jayrambati, some five miles off from Koalpara. Baikuntha Maharaj was treating him. Mother was very anxious for the child.

After they had made their obeisance, the talk began on her ailing grandson.

Narayana said: "Mother, he will come round through your blessings."

Mother replied with folded palms: "Through the Master's blessings."

Satu.—He (Narayana) has done much for Maku's son.

Mother.—Yes, he is a good man. He sent for medicine from Calcutta and spent money. Who would have done so much if he had not been here?

Narayana.—I am but an instrument of the Master. He is making me act like a tool in his hands.

Mother.—The Master said: "Those who have, measure out; those who have not, take his name."*

Narayana.—Is it necessary to do the washing ceremony at the time of *Japa*?

Mother.—Yes; if you are in your house, you must do *âsana* and *âchamana*.* But when you travel, it is enough if you simply repeat his name.

Narayana.—Only his name? Not the *mantram*?

Mother.—Yes, also the *mantram*, of course. But then a single utterance of the Lord's name is as effective as a million

* That is, those who are rich should make charities, etc.

* *Asana*=seating oneself. *Achamana*=washing mouth and other limbs. These are preliminaries of ritualistic worship, consisting of some symbolical practices indicating firm sitting and steadiness and physical purification.

repetitions of it, if you do it with a steady, concentrated mind. What is the use of repeating million times with an absent mind? You must do this whole-heartedly. Then only you can deserve his grace.

Narayana.—Is what I am doing enough? Or do I need to do anything more?

Mother.—Go on with what you are doing. You are blessed already.

Narayana.—It is said that the Lord grants man his vision if he calls on him sincerely even for two or three days. I have been calling on him for so many days. Why do I not see him?

Mother.—Yes, you will see him. The words of Siva and of the Master cannot be in vain. The Master said to Surendra: "Those who have money, give it away. Those who have not, take his name." If you cannot do even this, then surrender yourself to him. It is enough if you only remember that you have some one—(God)—who is your father or mother, to look after you.

Narayana.—I fully believe it since you say so.

The devotees saluted the Mother again. Narayana laid his head on her feet and Mother blessed him by laying her hand on his head.

(To be continued)

THE FUTURE OF INDIAN WOMEN

BY THE EDITOR

The mother's heart, the hero's will,
The sweetness of the southern breeze,
The sacred charm and strength that dwell
On Aryan altars, flaming, free,—
All these be yours, and many more,
No ancient soul could dream before.....

Swami Vivekananda

Is it true that feminine psychology and abilities are essentially different from masculine? There are those both in the East and in the West who believe them to be so and insist

therefore also on a difference of duties. Hindu thought seems to partially concur with this view. Western feminism however has sought to annul this view-point by a practical demonstration of the equality of the sexes in all fields of life ; and it must be admitted that its efforts have been considerably successful. *Equality* however is not yet proved. The Western opinion is yet divided on the point. And the crucial question has been asked : "Has woman profited by what equality she has achieved? Is she happier than before?" An Italian lady writing in *Current History* (New York) says : "Yes, woman has to-day the vote, glory, power, independence, often has wealth, freedom to do what she pleases ; but she does not have love and affection, none to think of her and of whom she can think ; she is alone, alone and desolate" The writer believes that the essential quest of a woman's life is to love and be loved, and love is based on altruism and unselfishness and "is related to sentiment, not to intellect." She therefore thinks that feminism which is pre-eminently intellectual in outlook cannot bring happiness and contentment to woman. The writer's opinion is certainly worthy of respect, because she holds an honourable position as an author and one of her books, *The Soul of Woman*, recently excited sensational interest in Europe.

Yet, feminism has accomplished much that is useful. The old limitations that so tightly gripped the soul of woman have been relaxed ; and women are happier and more capable than before through this movement. It is ridiculous to believe that Western women would ever like to go back to their old domestic and social position.

In India also the necessity of a similar readjustment is being keenly felt. But our problem is fortunately easier and clearer than the Western. A superficial view of our womankind may belie this happy estimation. But it is nevertheless a fact. It is true that our women have lived during the last several centuries within purely domestic grooves, though exceptions showing wonderful intellectual and practical capacities have not been rare. But with characteristic high idealism India has always granted her absolute freedom in the domain of religion. There women stand on the same level with men. A woman can, like any man, renounce the world

and take to the life of renunciation and enjoy the freedom that it implies. This fact is extremely significant. For it is the recognition that men and women are ultimately only spiritual beings and that their fulfilment lies in the realisation of their spiritual nature. That means that the differences of sex, psychology or capacity are relative and inessential, that to love and to be loved, as the aforesaid writer maintains, is not the ultimate aim of a woman's life, but to regain her spiritual being, and that the apparent differences of life and outlook between men and women (which are natural and cannot be ignored) should be utilised by making them the pathways to spiritual self-realisation. It is this fact, proved by the experience of millenniums of Hindu history that makes our task of social and domestic readjustment regarding women easier and clearer. We may boldly go forward and welcome any reform and innovation provided the new steps are towards the recognised spiritual ideal of India.

But ideas in order to actualise themselves have always to *fight* their way on. Dust and clamour fill the sky and mistrust and confusion the mind of men. It is no wonder that women's movements in India have not a smooth passage. We are not in a position to speak of other provinces, but Bengal is discussing the social and domestic values with some heat. The Bengali periodical literature is full of the conflict of the old and the new. Women themselves are discussing their present position and claiming new rights. But the public mind does not seem to have truly envisaged the coming changes. There is too much distrust of the new conditions in the minds of our men and much confusion of thought. It is absolutely necessary in order to avoid future complications and impediments to progress that we should know the trend of things and wait with friendly minds to welcome the future. It may be helpful therefore if we dwell on the general outline of the problem and try to find an angle of vision from which the changing features of our domestic and social life may be seen to harmonise with our eternal ideals.

To our mind, all the different problems of Indian women are reducible to two fundamental problems: (1) What should be her attitude towards physical and intellectual life? That is

to say, should these be circumscribed within the domestic limits as at present or should she come out of this limited sphere and take her place alongside of man in all departments of life, social, cultural, economic and political? (2) What will be her attitude towards marriage? Must all women marry? And those who would marry, what would be the significance of their marriage vow? Does it require changes from its present one-sidedness and inexorability? What is the ultimate value of *Sati-dharma*? Is the wife's to be an unquestioning service and allegiance to the husband, without the expectation of any return? Or would it be mere co-partnership, involving mutual rights and duties, such as married life in the West is tending to be? These are the two fundamental questions. All other problems are but details.

Reformers often forget that the success of their altruistic ventures does not depend always on their enthusiasm, however pure their motive and correct their proposition may be. Human life is too intractable a material to yield easily to extraneous cajoling. Like other facts of nature, human life and character also have their laws of being and movement. Just as we have to recognise and bow to its inexorable laws in our treatment with the inanimate nature, even so in our dealings with human beings we have to take into account his raw nature and its ways. Of course man differs from other creatures in not yielding passively to nature but seeking to transmute it into an ideal form. This new element, idealism, is the peculiar distinct of man. All the same, the realities of life, as distinguished from the ideal element, are too powerful to be safely ignored. By realities and nature we mean those original tendencies and desires which pertain directly to our physical and biological existence and which we mould and control in order to realise an ideal life. But sudden bends are not possible in nature. Too much restraint proves dangerous in the long run. Man loses the buoyancy of life and becomes dull and dead. This is the danger of excessive idealism. Man either succumbs to death or flares up in sudden revolt. A reformer therefore has to take into careful consideration the facts of human nature and must not coerce them into his ideal form. Time is an important factor in reform and progress.

Besides, the basic facts of life are not an unchanging quantity. The raw materials that constitute human nature are being constantly replenished with the passing and changing of times. New ideas, aspirations and powers are coming unconsciously into our life from some unknown deeps. They originate from a source of which our conscious life-activity is but the surface and an efflorescence. Man has no hold on this primal origin. When the changes come we can only accept them as inevitable. Therefore the dogged obstinacy of the ultra-conservative is also as futile as the overzealous activity of the reformers. Both are perhaps as foolish as if two parties were to argue whether they should or should not have winter after autumn. Just as the changes of the year's seasons do not depend on anybody's likes or dislikes, in the same way the changes of human society are independent of the zeal of the reformers and the obstinacy of the orthodox. Wisdom lies in recognising the inevitable and calmly welcoming it. Therefore we must prepare for the changes that are coming surely and steadily on in the outlook of our women. It is no use crying them down.

Are there signs of any such *inevitable* changes coming over our womankind? It requires no prophetic vision to answer in the affirmative. The signs are quite apparent. Our women will no longer remain shut up within the narrow precincts of the purely domestic life. The wider life is calling them, and for good or for evil, they must respond to it. For one thing, reason is against the old system. Woman is also a human being. She also is, like man, endowed with intellectual powers and practical capacities. It is natural therefore that these faculties should require use and exercise, and the domestic life does not offer sufficient scope for them. Reason dictates that freedom is the birthright of every being. Woman cannot be defrauded of it even for a pious end. Secondly, the present economic condition of our people is making it increasingly necessary that even our women should become earning members of the family. This new economic factor cannot but induce vital changes in the life of women. Thirdly, so long as the ways of Western social life were unknown, the galling sense of limitation did not irritate our womankind. Contrast makes us happy or unhappy. And a comparison of Western and

Eastern women was inevitable. Our women cannot easily dismiss the Western view-point and the value of the solid improvements that Western feminism has brought about. There can be no doubt that they need to be improved a great deal and secure the many physical and intellectual advantages that Western women enjoy. It is clear therefore what should be the answer to our first question. There must be an increasing participation by our women in the social, intellectual, economic and political life of the country. It is best we be prepared for this. It is not that we are to force these changes on them. On the other hand let us hope that the new developments would be indirect, silent and organic, for sudden changes always miss their purpose and create unnecessary heat. But when the changes do come, may we readily accede to and facilitate them.

What is wanted in this connection is that we should change our idea of female education. The highest function of education is the purification of motives and emotions. To feel truly and correctly is the highest product of culture. The culture of emotions and their control and refinement is therefore the primary object of education. One that feels truly also acts truly and all knowledge must justify itself ultimately in correct action. We know that mere knowledge is not the direct spring of action. It is feeling. But feeling is only half of man, however essential. The practical life which being atrophied brings about ultimately also emotional downfall, requires that we should also learn to use our mind and limbs effectively. The mind must be cultured and so also the senses. The education of our women has hitherto lain mainly in emotional training. Emotional education by its very nature can but be indirect. Through unselfish and patient service, sweet lovingness, and especially through following the glorious traditions of our exalted wifeness and motherhood, this education has continued even up to this day with unabated vigour. This has up till now saved our woman-kind and ourselves. The nation's entire energy seems to have been devoted to the maintenance of our women's noble traditions unimpaired through ages. And surely India can be proud of having produced some of the finest flowers of womanhood. But as we have seen, this was yet a partial education. It generally lacked the intellectual and practical aspects. These must now be added. The changing times require it.

Here the question may be naturally asked: "Will not the intellectual and practical tendency of life take away from the emotional richness and refinement of our women? Will not this be more a loss than a gain?" The answer that promptly rises to our lips is: "Whether it be a gain or loss, it must come about. The fiat has gone forth. We can but bow to it." But of course we need not be so pessimistic. The apprehension is groundless. It may be that the future women will be rich in different emotions than at present. The outstanding characteristic of our women is their ideal wifeness. The ideal of Sati-dharma is the very core of their being. To them their husbands are God himself, and all the adoration of their rich heart they lay at the feet of this God. It may be that the changes that are coming on may take away somewhat from the charms of this ideal. Husbands will probably miss this worshipful attitude of their wives. But would that be necessarily a loss?

What is Sati-dharma? It is one aspect of the Hindu ideal of the spiritualisation and deification of every being. The ultimate object of Sati-dharma is purely spiritual. The wife seeks constantly to look upon and realise her husband as the Divine himself. Her daily ministrations to her husband and his family are sacramental to her. Her life is a continued act of worship. That is why when the husband dies, she does not set up his picture on the altar of worship. The worship of the eternal God which while the husband was living was being done through him, becomes now direct and immediate. She gives herself to purely spiritual life, to contemplation, meditation and worship of her chosen Divine Ideal. She does not feel any break between the life of the wife and of the widow. Sati-dharma is thus only *one* of the ways of spiritual self-realisation. It is only a *means* to a higher end and need not therefore be binding on all. Other women may justly take to other means of Self-realisation. Besides it must not be forgotten that the awakening of the intellectual life and the realism of practical life will not be without their bearing on the emotional ideal of Sati-dharma. Sati-dharma is an essentially emotional practice, a training of the heart. The Sati does not question the worth of her husband. He may be to other eyes a worthless man. But the Sati overcomes the apparent by seeing the

deeper truth, the Self, the God that is in him, who is ever pure, infinite, eternal and almighty. Before this dazzling vision, the consciousness of his apparent limitations dies away. It may be that this vision is not real to all Hindu wives. But the attempt to realise it is always there. The nature of the intellect however is to militate against the ways of the heart. It raises questions. It drags the heart's inmost longings into the wider relationships of outer things. It seeks to systematise the inner and outer worlds into a united whole. The heart wants to forget the external in the absorption of a single love-emotion. When our women will become intellectual, this conflict must tell on the emotionalism of Sati-dharma and impair it to a certain extent. Husbands will no longer be Gods. Their drawbacks will come in for keener remarks and more drastic treatment. They will be made to fit in with the intellectual ideals of their wives. The same results will also follow from cultivating practical aptitudes.

But let us confess here that our forecast may not after all be correct. It is also quite possible that in spite of all intellectualism and practicality, women will remain as intensely emotional and adoring as ever. The present tendencies of Western feminism indicate that. It is an apt remark which says that a woman always wants a home and a family, a field to satisfy the hunger of her heart. Ellen Key notes two ideals, two directions of the woman movement, the second of which she approves: "The older programme reads, 'Full equality with man.' In the 'state of the future' both sexes shall have the same duty of work and the same protection of work, while the children are reared in state institutions. The movement in the other direction purposes to win back the wife to the husband, the mother to the children, and, thereby, the home to all."

From what has been said of Sati-dharma it must not be concluded that in its purely emotional form it has no moral effect on husbands. Nothing so tells on man as the adoration of a sincere loving soul. One almost becomes what one's beloved thinks and wishes oneself to be. This is the alchemy of love. Hindu husbands bear innumerable testimony to the efficacy of Sati-dharma. We are led to make these remarks in view of certain perverted views we have seen publicly dis-

cussed, sometimes by women themselves. They seem to look upon Sati-dharma as a sort of slavery imposed on women by Hindu orthodoxy. The abuses of an ideal must not be made the standard by which to judge it. It is true there are wife-beating husbands, and that wives often bear patiently the torments of their husband, in steadfast faith to their ideal. But taken all together, this ideal has not been productive of less good than any other conjugal ideal of the world. If the ultimate effect is beneficial, what is the harm of being a little patient? The wife may, with all honour to herself, stoop to conquer. Surely one party must bear, if conjugal life is to be happy and successful. We cannot, again, too strongly deprecate the mentality that decries Sati-dharma in order to have it replaced by a debasing and debilitating frivolous life. We have no right to destroy unless we also build at least to the same measure. India's one safeguard is that its faith in the ultimate end of existence is unalienable, born as it is of direct knowledge and experience. All social changes therefore pertain only to *means*. These changes are easily judged by their capacity to lead to the realisation of the eternal spiritual goal. Are the critics of Sati-dharma finding other effective ways of spiritual self-realisation for our women? Then they are on the right path. Or do they seek to escape the rigours of this noble ideal in order to waste themselves away in temporal passions? Then they are condemned. For Indian women as well as men, there cannot be any rose-strewn path. Whatever path is chosen, old or new, the journey must always be uphill. The ideal must never be lowered. Only new paths to the summit may be discovered.

The answer to the second question is therefore apparent. There will be changes in the marriage ideal. Sati-dharma will remain. But the married life may also be conceived as only faithful companionship, the spiritual idealism of the wife having shifted its centre of gravity to other spheres of life. Consequently also there will be many who will find in the celibate life a fitter instrument for the attainment of their life's ideal. For this is an excellent path to Self-realisation, giving as it does greater opportunities for concentration of powers.

We have presented this outline of forecasts from the evidences of the changing circumstances. We do not find any-

thing to be afraid of in them. Of course these will mean a profound change in the outlook of our women. But the change will certainly be for the better. We have mentioned before that the great changes in society come from the depths of the world's soul. They are not under any man's control. But man's duty, though from one view-point is only silent submission to them, is also from another view-point a strenuous struggle for readjustment. Human progress is a continuous struggle between the real and the ideal. Man constantly struggles to bring the real under the control of his ideal. The motive power of the struggle is not wholly derived from the consciousness of the ideal, but also from an innate desire to maintain the continuity of social and cultural traditions. Society is lost when traditions die away. It is through the channel of living traditions undergoing needed modifications with the change of circumstances that humanity seems to draw the sap of life from the inner depths of reality.

The present opposition to and distrust of the oncoming changes in the status of women are really due to a failure to find out the link between the old and the coming new. The Hindu is apparently afraid of novelties. But the moment they are shown to be a corollary of his ancient principles, he welcomes them gladly and confidently, however radical in character they may be. The student of Hindu sociology may have noted what important part some Sanskrit verses play in Hindu reform movements. Iswar Ch. Vidyasagar sought for scriptural sanction before he launched forth his widow-remarriage campaign. All Hindu prophets and reformers have based their new gospel on the old scriptures. The idea was to maintain the continuity of traditions. And we believe that it is not difficult to show that the new ideals of our women are but implications of our ancient principles. We hold that *the present women movements are only a return from the Pauranika ideals of life to the Vedic ideals.*

Our social and spiritual life have hitherto been in the tight grip of the Pauranika ideals. In every department of life, not merely in relation to women, we are trying to revert to the Vedic ideals. We do not mean to say that the Pauranika ideals are wrong and that our life, national and individual, for the last several centuries have been a waste and a blunder. What

we mean is that we were sidetracked by them from the main line of progress. But it has not been necessarily a loss. We have been as a consequence much enriched by spiritual experience and accession of various cultural and racial elements to the Mother Church. It was also necessary and inevitable. When the extreme liberalism of Buddha's teachings opened the gate wide for all and sundry to come into the fold of Hinduism, it was necessary that the newly admitted creeds, mostly crude, should be given free scope to grow and assimilate the fundamentals of the Hindu religion and culture. This necessitated the emphasising of personal ideals in religion. This is the origin of the Puranas. The Vedic ideal emphasises the impersonal and basic truths of spiritual life. The Pauranika ideal introduces variations. The one is direct in the process it proposes for Self-realisation. The other proposes many indirect and perhaps easier processes. The Vedas enunciate the true nature of the Self and asks one to realise it directly, by shedding all false knowledge and desires. The Puranas concede that it is not always easy for the common mind to respond to this strong call, nor are all temperaments suited to the high impersonal ideal. It therefore proposes to yield to the demands of the common mind for the sweets of life, and by asking it to spiritualise them, gradually raises it along a wider curve to the transcendental ideal. This call for the spiritualisation of the common experiences and desires of life is peculiar to the Puranas. Of course the Vedic statement that all is Brahman warrants and furnishes the basis for such spiritualisation. Sati-dharma is one of the various ways of spiritualisation. The husband is sought hereby to be spiritualised. The indirect processes of the Puranas have thus brought the practice of spirituality, and not merely rituals, nearer to the masses. But the one great drawback of the Pauranika religion is that it has almost made us forget that this indirectness in spiritual practice is not necessary for those who can take directly to the Truth, and that the personal ideals and whatever pertain to them are not absolute but are justified to the extent they conduce to the realisation of the impersonal Vedic ideal. We have been led to confuse the means for the end. And hence all these narrownesses and weaknesses in

our social and religious life and the lack of that breadth and power of vision which is characteristic of the Upanishads.

The call has now come and the changing circumstances of the world need that we go back to the impersonal strength-giving ideas and ideals of the Vedas. The intermediate experiences and acquisitions of the Pauranika age have enriched us greatly and disclosed deeper meaning in the Vedic teachings. In the Vedic ideal alone we shall find the requisite strength for and the rationale of our present and future development. Thus our women also shall again go to the Vedic ideal. The Vedic ideal declares that everyone, man or woman, is pure spirit, beyond all qualifications of body and mind, sexless, impersonal. The soul of woman has felt the inspiration of this impersonal ideal. Women too must realise themselves as spirit. They also must learn to feel themselves as pure self, untrammelled by the consciousness of sex, and act and live in the glory and dignity of the Self. The Pauranika Sati-dharma is only *one* of the processes of realising that Self. But it does not matter which ways we take to, provided we get rid of the delusion that makes us think ourselves as body and mind. The Vedas declare that the constant remembrance and thinking of oneself as pure spirit makes one overcome delusion and know the Truth. So, not only shall women have, on the authority of the Vedas, the free choice of means for Self-realisation, but shall also feel every moment the dignity of spiritual selfhood that confers unwonted purity, strength and sweetness on the human mind. No man or woman whatever the life he or she chooses, be it domestic or public, can, being inspired by this ideal, ever feel or act in any undignified way. Life will be for women as for men fuller and nobler. Let us therefore confidently and fearlessly acclaim the future, crowned as it is with the light of the Vedic ideals.

GOD, SOUL AND MATTER

BY SWAMI SHARVANANDA

From very early days of history, human mind has been trying to unravel the mysteries of these three fundamental principles,—God, soul and matter. In fact man's very progress depended upon the discovery of their truths from behind the

veil that hides the face of Reality. Investigation has been carried on along different lines, and the results achieved have been highly beneficial to mankind. Religion was and is busy knowing the true nature of God. Philosophy with its branches of psychology and ontology has been trying to know the true nature of the soul. And science is still busily investigating into the constitution of matter.

The relations between these lines of investigation are sometimes misunderstood. We often think that the truths of religion and philosophy, *i.e.*, those relating to God and soul have no relation to the truths that science tries to find out. But this estimation is not true. The present is an age of synthesis. Modern science and the different branches of human knowledge, probing deep into the mysteries of nature and life, are slowly discovering a common unity amidst their apparent varieties. It has thus become easy for us to synthesise the truths of religion, the truths of philosophy and the truths of science.

Nor is it correct to think that religion or God is a mere matter of faith and cannot be proved on rational grounds. The popular mind assumes the existence of an insurmountable barrier between religion and science. But the advanced knowledge of man does not think so any more. Every knowledge is now being subjected to the strict scrutiny of reason. Mere faith often biases inference and colours judgment. We shall here try to study the fundamental principles of God, soul and matter from a purely rational view-point.

MATTER

We shall first take up matter. It is best and easiest to start with the gross, and of the three aforesaid principles, matter is assuredly the grossest, being concrete and tangible. Let us take the instance of a table. We perceive the table so clearly and find it so gross and concrete and so very real that were we to declare that it does not exist and is a fiction of our brain, all would laugh at us and think us as fit objects for a lunatic asylum. But such in fact it is. For what is a table really? According to modern science it is only a vision imposed upon a group of carbon compound molecules. These molecules are revolving round each other like the planets of the solar system. The molecules are made up of tiny atoms of certain elements such as oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, etc., and these atoms themselves are made up of very fine particles of energy called electrons and protons. A proton is the centre round which a number of electrons revolve in order to constitute an atom. Some scientists go further and say that electrons are so many vortices of one imponderable substance called ether.

Such is the analysis of matter according to modern science and so far as it goes it is no doubt good and correct. But when we seek to rationalise these scientific conclusions, we are faced with great difficulties ; we find ourselves involved in contradictions and absurdities. A time was when matter and energy were considered different entities, and matter itself was thought to be composed of mutually independent elements. These old theories are now no longer respected. It is now accepted that matter and energy are essentially one. What we call matter, or atoms or molecules, are but different forms of the same energy. And matter is fundamentally one. But even this advanced view does not help us out of philosophical difficulties.

Let us take for instance the atomic theory of matter, that matter is made up of fine atoms or electrons ; that is to say, the corpuscular theory of matter, that matter is constituted of corpuscles which are elemental in their nature. These corpuscles cannot be broken into finer particles ; they are the smallest indivisible particles. If we break a table and reduce it to the subtlest particles conceivable, then those subtle particles would be the finest state of matter. Those corpuscles, or atoms or electrons or whatever we may call them, are therefore devoid of magnitude or length, breadth and thickness, for, any substance having magnitude ought to be divisible. To say that they are irreducible is to maintain that they have no length, breadth and thickness, that they have no magnitude. That means that they have no existence in space. Anything that exists in space must have magnitude and must be reducible to finer forms. To hold that the ultimate state of matter is irreducible is to make it at once transcendental like a geometrical point which has existence but no magnitude,—which is unthinkable. This is the first difficulty of the scientific theory of matter. The second difficulty is that a combination of such matter particles cannot by any means produce dimensions, the phenomena of length, breadth and thickness. If matter in the ultimate state, *i.e.*, as corpuscles, is devoid of dimensions, then a group of corpuscles cannot produce dimensions. Zero multiplied infinitely is zero still. The phenomenon of dimension or space is inexplicable according to this theory of matter.

If we take the other, the homogeneous theory, that the ultimate state of matter is homogeneous, *i.e.*, without any corpuscle and immobile like ether, then it becomes impossible to explain motion in matter, and the phenomena of heat, light, electricity or magnetism remain unexplained. Suppose that the capacity of a room is 320 cubic feet. If we pack that room with 80 boxes 4 cubic feet each, the whole space will be filled, there would not remain any space between the boxes and they would not move ever so slightly. For the boxes to move even by an inch, there must be some gap between them. Similarly,

in the case of the homogeneous condition of matter, as there is no inter-corpuseular space, no motion is possible. Hence motion cannot be explained by the homogeneous theory of matter. So from every standpoint we find that the scientific theory of matter leads us to insurmountable difficulties.

And these are not all. The greatest puzzle is how matter such as science defines it, produces the variegated vision of the universe. We see the wonderful effect that matter is producing upon us. We perceive the table so tangibly, yet it is not real. If we were endowed with superhuman vision so as to be able to see the subtle constituents of the table, or if human ingenuity could devise a microscope powerful enough to reveal the molecular, atomic or electronic composition of the table, then we would have found that the table-vision is a chimera and that only a number of molecules are revolving and breaking into atoms and the atoms are revolving and breaking into electrons, and there are electrons and nothing else. If we come to realise this state of electronic existence, we shall find that the universe is one infinite sea of electrons or matter and its infinite varieties are nowhere. Science does not explain how and why we perceive these varieties, if as a matter of fact there are only shapeless electrons. For an explanation of this mystery, we shall have to go to psychology. Psychology will tell us that the varieties of the universe are due to our mind and defective senses. The table is an aberration. Why do we see the table? First because our eyes have not the capacity to see the molecules, atoms or electrons ; and secondly because our mind misinterprets or misreads the reality. It is well-known that the human eye has only a limited power of receiving the light rays. It can receive only the seven rays of the spectrum. Below the red rays, *i.e.*, the heat rays it cannot see, nor above the violet rays or actinic rays, though there is light both above the violet rays and below the red rays. All the senses are thus limited in their capacity. Our senses are able to respond only to certain vibrations of the original matter. They fail us beyond that limited range. Our senses cannot and do not perceive matter as it in itself is. But it nevertheless affects them and the mind, and we, according to our tendency and capacity of response, interpret it as our external world. The world is therefore partly external and partly internal. It is both subjective and objective. And here is the contribution of the mind to the constitution of the visible universe.

We have already alluded to the vision that will present itself to our eyes if they are endowed with superhuman powers ;—there certainly would not be any dimensions or the opacity and solidity of our present vision of things. These apparent attributes of objects are clearly then contributed by

our mind.* Not merely the dimensions of things, but even their position in space and time is affected by our mind. Our mind interprets even time and space according to its varying moods. When we are very cheerful, a day seems to fly away like an hour. When we are morose, time hangs heavy on our hands and an hour appears as long as a day. As this is true of time, so is it of space. When, for instance, we travel in mountains, even distant things appear as quite near. The reason is that the mountain air is so clear that our standard of the measurement of space formed in the plains where the atmosphere is thick with dust and dirt, deludes and fails us. This is how time and space are affected by our mind. We do not mean that time, space and causation are wholly subjective as some Western philosophers seem to maintain. They have some objective existence also. But we wholly discredit the idea of the modern realists that they are entirely objective. They are, as we have mentioned before, subjective-objective.

We thus find that psychology and logic in trying to supplement and perfect the scientific theory of matter, have led us gradually to a point where matter blends into mind. There is no escape from this conclusion. Our ancient thinkers also held the identical view. We find that the Sankhya school looks upon the mind to be fundamentally the same as the external gross matter. The opinions of this school are replete with suggestions that help us to overcome the difficulties that beset the conclusions of science regarding the ultimate nature of matter. If we take mind along with matter and look upon them as essentially one, we at once find the connecting link that relates the formless original matter to the finished forms of the variegated world, which as our analysis has shown, are contributed by the mind. We have seen before how science reduces matter to an extra-material form when it holds that atoms have no magnitude and are really vortices of energy. From there the mind is not very far off. Such matter stands on the border-land of the mind. Space will not permit us to dwell here on the explanation of how mind becomes what we call material objects. The Sankhya and Vedanta philosophies dwell on it elaborately. We shall content ourselves by pointing out certain circumstantial evidences which corroborate the idea that matter and mind are fundamentally one and are essentially related.

For instances, the phenomena of thought-reading and mental telepathy and the experience of occultists who can stop the swinging pendulum of a clock by merely fixing their gaze on it. These phenomena are common in India and are generally looked upon as superhuman and supernatural. But

* That is to say, not as the individual mind but as a part of the cosmic mind.

Indian thinkers hold that there is nothing supernatural about them, they are perfectly natural. What is required is that our definition of matter should be revised and made more inclusive. Fifty years ago wireless telegraphy and telephony would have been considered supernatural, but to-day they appear perfectly natural. As an electric wave sent by the wireless apparatus from one corner of the world is received through the medium of ether in another corner, so in the case of mental telepathy and thought-reading, one brain becomes the receiving station and another the transmitting station for the sending and receiving of a thought-wave. A thought-wave is as much material as an etheric wave or electric wave, only it is finer, much finer than even the finest conception of matter. The phenomenon of stopping a pendulum by means of the fixed gaze shows that mind can work upon gross matter, that is to say, the mind is sending out an energy that can work upon matter. If mind and matter were not kindred substances, the one could not act upon the other.

As regards mental healing, cure by auto-suggestion is an accomplished fact. It has been clearly proved that physical ailments can be cured by bringing mental forces to bear on the body. Therefore there must be an intimate relation between mind and matter. Unless mind were one with matter, it could never work upon matter.

The Indian definition is that anything that changes, has motion and works in time, space and causation, is matter. Mind changes, has different conditions and works through time, space and causation. Modern science is sure to arrive in course of its progress at a stage where it will recognise that matter and mind are one and that thought is as much an energy as heat, light or electricity,—of course not in the sense of the so-called materialists who look upon the mind as an epiphenomenon of gross matter, but in the sense that matter in its original form is far subtler than even electrons and that in its primal condition it branches out of the cosmic mind.

SOUL

Let us next try to understand the nature of soul from psychological and ontological view-points. We naively feel that our personality is essentially dependent on the physical body. We call ourselves Mr. or Mrs. so and so, according to the sex of our physical organism and we identify ourselves with other adjuncts of our physical existence. But a little thought is enough to prove that this assumption is wrong. Human personality does not consist in the physical body. There is something subtler and higher in man—an intelligent principle. Even modern biology has come to recognise this fact. Modern biologists, even when they do not believe in the unity of soul

and in the singular nature of the individual, are constrained to grant the existence of a superior principle in man, flowing parallel to the physical energy. They call it the biotic energy. The physical energy forms the outer garments as it were, while the biotic energy is the inner essence. The most modern theory of biology regarding individual life is what is called the colony of consciousness theory, that every cell of the physical body has a life of its own and our individuality is the sum total of the lives of the constituting cells. Biologists adduce the illustration of a bundle of burning candles. If we take a hundred lighted candles and bind them together, the separate flames will mingle with each other to produce a large flame. The small flames will lose their separate existence and only one single light will be noticed. Similarly with the living cells. There is no such thing as an individual life. What appears as such is only the aggregate of cell lives, and the dissolution of these cells, the going out of the tiny flames, means the death of man. This is no doubt a fine theory, but a little scrutiny reveals the unsound character of the idea of colony of consciousness. In the case of candles, it is quite plausible, because a candle is an unconscious thing and has only an objective existence. Objectively considered, the delusion of the combined flames is perfect,—it *is* really a single flame though made up of smaller lights. But the case of man is different. We have also a subjective existence. We carry within us the consciousness of the singularity of our being. Everyone feels that he is an individual and distinct from everything else, that he is not a compound being, but integral and elemental in his nature. Suppose the candle-flames had consciousness. Then, though to an onlooker their combination would have appeared to constitute a single flame, the candles themselves would have each felt that it had no essential unity with the other flames, was complete in itself and had an absolutely independent existence, and the compound flame itself would have had no self-consciousness of its own beyond the separate, individual consciousnesses of the candles. Similarly, if human consciousness were the aggregate of the consciousnesses of individual cell lives, then each cell would feel that it is separate from the rest and the aggregated consciousness would by no means produce the feeling of singularity, unity and integrity such as every man has within himself. One plus one plus one plus one and so on do not make one. So this biological theory is too inadequate to explain soul-consciousness.

Whence then this consciousness of "I," "My being," etc.? What does the real nature of our being consist in? Is it in the body? No, because body obviously is inert matter. Its seeming activity is due to something beyond it. We infer its existence by the difference between the living and the dead. What is that principle? The existence of a disembodied spirit

is an accepted fact. Even a scientist like Sir Oliver Lodge acknowledges it. In India we have from very ancient times recognised the super-physical existence of man. That existence transcends even the mind. The principle which thinks, feels and wills is not the reality of the soul ; for the self-consciousness of man is much wider and more persistent than even the mind. Through all different stages of life,—childhood, youth and age, and the constant changes of the body and mind, the consciousness of the individuality of man persists. An old man feels that he is the same as once was a boy, though he knows that his body and mind have undergone radical changes. Physiologists will tell us that the old cells of the body are being continually replaced by new cells. The body is a flux, it is ever changing like a river. Just as a river, even though fresh quantities of water are flowing down it every moment, retains its identity, even so the body. The constancy of the river is due to its having a permanent bed on which the water flows. Even so there must be something permanent behind the changing body and mind to ensure the constancy of human individuality. That we have to find out. That is the soul of man.

We are aware that the mind of a boy and the mind of an old man are not the same. The mind changes continually. Even a short observation will show how it fluctuates and varies in its moods. But through all these changes, there is a thread of permanency. We feel, “*I am happy,*” “*I am miserable,*” “*I am doing,*” “*I am thinking,*” etc. This “*I,*” the consciousness of one singular existence, unchangeable and immutable in nature, forms the permanent background of all the physiological and psychological changes of the human personality.

This fact becomes clearer when we analyse the different states of consciousness. Take for instance the three states of consciousness: the waking state, the dreaming state, and the dreamless deep sleep state. In the waking state we are conscious of the external world and of physical and mental phenomena. In the dreaming state, the consciousness of the physical world is obliterated and a new world rises out of the mind. A beggar dreams that he has become an emperor ;—all his poverty and sufferings are forgotten and he enjoys imperial happiness. These are the freaks of the mind ; it changes and stultifies even our physical existence. But in and through the extreme changes of the dream state, the “*I*” persists. The qualifying attributes of “*I*” vary, but the “*I*” remains the same even in a dream.

The persistence of the “*I*” and its unaffected permanency is still clearly proved by the evidences of the dreamless deep sleep state. In that state, we are considered to become absolutely unconscious. When we fall into a profound sleep, we no doubt become unconscious of the physical world, of time, space and causation and our own body. But strictly speaking, it is

not an absolutely unconscious state, for though the sleeping man is unconscious of everything else, he is not unconscious of his own being. For had he been so, there would have been a gap in the continuity of his existence. An existence without some kind of consciousness of it, is the same as non-existence to us. If self-consciousness were totally absent in deep sleep, then the man who entered into sleep and the man who awoke from it would have felt themselves as separate individuals. The thread of existence would snap everytime a man fell into sound sleep. But such as a matter of fact is not the case. The continuity of existence is not affected the least by the daily sleep of man. This clearly proves that the "I" exists even beyond the functions and existences of the mind and body.

There is a still further proof. When a man wakes up from sleep, he often says, "I slept well. I did not remember anything." Well, though he did not remember anything, he remembers at least that he did not remember anything. So there must be a kind of consciousness even in deep sleep.

Consciousness can be likened to a crystal cup and its contents. When a crystal cup is filled with a liquid, it assumes the colour of the liquid, but when the contents are poured out, the cup regains its original transparency. Our consciousness also is in the same way tinged by its contents the ideas. Our thoughts and feelings form the contents of our consciousness and impart their colour to it. That is why we do not perceive the true nature of consciousness in either the awakened or dreaming state. Only in deep sleep do we get a glimpse of it and are filled with profound calm and joy. When a man enters into deep sleep, all conditions of life fall off from him; he forgets his physical and mental existences and the self alone remains in its original, undifferentiated state. This is the essence of man, this is the soul, the principle of consciousness. The English word, "consciousness," is misleading. Our word for the soul is "Chaitanya". *Chaitanya* is not *consciousness*. Consciousness, according to Western psychology, implies mental activity. The Western conception of soul is quite different from our Atman, because according to Western psychology, the soul is mind. The true soul of man or the Atman, however, is not mind. It is a singular entity quite independent of the mind and its functions. In deep sleep state, the mind does not function, yet man lives. If mind were soul, then man in deep sleep ought to have been soulless. But such is not the case.

This is what the analysis of our ordinary experiences indicate regarding the nature of the soul.

But there are certain experiences recorded by a few individuals at different times in different parts of the world, which point to a new phase of consciousness. We cannot disregard these evidences if we are to come to a scientific estimation of the nature of the soul, for the greatest danger to induction is the

omission of relevant data, however rare they may be. Modern psychology bases its conclusions mostly on the awakened state of consciousness, and errors and imperfections become necessarily inevitable. Indian psychologists however have taken all the different states of consciousness into account,—the waking state, the dreaming state, the deep sleep state and another which they call the “fourth” state. There is a state of consciousness, the superconscious state, in which the ideas of time, space and causation are transcended and forgotten. It differs from the deep sleep state in that whereas we reach the superconscious state by deliberate effort and gain thereby a permanent knowledge and illumination of the Truth and the Real, in the deep sleep state, our attainment of our pristine, unconditioned nature is veiled by cosmic ignorance and we do not therefore remember our experience on awakening and do not derive any permanent illumination from it.

The superconscious experience is not a freak. It can be had by all. Nor is it morbid. Indian psychologists and philosophers have thrown the challenge to the world to test its validity. It is foolish to deny its truth without taking up the challenge and fulfilling the test. Man *can* transcend all the conditions of his physical and mental existence. The principle of human consciousness *can* realise a state in which it knows the transcendental existence. It is not deep sleep, it is not unconsciousness. It is a state of intense awareness and it has peculiar experiences of its own. These experiences have been recorded in the Vedas and have been testified to by hundreds of ancient Rishis and sages and are being corroborated even to-day by numerous Hindu mystics. These things have been experienced also by the mystics of Persia and Arabia (Sufis), of Greece and Alexandria (Neo-Platonists) and of China (followers of Lao-tze). The superconscious state is not therefore the morbid experience of solitary individuals, but is intensely real and healthy. A tree is known by its fruits.—Had these experiences been really morbid, the persons who realised them would have shown, like lunatics, signs of morbidity. But history records that these persons who soared so high and knew and stood face to face with the Infinity, were the salt of the earth. They wielded gigantic powers for good and noble activities in the human society. Surely a Buddha or a Christ is not a lunatic. Sane psychology therefore cannot deny the truth of the superconscious state of existence. This is the real nature of the soul.*

(To be continued.)

* A lecture delivered at Simla.

MOMENTS WITH THE SWAMI TURIYANANDA IN AMERICA

BY SWAMI ATULANANDA

Perhaps it is only fair at the outset to remind you that my remarks about the Swami Turiyananda are intended only to give you a picture of the Swami as I see him to-day, through the veil of time. At this late date it is impossible for me to quote him literally, or even to approach his forcible, convincing language.

We shall not now be concerned about details, about dates or places. It is with the Swami himself we shall deal, with the man, the personality. What interests us is to study him, to see him handle situations, to watch him react in contacts with his daily surroundings.

To me there is nothing more elevating and ennobling than to contemplate the life of one whom we love and revere, to whom we look up as our example, in whose footsteps we wish to tread. To me it appears to be one way of associating with the wise, a method advocated by our scriptures as a means to liberation.

Once in America a stray acquaintance in an off-hand way asked me what would seem a very simple question. It was this: "Do you think Swami Turiyananda was a great man?" My answer came without a moment's hesitation, "Yes."

Thus we ask and dispose of questions. But when my acquaintance, who did not seem to agree with me, had left, this question set me thinking.

When I came back to America, after having visited India, people often asked me, "How did you like India?" Of course, the answer meant nothing to them. Asking questions is merely a habit, and any reply satisfies provided it is definite and comes instantaneously. The more cocksure you are, the better people like it. And so we move on through life asking and giving opinions in a shallow, thoughtless manner.

What I think of Swami Turiyananda or of India, matters very little indeed, except to *myself*. The question that really matters is, How far have I personally been able to appreciate the greatness of the Swami and the real worth of India; how have I been affected, how have I profited, what have I gained by coming in contact with a singularly great personality, a man of staunch character, of deep spiritual realization? How

did my nature respond to the remarkable experience of living in India with her complex, ancient civilization, a civilization, if not on the surface always, at least at heart, perhaps, the noblest civilization in the world to-day. What have I been able to assimilate, what have I absorbed, made my own, how was my character affected, my life molded? The serious question is this, "Has it brought me closer to God?"

Was Swami Turiyananda a great man? But what is greatness? What is the standard to judge by? Who is the person to judge? Greatness is recognized only by the great. Many a genius has passed through life without being noticed during his own time.

The generally accepted test of greatness is however the more or less lasting influence for good, a person, or an invention, or a production of art, or whatever it may be, brings to bear upon society. What *lives* is great. Popularity often is of a mushroom growth, famous to-day, to-morrow forgotten. But what is great has a lasting effect, holds a lasting interest. Sri Krishna was great, Buddha was great, Jesus was great, because their work lives to-day to bless humanity. Their popularity during their life-time we can only surmise, but certain it is that their popularity and influence has grown and spread throughout the ages.

Swami Turiyananda was not great in the popular sense, he was not a man of world-renown. His influence was local, confined to smaller circles. But if we apply the same standard to a smaller radius, his influence on individuals instead of on the masses, one would not hesitate one moment to call him a man of rare worth. He himself once said to me, "If I can influence a few students to love the Divine Mother and to live a pure life, I shall consider my work a success."

This hope of his was fulfilled in a far greater measure than he expected. He has influenced the lives of a large number of persons, both here in India and abroad. And in those whom he touched his influence will continue to bear fruit as time goes on.

Swami Turiyananda was a character-builder, his work was solid and enduring. And let us remember that in the light of a glaring sun the stars do not stand out to attract the common eye. But each star in its own orbit fills its place, and when the sun retreats, it adorns the heavens, and helps to illumine the darkness of the night.

We shall not discuss Swami Turiyananda comparing him with greater lights, such as his incomparable Master from whom he drew his inspiration. We take him for what he was, a blazing torch of spirituality, a blessing to those who knew him best.

In America—and it is of his life in America that I shall speak here—he was a constant inspiration to the disciples who lived with him. Personally I have had the blessings of his association for years, a close and intimate association, that gave me the opportunity of watching him and of learning from him day and night. To me, his *life* was the greatest lesson, for of Swami Turiyananda I can say with conviction that he walked with God. He was devoted to his ideal, the highest, the noblest ideal man can aspire to. His ideal was ever before him, it was his pole-star of which he never lost sight. And surely that in itself is greatness.

His ideal was to live in constant communion with God. God-realization was his very life, his existence, the breath of his nostrils. It formed the background of all his actions, of every word he spoke. His playful moods, his periods of serenity, his eating, his walking, his teaching, were all so many offerings to God. There seemed not to be a moment that the thought of the Divine Mother did not have a place in his mind.

To me this was most astonishing. Whenever I met him he turned the conversation into a religious channel. And it was his constant care to have his students turn their minds to God. “What are you talking about?” he would question, breaking in upon students conversing together. “Forget the world, think of Mother.” This occurred so often, that the very sight of him made us remember it.

“If you think of worldly affairs all the time,” he said in the Shanti Ashrama, “why did you come here? Live in the world and enjoy the world. We have come here to think of Mother. Lower animals live in the senses only. It is man’s privilege to live a spiritual life, to know the Atman. Unless we try to realize our divine nature, we are no better than beasts.”

It is now more than twenty years since Swami Turiyananda was in America, but even to-day it is not at all unusual when his students meet that he comes up in their conversations, and the discussions often turn to the wonderful period of his life in the Shanti Ashrama and other places in California. And even to this day many of the letters received from his students in the West contain some reference to the life of the beloved teacher.

On other occasions I have given my own impressions of the Swami. It may be interesting to know what others think of him, how others were blessed by his association. I shall therefore intersperse my remarks with reminiscences given by some of the other students. I shall first of all quote a letter received from California some time ago. This is what my friend writes :

“When we said our final good-bye to our beloved Swami Vivekananda in San Francisco, he told us about Swami Turiyananda, whom he would send to us from New York, and he assured us of the beauty of his character and nature. We were therefore prepared for a wonderful and unusual personality. But we had much to learn, for as we came to know him our love and appreciation grew quite beyond expectation.

“He was so courageous, and seemed like a lion at times ; and again at other times he was quiet and gentle as a lamb.

“He never hesitated to correct our short-comings, and he often teased us, and that so sweetly, that we adored him all the more.

“While in San Francisco he was quite ill, suffering with a severe attack of gall stones, and I helped with the nursing. In this way I came very close to him, and while he scolded me unmercifully, I always felt that beneath it all there was a great love. In fact, we all noticed that after the scolding he was always most gentle and kind to us, so we felt that he loved us the more for having rebuked us.

“In Oakland, he held classes smaller than those in San Francisco. I liked these smaller classes for they were more intimate, and I often travelled the distance from San Francisco to Oakland with him. He always questioned me about why we Westerners did certain things, and often embarrassed me, as I was very young at that time, and so not very apt with my answers. With very keen insight he pointed out weaknesses in my character, which I of course attempted to correct.

“Everything interested the Swami, what we were to have for dinner, how we prepared it. And often he was impatient to taste a new dish before it was ready. While he helped about the cooking, he chanted and told us stories. So we nearly forgot what we were doing, as we did not like to lose one word of his.

“After dinner he lectured and answered questions, and never was he at a loss for an answer even to the most abstruse questions.

“The memory of his sweet presence still remains like a fragrance. Though it has been so many years since he was with us, he will never be forgotten by those who loved him so much.

“The daily happenings were used to point out the lesson he wished to teach, just as Jesus did when he was with his disciples, and as I am sure all great souls must do.

“His conversation repeatedly turned to stories of his boyhood when he was at the feet of his great Master, our Lord Sri Ramakrishna. He made us feel sure that we really were His children, even to the least of us, for he said over and over again, ‘Sri Ramakrishna has you by the hand, he will

never let you go.' These words thrilled me through and through ; but I told the Swami there must be some mistake about me. The sweet smile and words with which he reassured me then, will never be forgotten. They were a benediction. And now I still hope and pray that these words are true for all of us who loved the Swami."

This beautiful little sketch I did not want to spoil by taking it to pieces. But perhaps it may be to our mutual benefit if now I enlarge on the subjects hinted at in this letter.

The final good-bye to the Swami Vivekananda of which my friend writes, took place when Swamiji was leaving San Francisco for Eastern parts of the United States. I was not present at the time, but this, I was informed, was what Swamiji told the students: "I have lectured to you on Vedanta," he said, "in Swami Turiyananda you will see Vedanta personified. He lives it every moment of his life. He is the ideal Hindu monk, and he will help you all to live a pure and holy life."

But though the students were thus prepared for a wonderful personality, when at last the Swami came from New York, it took a little time to understand him. He was so different from anyone the students had ever met. But as they came in close contact with him, and came to know him intimately, their love and appreciation grew quite beyond their most sanguine expectations.

I have seen the Swami in many moods, sometimes playful, sometimes serene, at other times indulgent, and on rare occasions severe. His spiritual moods would also change. I have seen him in New York startle a sophisticated Christian audience with the bold, uncompromising message of the Advaita Vedanta, enjoining them to break loose from the bondage of *maya*. "Brahman alone is real," he exclaimed with great force, "everything else is unreal ; and the human soul is that Brahman. The lion shut up in a bulrush cage thinks he is caught, and escape impossible. He does not know that one blow from his mighty paw would demolish the cage and set him free. We are bound by the delusion of ignorance. Tear away the delusion and be free. All power is within you, for you are the Atman. With the sword of knowledge, sever the veil of *maya*, and assert your divine nature."

To some of the most orthodox in the audience these stirring words sounded like blasphemy. A timid young lady, after the lecture, approached the Swami and told him that she could not understand how the soul could be God, and the world unreal. The Swami listened patiently to all she had to say. Then in a very earnest tone he consoled and encouraged her.

“It took me many years to realize this,” he said, “but once it is realized the work is done.” Then the lady began to speak in praise of Christianity as being so much easier to grasp. “Yes,” the Swami admitted “Vedanta is not an easy, comfortable religion. Truth is never cheap. So long as we are satisfied with glass beads we won’t search for diamonds. It is hard work to delve into the earth, remove the stones and rocks, and go to great depths to find the precious stone. Vedanta is the jewel among religions.”

At other times he would take up the dualistic aspect of Vedanta, and speak with great devotion and depth of feeling of the infinite love of the Divine Mother of the Universe. “Surrender yourself to Her,” he would say, ‘and she will’ guide you in the right path, for she is always ready to help Her children.”

The Swami as he taught and moved among us was indeed brave and patient. We had much to learn, as my friend writes, and well might he have felt disheartened at our slow understanding and waywardness, for we were not all quick and docile disciples.

(To be continued)

THE ESSENCE OF VEDANTA

[VEDANTASARA]

इदमज्ञानं समष्टिव्यष्ट्यभिप्रायेणैकमनेकमिति च व्यवहियते । ३५

35. This ignorance is said to be one¹ or many² according to the mode of observing it either collectively³ or individually.⁴

[1 *One*—As in the Sruti passage, “अजामेकां” (श्वेतः उपः ४-५) —“There is one unborn.”

2 *Many*—As in the Sruti passage, “इन्द्रो मायाभिः पुरुरूप इयते” (ऋग्वेद ६-५७-१८) “Indra through Maya assumes various shapes.”

3 *Collectively*—*Samasti* means an aggregate which is considered as made up of parts which are substantially the same with the whole.

4 *Individually*—The separate units which go to constitute the aggregate.

Now doubt arises as to whether ignorance is used to denote one or many as scriptural passages may be cited in support of both. The solution is that ignorance is one when viewed from the standpoint of *Samasti* (सामान्य) and again it is many when looked upon from the standpoint of *Vyasti* (विशेष).]

तथाहि यथा वृक्षाणां समष्ट्यभिप्रायेण वनमित्येकत्वव्यपदेशो यथा वा जलानां समष्ट्यभिप्रायेण जलाशय इति तथा नानात्वेन प्रतिभासमानानां जीवगताज्ञानानां समष्ट्यभिप्रायेण तदेकत्वव्यपदेशः “अजामेकां” (श्वेः उपः ४-५) इत्यादिश्रुतेः । ३६

36. For instance as trees when considered from the standpoint of the aggregate is denoted as one, viz., the forest, or water is collectively named as the reservoir, so also ignorance, existing¹ in Jivas, being² diversely manifested, is represented, with reference to the aggregate, as one,³—as in such scriptural passages, “There is one unborn”⁴ (Svet. Up. 4. 5) etc.

[1 *Existing etc.*—Though Brahman is the substratum of ignorance, yet the effect of the latter is seen only in and through the created beings. Though a snake always keeps poison in its mouth it is never affected by the poison. The effect of the poison is seen only when the snake bites others.

2 *Being etc.*—This refers to the created beings. Though absolutely speaking Brahman alone exists, yet the distinction of created beings must be admitted from the relative standpoint, otherwise states of bondage and liberation become meaningless. These two states are too well-known. Ordinary creatures are in bondage whereas Suka, Vamadeva, etc. are admitted to have attained their liberation. Again the two states are not possible for one and the same being simultaneously. This establishes the diversity of created beings. Besides, the scriptures admit the two processes of immediate and gradual (क्रम) liberation which also become possible when the distinction of created beings is recognised. From such distinction (जीवभेद) naturally follows the distinction of ignorance (अज्ञानभेद), otherwise liberation from ignorance of one man will imply the liberation of the rest. Further it will be impossible for one individual to attain liberation through knowledge on account of others' remaining in a state of ignorance. Therefore the diversity of ignorance must be admitted.

3 *One*—If the multiplicity of creation is associated with the aggregate of ignorance, it may be contended that the liberation of one must imply the liberation of all. But really this question does not arise. There is only one Jiva; others are seen as such on account of his ignorance and, really speaking, they have no separate existence. When he is liberated through knowledge, the entire phenomena of existence which are the results of his own mental projection vanish away. The question of others' remaining in ignorance is therefore irrelevant; because there is no other existence separate from him. If after the liberation of a particular individual another being is seen in a state of bondage, it is due to the ignorance of the unliberated one.

4 *Unborn*—This refers to ignorance which is without beginning. The other adjectives of ignorance as given in the text are “लोहितशुक्लकृष्णां”—“of red, white and black colours”—and “स्वरूपां” “like

religion itself is a puzzle. "He worships Shiva, he worships Kâli, he worships Rama, he worships Krishna, and is a confirmed advocate of Vedantic doctrines. . . . He is an idolator, yet is a faithful and most devoted meditator of the perfections of the One formless, infinite Deity. . . His religion means ecstasy, his worship means transcendental insight, his whole nature burns day and night with a permanent fire and fever of a strange faith and feeling."

He studied the doctrine of the Vedanta at the feet of one Tota Puri, a holy man who took up his abode at the temple for the space of nearly a year. But it was along the path of worship (*bhakti*) rather than by way of knowledge (*gnâna*) that he sought for the solution of the mystery of the universe.* By temperament he was a mystic rather than a philosopher. The narrative of his life and teaching recalls inevitably the emotional figure of Chaitanya. Like the great Vaishnava saint of Nadia he gave vent to his pent-up feelings in song and dance. Hymns to the deity sung by his favourite disciples reduced him to tears, and frequently induced in him a state of trance. He was subject to such trances from his boyhood, his first experience taking place at the age of eleven, when, according to his own account, he suddenly saw a vision of glory, and lost all sense-consciousness while walking through the fields. His knowledge of God was intuitive, and he never felt the need of systematic study. A discussion on the subject of the study of the Scriptures was once in progress among his disciples when he exclaimed, "Do you know what I think of it? Books—sacred scriptures—all point the way to God. Once you know the way, what is the use of books?" A

* Not so. Sri Ramakrishna recognised the importance of the paths of Jnana, Bhakti, Yoga and Karma and attained the Supreme Ideal through each of them. The doctrine of harmony preached by him was not a matter of intellectual assent merely. It was the outcome of his personal realisation. For a full and comprehensive exposition of his life and teaching vide *Life of Sri Ramakrishna*, published by the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas.—Editor, P.B.

3 *This*—Aggregate of ignorance.

4 *Omniscience*—As It is the witness of all the animate and inanimate objects of the universe.

5 *All-lordship*—Iswara is said to be the agent that controls the rewards and punishments of the created beings according to the merits of their work.

6 *All-restraining power*—Because Iswara is the director of the mental propensities of the created beings.

7 *Unspeakable*—Because he is beyond all proofs.

8 *Cause etc.*—Because Brahman is the substratum upon which the empirical existence of the universe depends.

9 *On account etc.*—Ignorance in its collective form has been said to be the associate of Iswara whereas the created beings are influenced by its individual aspect. This aggregate of ignorance is said to be *one* and it is manifest only to Iswara.

10 *Such etc.*—Comp. “सदेव सौम्येदम्” (छा: उप: ६-२-१)—“In the beginning, my dear, this (world) was only in the form of Existence.” “एषः सेतुर्विधरणाः” (बृ: उप: ४-४-२२)—“He is a bank and a boundary (so that these worlds may not be confounded).” “एष त आत्मा अन्तर्याम्यमृतः” (बृ: उप: ३-७-३)—“He is thy Self, the ruler within, the immortal.” “महतः परमव्यक्तम्” (कठ: उप: ३-११)—“Beyond the Great there is the Undeveloped.” “यतो वा इमाणि” (त: उप: ३-१)—“That from whence these beings are born.”

The word ‘Iswara,’ properly known as ‘God,’ has a peculiar meaning in the Advaita Philosophy. The Vedantist does not believe Iswara to be the absolute existence. Because he is as unreal as the phenomenal universe. Brahman associated with ignorance is known as Iswara. The difference between Iswara and the ordinary man is that the former, though associated with Maya, is not bound by its fetters whereas the latter is its slave. Iswara is the highest manifestation of Brahman in the phenomenal universe.]

AGATHERING FRAUGHT WITH POSSIBILITIES AND PREGNANT WITH HOPE

BY MADELINE R. HARDING

This is how may be described a great Meeting held in the City Temple, in the heart of London.

The City Temple is one of the largest of London’s churches, seating about three thousand people. It was packed to its fullest capacity. An overflow meeting was held in the large lecture hall below. That was also filled to overflowing, and in addition many hundreds of people were turned away.

And for what had they come? To hear about, or to add their sympathy to the cause of world-brotherhood.

This was the first meeting of its kind to be held in Europe. It was under the auspices of the "Fellowship of Faiths." Its object Peace and Brotherhood, as taught by Seven Living World Religions.

The movement is Three-fold—Fellowship of Faiths ; Union of East and West ; League of Neighbours. This in a Christian Church, the Christian Minister, Dr. F. W. Norwood, presiding !

And what note throbbed in all the messages? LOVE.

Ten minutes was allowed each speaker to place before the audience the ideals of the religion he represented. All breathed the same spirit—*Fellowship* of Faiths, not proselytization ; *Union* of East and West—that all racial hatred should cease, as the only means too, of ending war ; That the Great Brotherhood of man the world over, should be recognised and *lived up to*.

For the Buddhist Faith, the Hon. Dr. W. A. Silva of Ceylon, spoke ; for the Christian, Dr. Sherwood Eddy of America ; for the Confucian, Dr. Wei-Chang Chen of China sent his written message ; for the Hindu the Maharajah of Burdwan ; for the Jewish, Dr. Moses Gaster ; for the Mohammadan—as though to doubly emphasise their message—Abdul Majid and Maulvi A. R. Dard ; for the Theosophists, Dr. Annie Besant.

One and all of these messages made us say : If these people are truly representative of their religions, where is the room for bitterness between religion and religion? Where the room for Hindu-Muslim feuds? Where room for the contempt of sect for sect, and creed for creed? And above all where the room for racial strife and hatred, that sometimes even the most exquisite shade of Oriental skin will give rise to an air of superiority in the possessor of a lighter one, when too, it is a moot point in the eyes of many which is the more beautiful?

As each speaker concluded he went below and repeated his address in the hall where the great overflow meeting was being held, so that except for the inspiration of the mighty audience in the great Church, all fared alike.

Devotional music was given, the first item being The Moslem Call to Prayer by the Muezin of London Mosque.

Following a clear and emphatic speech by the Maharajah of Burdwan on Hindu ideals, world peace, and brotherhood, Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy (India's sweet musician) whose name is becoming well known here, sang to his own accompaniment on his beautiful instrument the *Dil-ruba*, which we are told means, "Comforter of the Mind."

Could Indian devotional music have been introduced to a more wonderful audience as regards numbers—(and we may perhaps say the right kind of audience)—by a more perfect artiste?

As Mr. Roy came forward to the front of the extensive rostrum (where have stood some of the greatest souls this world has known) in his picturesque national dress, the bearing of his tall form seemed to fulfil the great Swami Vivekananda's appeal—"Be proud that you are an Indian ; say every Indian is my brother ; India's soil is my highest heaven ; India's good is my good."

Perhaps few in that great audience were prepared for the beautifully modulated voice, so soft and exquisitely sweet, yet filling every corner of the great Temple. But first, it was as though he said : There shall be no misunderstanding by this great representative audience ; this song I am about to render shall not by any manner of means be taken as an example of idol worship, according to the "Missionary School of Painting". Therefore he gave in a clear voice, audible to everyone in that vast gathering, the English translation, before singing it in Bengali. It was—

MIRABAI

(Waiting)

O make me servant Thine !

For Thee I'll make a garden fair and bright,
Where every morning Thou wilt crown my sight.

In all Vrindâvan's groves with greenness gay,
My songs of Thee will ring all night and day.

With greenest glory my garden will be dight,
With flowing streams' and laughing mountains' play.

And Thee, O Presence, evergreen ! I'll greet
Amid my vernal bowers with blossoms sweet.

The Yogi comes in meditation deep,
 The naked hermit his penance' fruit to reap.
 The devotee doth come to Vrindâvan,
 For worshipping his Lord, his dearest One.
 But strange, O Mira! Is thy Master's will!
 Be still, tempestuous heart! O soul! be still!
 For He will come at midnight to tny grove,
 Beside the waters of the stream of Love.

These exquisite words must have prepared hearts for beauty in the music which followed, even if the strains were unusual to many.

The applause was great and genuine. Mr. Roy then descended, as others had done, to *give* to the waiting hundreds below.

The gathering closed with a Christian hymn to the world-embracing All-Father God, in which every heart could join. The beautiful organ pealed out a magnificent voluntary as the thousands poured out into the busy London streets.

The Honorary organisers of this meeting were Mr. Kedar Nath Das Gupta and Mr. Charles Frederick Weller of America. May this work for brotherhood become a living power in every corner of the earth!

AN ORIENTAL LOOKS AT THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

BY JOHN JESUDASON CORNELIUS

(Continued from the last issue.)

The Westernizing process is not confined to India. The anti-Christian movement of China similarly accuses Christianity of being a Westernizing force. The mission schools are accused of having grossly neglected to emphasize Chinese culture and literature. This charge is substantiated by the fact that as a rule graduates of mission schools are woefully lacking in a knowledge of Chinese literature and in an ability to express themselves in correct Chinese. Let us suppose that the children of some of the schools in the state of New Jersey were taught Confucianism as the best code of morals; the geography, not

of New Jersey and the United States, but of Manchuria, Peking, Canton, etc. ; the history, not of the United States, but of the Chinese Dynasties and the Republic ; let us suppose that they were taught a little English but much of Chinese, that they were trained to write Chinese with ease and to speak it with fluency ; and that the whole system of education was based not on the American philosophy of education and pedagogy but on the Chinese. Would you say that these schools were training the young to take their places as intelligent citizens of the American republic ?

Even though such an education were financed by Chinese capital and carried on with a purely philanthropic motive, would not Americans revolt against such an un-American system of education ? Would not the American Government be justified if it required the registration of all the schools for American children conducted by the Chinese, and if it legislated in such a way that in course of time these schools would become American in the personnel of their administrative staff, in their supporting constituencies and legal relationships, in the content of their curricula, and above all in their entire atmosphere ? This is exactly what the anti-Christian movement wants to do with all the schools conducted by the missions for the Chinese children. It wants these schools, instead of being Westernizing and denationalizing centers, to become radiating centers for a higher nationalism fitting in with the whole educational structure. Not a wicked ambition, is it ? Hence it is that the Chinese Government requires the registration of all mission schools.

The Chinese Christian Community, much like the Indian Christian Community referred to elsewhere, tends to become isolated from the rest of the people. In China the right to preach throughout the empire and the protection of law for their lives and property, were given to the missionaries as a result of concessions wrung from the Chinese Government by foreign powers. The American Treaty with China, Article 14, has a clause which reads thus : "Any person, whether citizen of the United States or Chinese convert, who according to these tenets peaceably teaches and practices principles of Christianity, shall in no case be interfered with or molested therefor."

Such agreements placed the Chinese Christians under the

protection of foreign powers. Even some incorrigible criminals became Christian nominally in order to escape lawful punishment. It was only as the protector of the faith of the converts, to be sure, that a foreign power could intervene legally, but in practice the result was to separate the Chinese Christian from the mass of his fellow-countrymen and sometimes to help criminals to evade the law. Such treaties dealt a serious blow to the prestige and sovereignty of the Chinese State, as they resulted practically in removing the Chinese Christians from its jurisdiction.

The political complications of Christianity, much as we may regret it, have brought about the inevitable consequence—animosity. The political and commercial penetration of the West has engendered a new spirit in the East. The rising tide of nationalism, as it is called, is not a desire to be aggressive but a longing to be free to determine its own destiny and to live naturally and normally within its own boundary unhampered by foreign interference. Western Christianity, according to the present temper of the East, has been philanthropic in profession but political in action. It is compelled not to further the national aspirations of the people but to exert its influence in the interests of alien governments. The Eastern will to be free and its passionate desire to throw off all foreign domination have begun, therefore, to make themselves felt in the domain of religion also.

IV

Along with the political imperialism of the West, the religious imperialism of Christianity has added much to arouse the spirit of hostility in the East. The religious hospitality of the Orient is due to the recognition that while there is only one God, there are many approaches to him. The Hindu would say that just as the many rivers which swell by rain-drops empty themselves into one mighty ocean, so also the devotees of all religions enriched by their various religious experiences, find their way to the bosom of the One Infinite Being. But a Christian does not seem to look at it that way, and the attempt of the missionary appears to be to make Christianity the Nordic among religions. Perhaps the Semitic background of Christianity is responsible to a large extent for

its exclusiveness. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God," said the Semite. Coupled with the intemperate aggressiveness of the Western nations, the simple religion of the humble Nazarene has become the most aggressive, exclusive, and powerfully organized religion in the world. The Nordic-complex in religion shows itself clearly in all Christian literature. Take, for instance, the hymn "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" and go through verse after verse ; it will surprise one that such hymns are found in Christian hymnals. Glance at some of the lines :

The *heathen* in his blindness
 Bows down to wood and stone.
 Shall *we*, whose souls are *lighted*
 With *wisdom* from on high,
 Shall *we* to men *benighted*
 The lamp of life deny?

Notice the striking Christian modesty in this hymn, composed by a bishop ! Another Christian, like Bishop Heber, is Kipling of immortal fame. He sings thus :

Ship me somewheres east of Suez,
 Where the best is like the worst ;
 Where there ain't no ten commandments
 And a man can raise a thirst.

It never occurred to him that the ten commandments were not the creation of his forefathers and that they really had their origin "east of Suez." In fact, it is the East which has given all the great religions of to-day, not excluding Christianity.

In order to establish the superiority of Christianity the missionaries had to write volumes on the differences between religions. No one will question the fact that all missionary literature is for definite ends. The object of such writers has been to show the superiority of Christianity by giving it a background of the horrors of the "heathen" religions, to arouse an interest in the missionary enterprise by portraying the "unspeakable" immorality and evils of non-Christian societies, and finally to make the reader an enthusiastic supporter for the enterprise, financially and otherwise.

Imagine for a moment what a picture India would have of America if most of what she knew of America were from the writings of workers in the slums, of the anti-saloonists, of the crime investigators, of the red-light-district workers, and of other such good people! If such literature flooded the markets of India for a half century, nay even for a quarter of a century, it would be as impossible for an American in India to convince the people brought up on such literature that Americans do not marry only to divorce, that killing one another is not the pastime of Americans, and that banks exist in spite of robbery, as it is for an Indian in America to convince those brought up on missionary literature that girl babies are not thrown into the Ganges, that the people of India are not savages, that social evils are not the monopoly of the East.

Just as I am writing these lines I see before me a recent number of the *Modern Review* of Calcutta. It contains a review by Agnes Smedly, an English lady, of a recent missionary book, *Among the Women of the Punjab*, written by Miriam Young. The English reviewer says: "Were it not for the fact that this book is a propaganda document against India, no person of intelligence would read more than ten pages of it without throwing it aside in disgust. In it the missionary mind stands stripped naked as not only an unfair primitive mind but a mind that tells deliberate falsehoods when necessary. If I knew nothing of India and read this book, I would finish by thinking that the Indians are a very low uncultured people, that all the men are foul-mouthed and the women sit about picking lice out of each other's hair."

How can such missionary literature fail to produce ill-feeling? It has been one of the potent causes of the "modest" assumption of the superiority of the West, especially as the unspeakable immorality of Western night life, the appalling social irregularities and the miseries and filth of Western slums, have not yet been sufficiently exposed in the Orient. If one can see to what an alarming extent the missionary literature is responsible for the deplorable one-sided information—and that the worse side—which the West possesses and to what an extent this literature is responsible for its superiority complex, in that alone one would find enough justification for the revolt of the East against the whole missionary enterprise!

V

Just as they paint the dark side of the East for the West, so they paint the brighter side of the West for the consumption of the East. But with the growth of cultural intercourse with the West, the East is discovering things for herself about the assumed superiority of the West. The present anti-Christian attitude is a challenge based on increasing first-hand knowledge of the failure of Christianity to influence the lives of Western peoples. In days of old it used to be said that the lives of Europeans who lived in the East were obstacles to the progress of Christianity out there. But to-day in the life of the West itself Christianity—to the Eastern observer—stands exposed and condemned.

The rapidly growing commercial intercourse and the opportunities for practical education bring a large number of Oriental sojourners to the West. Every year students are coming in ever-increasing numbers to American universities. There are now about two thousand students from China, about one thousand from Japan, two thousand from the Philippine Islands, and about three hundred from India. They come here to prepare themselves to be of some service and leadership in their homelands. They undoubtedly carry back impressions of the West. Are such impressions pro-Christian or anti-Christian? Some of the Oriental students have seen with their own eyes the ghastly sight of the negro being riddled with bullets by angry mobs under a "civilized" administration. They understand a caste system fostered by religion as in India, but they do not understand a caste system opposed by the teachings of Jesus but upheld by the churches of the South. These and like experiences of un-Christian practices are broadcasted in the East, and the non-Christian sees in them a wide gulf between the teachings of Jesus and the practice of his professed followers. The Mohammedan, therefore, speaks of his religion as being much more practical and democratic; so also the Chinese upholds Confucianism as a livable code of morality, and the Hindu says that Christianity being idealistic, the West is not prepared to pay the price for it, and hence that it is not of much use in daily life.

When Dr. C. W. Gilkey was in India last winter, as the

Barrows Lecturer sent by the University of Chicago, he was told that the Hindus once thought of America as the land of Christian idealism and of opportunity, but that now they think of it as the land which insults the Hindus, excludes the Asiatics, and lynches the Negro. Now that the social evils of the West are being exposed in the Orient, the East is losing confidence in the religion of the West. How can an anti-Christian attitude be prevented if the Western Christians, in the face of such facts, claim exclusive superiority? "The Western peoples in spite of their Christianity, are just as bad as the Eastern 'heathens' ; why should we allow the West to yoke us with a foreign religion which is so unrelated to our life?" asks the anti-Christian movement. The excellence of the life lived by the devotee of a religion is the best vindication of its superiority. Judged by this standard Christianity appears to the East as a failure. "But," says the missionary, "it has not yet been tried." "If it has not been tried in the West during its history of nearly two thousand years," the anti-Christian Oriental asks, "then why try it on us?"

The East has not only seen how the missionary's religion falls short of practice in its homelands, but the incoming of such large numbers of students has helped it to see also how money is raised to carry on the Christian propaganda. The East has seen itself misrepresented, has seen how the darkest side of Eastern life is presented and how money is raised by appeal to pity and condescension. With the awakening of national pride the Eastern peoples are no longer willing to see their countries sold for a mess of pottage. The Orientals naturally revolt against an organized religion which for the sake of money to propagate itself so humiliates them in the eyes of others. Such methods adopted for the express purpose of raising money and for the justification of the missionary enterprise, have not helped the West and the East to mutual respect. Only an interpretation of the higher idealism of both countries will bring about good will.

VI

Very few are conscious of the great contribution the Oriental students are making both to their own countries and to the Western countries in general and to America in particular. By

their friendly criticism resulting from a different view of life, they have made some Americans re-evaluate hitherto accepted standards of the West. By openly challenging in speech and in writing those who misrepresent the East and falsely interpret Oriental religions because of an erroneous familiarity with them, the Oriental students are rendering valuable service to the cause of better mutual understanding. This attitude of the Oriental students is characterized by some as "anti-Western" but it will be nearer the truth to say that it is "pro-Eastern." This attitude has helped toward a new appreciation of Oriental culture and a growing conviction that the East has something to give to the West. In fairness to the progressive minority in the missions it must also be said that changes are being effected by younger men with liberal ideas. It is extremely gratifying to see the changes now taking place in the policy of foreign missions. The missionary press is beginning to put forth more sensible literature. Though this change has taken place only within the last few years, yet it promises a brighter future of appreciation and co-operation between East and West.

Like the pain before birth, the anti-Christian attitude in the East and the pro-Eastern attitude in the West are causing great concern in certain quarters. The old tales do not sell, the old methods do not work, and money is not forthcoming for the saving of "heathen souls." It is neither the anti-Christian nor the pro-Eastern attitude which is solely responsible for the financial difficulties of Foreign Missions Boards. To some extent these are responsible, no doubt, but the throwing overboard of the old theology is also responsible. Modernism has knocked the bottom out of the old reward-morality and many of the Christians do not seem to be much interested now in the saving of souls. Nor is the East anxious to welcome missionaries on the old basis.

Says the anti-Christian movement, "If you are coming only to help your commercial and political interests, if you are coming only to destroy our national cultures, if you are interested only in making a Buddhist into a Baptist, a Mohammedan into a Methodist, and a Confucianist into a Catholic, then it would be better not to trouble yourself." The old economic theories, the old imperialism, the old ethics of international relations are all giving way, and modernism is disintegrating the old missionary

motive. The present situation is certainly a challenge—a challenge to renounce our Christianity and follow Christ.

The inner meaning of the anti-Christian movement must now be clear. It is a call to Christianity to disentangle itself from all its political complications, to substitute disinterested service for proselytizing as its motive, to seek to supplement and not to supplant, to be domestic and not foreign, to be concerned more with life and less with dogma. Herein lies the challenge! To the extent that one sees its significance and strives to meet it, to that extent one will be able to perceive the dawn of a brighter day. God is one and truth is universal. There are several ways of realizing the Infinite to meet the individual needs and differences of people. One person may realize Him in social service, another in worship and meditation, and still another in ascetic practice. Each of these ways may be imperfect and unsatisfying, but it is the sharing of religious experiences which helps to perfect that which is imperfect.

The fundamental object of all religion is the same: the promotion of love, peace, good living, and the general welfare of all human beings. "Instead of hating and killing each other because of differences in faiths," says the East, "let us join hands to destroy vice and to promote virtue throughout the world." But such loyal co-operation in human service is not possible so long as there is religion in imperialism and imperialism in religion.*

NEWS AND REPORTS

Swami Nirmalananda at Trivandrum

The members of the *Hindu Vanitha Sangham*, Trivandrum (S. India), mustered strong on the evening of the 9th July last in the local Museum lecture hall to listen to the learned address of Swami Nirmalananda of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission. Precisely at 3-30 P.M. the meeting began with prayers and music. Swamiji arrived at about 4-30 P.M. and delivered an inspiring address in English touching upon the various problems affecting the welfare of Indian women in general and Travancore women in particular. In the course of his address, the learned lecturer dwelt upon the practical aspect of Hinduism which was best fitted for home life which was rendered so sweet by the hallowed presence and teachings of an ideal Hindu mother. Unlike

* From *Harpers Magazine*, New York.

the custom in Western countries, particularly America, Indian, and especially Hindu women, preferred a solemn conclave of their own sex to the mixed artificial audience where so much of decorum had to be observed. There was no reason to discourage this as the social and domestic needs of the two countries were found to differ. A rare type of Hindu mother was Sri Ramakrishna's wife. She wanted Sri Ramakrishna to teach her Realisation so that she might also enjoy the sight of God. When Ramakrishna entered Samadhi, this paragon of virtue prostrated at his feet and called him Mother. This was true realisation. But our women could not and need not for the present aspire for such spiritual bliss. They can be more concerned with worldly prosperity in order that they may clothe the ragged and succour the needy and lowly. Above all they should pay particular attention to the training of their children since, as Emerson said, a country's greatness depends upon the future citizens. At the same time, children should not be allowed to imitate them in rituals but should grasp the significance of each sacred custom. Girls should be taught to sing without the drowning effect of harmoniums. Pure music and fine arts should be encouraged. It is not enough if a thing is good. It should be used properly. A Hindu mother's responsibility was indeed great since the father often found it impossible to devote any attention to his children. There was no harm in imitating Westerners in the training up of children, but a wholesale imitation was to be condemned. Children should imbibe the sanitary and hygienic methods of the West, but not their dandyism. There was then the question of marriage which should be based on principle. The wife is to share the pleasures and pains of the husband intelligently. Sri Ramakrishna's marriage was an extreme type. When Sri Ramakrishna was about to breathe his last, he seems to have said to his wife, "No one is as fortunate as you are. Some might have great daughters. You are the mother of an illustrious son (referring to Swami Vivekananda)." The regeneration of India lies in the hands of the Indian mothers. Let mother India be the mother of many noble Indian mothers. Let religion be the foundation of greatness. See that the children are brought up properly and the goal is in view.

In spite of the Swamiji's introductory remarks that he was least fitted to address an audience composed purely of women, the lecture was listened to with rapt attention as it contained precious gems of wisdom. Swamiji's speech was with characteristic eloquence and clarity translated into chaste Malayalam by Swamiji's disciple, Padmanabhan Tampi. After this was over, there was again music accompanied by Kolattam.

Mrs. Narayanan Nair then made a nice speech thanking the lecturer for his brilliant address and explaining the scope of the Hindu Vanitha Sangham, after which Swami Nirmalananda made a few concluding remarks by way of thanking the Hindu Vanitha Sangham members for giving him an opportunity to meet and talk to them. The meeting then dispersed.

R. K. Mission Sevashram, Rangoon

The following happy remarks were made by the Editor of the *Rangoon Times*, Rangoon, on the local R. K. Mission Sevashram, in one of his recent issues :

On the north side of the section of Merchant street that passes through East Rangoon there may be seen, in the midst of a severely industrial area, a square of pleasant green with homely looking buildings standing at intervals, neatly constructed and tended. This is the Ramakrishna Charitable Hospital. It is under the auspices of a great Indian philanthropic society the influence of which has not only extended from India to Burma but has been established in Europe and America. There could hardly be an institution the funds of which are expended more directly upon its objects and less on its own administrative expenses, for it is carried on by monks of ascetic habits of life and having no interests beyond their work and the goodness emanating from it. By this it cannot be judged that the institution is sectarian. If the ministrations of the hospitals are limited to a class it is to the class defined by poverty only, for among the patients are Burmans, Hindus and Mahomedans and indeed both the out-treatment and the wards are available to all. The Rangoon Ramakrishna Charitable Hospital is in charge of Swami Shyamananda, who, despite an unobtrusive personality and vocation, is known by a good many people belonging to all the communities, and is respected where he is known.

There are a great many calls on the purse in Rangoon at the present time but no apology is needed for keeping its unique activities before the public, and since a great deal more money is required for carrying on the work than is forthcoming from the limited sources of regular income, any sums able to be spared will be greatly appreciated, and we are able to state that they could scarcely be better given to better effect. It is true that the functions of this charitable hospital and those of the Rangoon General Hospital nominally overlap. The charitable hospital, like the general hospital, provides treatment, in and out, with Western drugs; and the general hospital, like the charitable hospital, gives treatment free, where necessary. But the Ramakrishna is frankly engaged in helping the very poor and ignorant indeed, and rightly feels that it has a claim to public sympathy for this precise reason. The charitable hospital is serving, among other purposes, those of relieving the pressure on the public hospital in regard to a certain class of patients and providing a refuge for many whose abject lowness and timidity in such that many of them would die rather than venture into an official-looking building.

Ordinary public hospitals, too, cannot manage to be so leisurely as the Ramakrishna The monks at the hospital are resigned to bear with the ignorance of the patients in a manner that would be impossible in a regular institution. The number of patients dealt with at the Ramakrishna hospital is second not only in Rangoon but in the whole of Burma to that dealt with by the Rangoon General

Hospital. When it is realised that the work has attained this magnitude without any semblance of official administration and control and with only very limited official financial aid it will be admitted that it represents a most worthy achievement. Sometimes when India appears to be dark with evil passions and disfigured by excrescences of hatred of religion and class, it is good to dwell upon pictures of self-sacrifice and purposeful loving kindness such as are made by the Ramakrishna hospital, and to reflect that the land from which such inspiration is drawn must be fundamentally sweet-natured.

Swami Prabhavananda at the Reed College, Portland, U. S. A.

Swami Prabhavananda was invited by the authorities of the Reed College, Portland, Oregon, to give a discourse on Vedanta. His lecture was attended by the students and professors who proved to be a very appreciative audience. The Swami spoke on "What is Vedanta." In the course of his speech he showed how the researches in the field of modern science tend towards the ultimate conclusions arrived at, centuries ago, by the great seers of India.

After the lecture the Swami was the guest of honour at a lunch given by the Professors. And they had interesting chats about India.

The Professor of Philosophy took particular interest in the Vedanta teachings and promised to invite the Swami next session to give a course of lessons on Hindu ethics and sociology to the philosophy class of senior students.

This will give the Swami a new and a greater field of work in America.

Swami Raghavananda

Swami Raghavananda who went to America in 1923 to work at the New York Vedanta Centre, left for India Via Europe in last June. He is expected to reach here shortly.



Swami Saradananda.