

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

VOL. XXXIII.

DECEMBER, 1928.

No. 12.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

IV

(To an American friend)

NEW YORK,
14th February, 1895.

* * * According to Manu, the collecting of funds, even for a good work, is not well for a *Sannyasin*, and I have begun to feel that the old sages were right. 'Hope is the greatest misery: despair is the greatest happiness.' These childish ideas of doing this and doing that appear to me now like some hallucination. I am growing out of them. 'Give up all desire and be at peace.' 'Have neither friends nor foes, and live alone.'

'Thus shall we travel, having neither friends nor foes, neither pleasure nor pain, neither desire nor jealousy, and injuring no creature—from mountain to mountain, from village to village, preaching the name of the Lord.'

'Seek no help, from high or low, from above or from below. Desire nothing. Look upon this vanishing panorama as the witness. And let it pass.'

Perhaps these mad desires have been necessary, to bring me over to this country. I thank the Lord for the experience.

I am very happy now. Between my disciple and myself, we cook some rice and barley, and lentils, and quietly eat. Then we write, read, or receive visits from poor people who want to learn something. Thus I feel myself here to be more of a Sannyasin than I ever was in America before. 'In wealth is the fear of poverty. In knowledge the fear of ignorance ; in beauty the fear of old age ; in fame, the fear of slanderers ; in success the fear of jealousy. In the very body itself is the fear of death. Everything in this earth is fraught with fear. He alone is fearless who has renounced all things.'

Two of our friends want to arrange classes. I am no longer seeking for these things. If they come, blessed be the Lord ! If not, blessed the more be He !

AS WE KNOW HER

BY THE EDITOR

(Continued from the last issue)

In judging the caste system, the position of women in India, India's economic policy or even her attitude towards politics, one fundamental fact has always to be borne in mind, namely, that the regulative ideal of India differs essentially from that of the West. We in India always seek not so much to regulate our environments as our own self. We try pre-eminently to adjust ourselves to the circumstances, not the circumstances to ourselves.

In the progress of man till he has reached the Absolute, these two elements there always are : man himself with his mental equipments and tendencies ; and environments, domestic, social, political, economical, etc., which are more often than not antagonistic to him. Man has always to fight his way on. He comes into conflict with his surroundings almost at every step. Nature herself is cruel with her inexorable laws. Through the thorny jungles of circumstances man has to make his progress.

Of these two elements of progress, we in India consider the first one—our own self—more important, whereas the West, as far as we have understood, considers the second as more important. We believe that we can achieve all powers by

adjusting and moulding our own mind. All is in the mind. If we can properly train the mind, we can attain even to the highest without troubling the least about our environments. Our method is the control of the mind, self-discipline. To a Westerner, this extreme and almost absolute emphasis on self-control appears as self-suppression and suicide. He must have 'individual freedom' (in the ordinary sense), and if the family, society, industrial conditions, the state or Nature seem antagonistic, well, it is his prime duty to change them, to remodel them according to his needs and ideas, and even destroy them if necessary. He wants to achieve his progress principally by changing his environments, not by changing himself.

It is easy to see what happens when a Westerner or any one with the Western view-point, sits in judgment on Indian life and institutions. He finds only apathy, squalor, laziness and weakness everywhere. He finds Indian society bowed under loads of superstitions. He does not know that we have drawn a magic circle around us which the outer influences can scarcely penetrate. We do not fight our circumstances so much as we fight our own selves. Within that inner circle, within our own selves, is the main field of our activity. There we live as alert as any race and there we measure, judge and achieve. But all this is not apparent to the unaccustomed eye. The passing events bring us good and evil, and more evil perhaps than good, but we do not mind. Let them all come, we know how to meet them. Is not the privilege of interpretation always ours? And do not things act on us according as we look upon them? So we change our angle of vision, see things in those aspects in which they relate themselves to the Eternal, and they yield to us their ambrosial essence, however baleful their exterior may be. To one looking from the outside, things may appear as bad as can be, to us they do not. Of course such interpretation is essentially an inner affair, a state of the mind, the realisation of new angles of vision.

These two facts, namely, that all progress is in mind and that environments act on us according as we take them to be, are very highly prized in India and considered very important in the conduct of individual and collective life. Their significance has been deeply impressed on the Indian mind, and now even the most ignorant villager knows it. It is mind that binds and mind that frees, is a constant dictum among all classes of people. And it is not merely spoken but is also acted upon. Thus our women,—from the outside their life

seems limited and cramped. But Indian men and women know that the outside means little. And whoever has the inside view of our women's life knows that their mind moves along high planes of thought and perception. The exigencies of history necessitated the external limitations, but they could not cramp the inner life of our women. Women created their noble world even within those limitations, and who that has not actually lived in it can ever measure the sweetness and goodness of that world? It is not vast space or stupendous action that creates goodness or greatness. Even a point contains in it the infinite universe if only we realise it. It is a profound spiritual truth ; but our women try to live up to it. Similarly of the caste system. Tears of sympathy gush forth from our eyes at the sight of our lower classes, and the tyrannical Brahmins,—how we gnash our teeth at their very idea! But the masses have not been tyrannised over only, they have also been taught that the externals mean nothing and that in mind is everything ; and it must be admitted that nowhere in the world have the masses received such spiritual light as in India, though no doubt Indian masses have lacked material comforts to some extent. And so it comes about that even among the lowest of the low castes, there have been born saints and sages before whose wisdom and nobility of character even the proudest head will bow down in respect. To this day there are found among them saints who, though they ply their accustomed low trades and occupy low social positions, are yet highly honoured of all because of their spirituality. How has that miracle been possible? By the wide propagation of that supreme truth that the mind is everything and external circumstances nothing. Foreigners have invaded time after time deluging the plains of India with their hordes ; and yet, the Hindu race with its ancient knowledge and superstitions still lives. What is the secret of this eternal life? It is that the mind is everything. This expresses itself as an attitude of extreme and invulnerable conservation in times of danger. To-day the Westerner is the master of India. We have submitted to his political and industrial power. But that submission is only external. In all inner concerns we do not recognise him. He has no place in and no hold on our social and religious life. He is only a *mlechcha* in those respects and cannot be treated as an equal. The defects of this attitude are obvious ; but till a constructive and assertive spirit has reappeared in the society to squarely face the situation, such an attitude is the

only possible course, if of course we are to live. To-day we do not require to observe such an extreme conservatism, because the ancient spirit is awake again and we can face the new-comer on any plane,—he cannot injure us ; we hope and mean, on the other hand, to assimilate him.

This is how we Indians act and move. How do the Westerners act? When they go to a new country, they only antagonise the inhabitants, they cannot live in harmony with them. Wherever the white and coloured races have met, there have been disharmony and clash, not because of divergent political and economical interests merely, but mainly because of an inherent defect in the Western outlook on life, which is that the Westerner always seeks to remould the outside in order to fit it with himself. Unfortunately the outside does not belong to him only ; there are also other claimants to it, who may not like it to be so changed. Conflict is thus inevitable. If Western women want to improve their position, the first thing they do is to lead a campaign against men, because the prevailing conditions must be changed and men and their ways are essential parts of those conditions. If the working classes want improvement, the capitalists have to be fought against. So on and so forth. What a tremendous expenditure of energy and what noise and heat and suffering! And the results,—they are scarcely commensurate with the energy expended. But it cannot be denied that this also is one method of progress. The greatest defect of this method, however, appears to us to be its inherent tendency to generate an atmosphere of clash and conflict, in which the delicate flowers of spirituality can scarcely blossom and breathe. It also lacks depth of life and perception ; it rages on the surface. It is not that it produces no effect on the mind. It does discipline, witness for instance the tremendous organising abilities of the Western man, his power of obedience and efficient struggle, his developed sense of responsibility to the corporate life. But would it be wrong to state that this effect is not deep enough to reach those fine strata of the mind, where alone the spiritual battles are fought and victories won?

The Indian method of self-discipline is much more favourable to spiritual growth. It is only in the inner silence, undisturbed by the clamour of the externals, that the Light Divine shines ; and if one hungers after spirituality, one can do no better than dissociate oneself from the externals. It is this spiritual necessity as also spiritual experience that has

developed and confirmed the Indian method of progress. For, it has been found that external conditions are really the projection of our own inner states,—they have no independent reality of their own ; and also that as the soul soars higher and higher into the spiritual empyrean, environments lose their hold on it and fall off like seared leaves. Naturally, therefore, India has acquired the tendency of not fighting with circumstances directly.

It must not be understood from this that India wants to perpetuate the external conditions in the same form or that these never change in India. Conditions do change and are sought to be changed, but not directly. The mental changes that are directly and consciously brought about cannot but have their repercussion on the external conditions which automatically undergo a corresponding change,—they become pliant instruments in the hands of the internal creative forces. But of course this change takes time to become manifest on the surface. Thus in the present age, during the last hundred years, India has given birth to the synthesis, realised its perfect form internally and nurtured it in her heart,—she has brought the ancient spirit to play in the new field ; and now its actions are daily becoming more and more apparent on the external plane. India has internally won the battle, the external victory is only a matter of days. The period of silent growth is a puzzle to the foreigner,—he does not know the secret and rushes to the conclusion that India is dull and dead, lulled by the soporific murmurs of *Mâyāvāda*.

It will be superfluous now to point out that the idea that India lacks the spirit of progress and has to borrow it from the West, is ignorant and untrue. India is progressive. But her method of progress is different from that of the West. And also the direction of her progress is different. We are daily progressing spiritually. In the field of spirituality, we are carrying out experiments every day of our life. No age has lacked a profuse harvest. And if India has not been progressive, how is it that modern India is so different from the Vedic India?—And yet it must be admitted that the fundamentals of India's life have remained the same through the succeeding ages. It is sheer nonsense to say that we believe that four thousand years ago our inspired countrymen established the most perfect possible social system, that we shall not work to obtain a better system—rather we shall resist the idea that any improvement can be found. What we believe and how we act

have been pointed out above. The Hindu society during its existence of millenniums has shown as much variation and progressiveness as the Western society.

But perhaps here we should draw a line of demarcation between the Western idea of progress and the Indian idea. We do not believe in any significant far-off divine event which will sometime be realised on the earth. We believe that the lasting happiness or the eternal good of man cannot be realised either in social life or in the perfection of so-called civilization. In this sense we do not believe in progress. If it is thought that a time will come when this earth will be transformed into heaven, we say that it is an idle dream. Even as an idea it is absurd. In this relative world, there cannot be light without shadow. Happiness and perfection to be here, there must also be misery and imperfection. It has been asked: "Is there no possible advance or betterment in this life of ours? Are we fools to try? Has nothing happened throughout all these painful centuries but the continual piling up and tearing down of a child's house of blocks?" No doubt something has happened throughout all these painful centuries; but if that something has been good, it has also been evil. The Westerner may look around him and congratulate himself on the felicities he is enjoying, which his forefathers did not know three or four centuries back. But the Oriental also looks around him and bemoans his fall, remembers his ancient glory and sheds hot tears over his enslavement to the proud and ruthless races of the West. If all the nations were free and if Western nations were prevented from exploiting Asiatic and African nations, would there have been such 'progress' as we see in the West to-day? It is only at the cost of the rest of the world that the West is growing in prosperity. We may grow eloquent over internationalism, but we must not forget that the mutual hatred of nations never raged so furiously as now. We must not forget that the greatest and the most horrible war has been waged in *our* days. We have grown in material comforts, but we have lost spiritual idealism. No, no, this finite world cannot realise the all-comprehensive vision of humanity.

Progress is achieved along two lines, individual and collective. Individually, the only real progress is spiritual self-realisation and in this, man has to travel the strait and narrow path alone. He has to fight his lone battles. This is the only fulfilment of man. What he thinks, feels, wills or achieves is measured ultimately by the spiritual standard and this is the

only real standard of evaluation. In its collective aspect progress is achieved by men through their conjoint efforts by improving and reforming the conditions and institutions of corporate life, by devoting their energies to the service of the community. This collective progress has been and is being achieved more or less in all countries. India is no exception. But India has not forgotten two important facts in this connection: (1) there cannot be continuous progress for any nation,—there will come times when collective progress will receive set-backs ;—history is replete with such tragedies ; (2) man is not only a social being but also supersocial ;—social achievements therefore cannot be enough for him ; only in the Absolute is true perfection, peace and fulfilment of life, and collective progress even in its highest achievements can but be relative ; man therefore must sometime or other leave the company of his fellows and start on his lone journey. Besides, however much humanity may progress collectively, it will be at too tardy a pace for the impatience of our spiritual hunger, and man's inner restlessness will make him seek the salve for his soul through supersocial, subjective strivings.

S. T. observes : “Through all the changing and experiencing and elaborating, something has happened. And that something that makes everything worth while to us, that makes us declare to a man that we would not go back, is—oddly enough—precisely the same thing for which the Hindus are striving: *expansion into a wider consciousness*. We are conscious of including more, much more, within our boundaries of life and possibility, than the savage or the pilgrim fathers—or even the people of the nineteenth century. We vastly prefer the contacts, the richness of association of our present day. We have finer instruments, more responsive material, control over more subtle forces—and so a wider range of experience. Electricity is better than gas or steam, wireless than cables or telephones, round the world intercourse than round the tapee or the town.

“It is this progressive expansion that has made all the suffering and striving worth while—and that is the meaning of life, for race or individuals. *Progressive expansion*: this is reality for us, as truly as expansion into the Absolute is reality for the Hindu. A gradual advance toward an ultimate perfection—or at any rate an ultimately satisfactory state. We believe in this, we are united as a social body to accomplish it ; our interest, our faith, all our effort and our hope is centred and

staked on it. Is this great urge and instinct of so large a portion of mankind simply a delusion—a trick of nature? Is it never to be realized? Are we merely squirrels running round and round our caged wheel? I do not believe it.”

An ultimate perfection is quite realizable, but only individually, not by the race, nation or humanity as a whole. “This great urge” is no delusion or trick of nature, but that is to be conceived only individually. To realise perfection on earth is to destroy nature herself ; for nature must always be imperfect ; to be perfect is to be Absolute. Nature cannot allow her own destruction. S. T. is deluding himself when he believes that progressive expansion is as truly a reality for the Westerners as expansion into the Absolute is reality for the Hindus. We do not think that the Hindus and the Westerners are so differently constituted in the mind. Hindus also, like their Western brothers, have sought to realise unity amongst races and nations and have dreamt of world-unity. Westerners also have sought and are seeking individually to realise the Absolute. There is no constitutional difference between them. The difference lies in Hindus knowing more of the secret of the higher, spiritual, life than the Westerners, and is being thoroughly convinced that the social instincts of man are not the highest manifestation of his mentality, and that man cannot truly fulfil himself in social life however perfect it may be. In Hindu phraseology, the Western nations are predominantly *râjasika* in temperament and outlook and the Western idea of collective progress is born out of this *râjasika* outlook. They have not yet understood, as a race, the nature and meaning of *sattva guna*, which the Hindus as a race have done and are applying to their culture and civilization. When the Western nations will have enough of *rajasika* activity and be convinced of its futility, then they will come to feel that real progress can only be subjective and individual. Hinduism has therefore laid the greatest emphasis on individual Self-realisation. Hinduism knows that so long as man has outgoing (*rajasika*) tendencies, he will relate himself to external realities, and there must be efforts at collective progress. But knowing that man’s true fulfilment does not lie that way, Hinduism has taught him to conceive his activities as the worship of the God who is in man and society and everywhere, and through this doctrine of *Karma Yoga*, has co-ordinated the two different lines of progress, individual and collective.

We do not believe like S. T. in the doctrine of progress in

the sense that the kingdom of heaven will be one day established on earth. This dream is not characteristic of the West only. Such rosy dreams come to all spiritually inexperienced nations. Such ideas were held by Hindus also at one time. But higher experience dispelled these childish notions. Hence the idea of Renunciation.

Apropos of so-called international unity, Swami Vivekananda, while visiting the West the second time, once remarked: "What is the beauty of unity amongst a pack of wolves?" Unity by itself is nothing. The motive of union and the intrinsic character of the uniting elements determine the value of unity. In the last analysis, it is individual Self-realisation that counts. India rightly lays emphasis on this. But from this it does not necessarily follow that we do not concern ourselves with the salvation of our brothers or that we do not work with any great enthusiasm to bring about good and happiness in the social life. Why have so many teachers taught in India? Has it been for themselves or for the good of others? The casual observer notes only the words of our principle but does not consider its implications. When we say that one's salvation is one's own concern, we also say in the same breath that one must shed his selfish and finite ego, one must change one's outlook of oneself and of the universe, one must learn to see things not as material and mental but as embodiments of God himself. All these are inseparable ideas to us. One aspiring after salvation becomes the worthiest servant of humanity, not the humanity of the fussy internationalists but as it nestles in the heart of God. To him, no man is insignificant. India surely can be proud of having done, of all nations on earth, the greatest service to men inside and outside her boundaries. In India, even animals have received worshipful considerations. It is idle to say that India's philosophy makes her children apathetic to one another's good. The fact is, in this funny world paradoxes are often the highest truths. It is only by renouncing the world that we are truly united to it, for then only do we realise it as identical with our Self. Only he who never cares for man loves man truly, for he then knows him as God himself. India fully believes in this truth and therefore considers the renunciation of and retirement from the world as a necessary step towards ideal life and noble activity in society.

This renunciation is a very important fact of life. It is not, as S. T. considers, an Indian equivalent of the idea of expansion. Though etymologically negative, it is not negative in signi-

ficance. It does indicate something positive, the fire of impatience with the finite and the gross, that the hunger for the Divine ignites in our soul. Renunciation is the passionate yearning for God, which consumes all the dross that is in us to make us pure gold. The idea of expansion does not indicate this fiery passion. Unless this fire burns within us, we do not feel any inclination to search for God the highest. Therefore Hinduism and other religions have emphasised renunciation as an essential pre-requisite of spirituality ; all religions have required men to diametrically change the direction of their life's course.

Renunciation has two definite stages. The developed stage is obvious, as when people leave their relatives and friends behind and go out in quest of God. This phase is patent in the life of our devotees, monks and ascetics. Foulest abuses have often been heaped on their devoted heads and their life has often been considered a waste and they themselves a heavy drain on society. It is only the thoughtless that indulge in such criticism and their words do not deserve serious attention. But there is a preliminary phase of renunciation, which is more universal in India and interpenetrates the very texture of India's individual and collective life. We have already referred to it in another connection and form. It is that the true fulfilment of man lies not in active fight with his environments but in so disciplining his mind as to realise within himself a higher reality and find as a result the outer conditions changed and improved. This self-discipline is another name for renunciation. We renounce the lower self in order to realise a higher one. This is self-discipline. This kind of renunciation is, as we have seen, the very regulative ideal of our life from the highest to the lowest stratum of society.

It will be seen that this outlook on life is rather unique and is not what we deem 'natural'. We take for granted that the outside is nothing and that the mind is everything. This means that the objective world has not the same value to us as it has to be common mind. Consequently, in all our conceptions of an ideal condition, we do not figure it as an objective reality, but as a state of consciousness. We do not believe that there can be a heaven on earth in which, by a gradual process of greater and greater union of men, humanity will objectively participate. We believe that the kingdom of heaven is within each of us, and whoever will realise it there, will find it outside, but none else. We do not dream of a heaven after death,

where all good people will assemble. Such conceptions are childish. It will be noticed that many of the modern religious movements in the West conceive spiritual life as a mere extension, though in a transfigured form, of the earthly life itself. Spiritualism has this earthly outlook. Such an outlook may seem 'natural', but it is not grounded on truth, for the truth is rather the opposite as is borne out by metaphysics and the spiritual realisations of the mystics all over the world. Spirituality really begins with the transference of the centre of gravity of our life and the locus of our consciousness from the Objective to the Subjective, with the dawning perception that reality is not of the nature of an object, but of consciousness. With this realisation is born the spirit of renunciation. "The self-existent God has rendered the senses so defective that they go outward, and hence man sees the external and not the internal self. Perchance some wise man, desirous of immortality, turns his eyes in and beholds the inner Atman." The spiritual life is not a mere continuation of our so-called normal life. Some time, somewhere, we have to turn a sharp corner and take a new direction. That is renunciation. In the days of Vedic sacrifices, when Self-knowledge as taught in the Upanishads was not generally known, the Aryans dreamt of heaven as the goal of existence. That goal was conceived as a mere extension, in a finer and superior form, of their earthly life. Renunciation then was not truly understood. But doubts arose. Heavens did not satisfy. And Self-knowledge was revealed. Then India really came into being. The entire life of man, individual and collective, began to be slowly moulded according to the spiritual necessities. The spirit of renunciation or self-discipline, that is to say, the idea of viewing life and reality as modes of consciousness, began to grow. The infiltration of this supreme idea into the Indian mind has gone on from the ancient Vedic ages down to the present day, till the whole society has been saturated with it. Every day a Hindu must sit at least twice in meditation withdrawing into the silence of his self, be he worldly or spiritually inclined. This practice is obligatory to all Hindus of the upper castes so that they may grow in detachment and inner vision. The people have thus been prepared to consider utter renunciation as natural and a matter of course. This preparedness is extremely important. For if we are once convinced that the ultimate end of life cannot be realised by a mere extension and expansion of our 'normal' life and by proceeding along the current of creation, we must learn to turn

back or change our course some day. But the power and feeling to so turn cannot be evoked in one day. These can only be the culmination of a process pursued through ages and lives. Is it easy to realise a state of mind favourable to the spiritual view of life? One must struggle birth after birth to realise the required outlook. Our mind is over outgoing in its tendencies. As animals and uncivilised men, we have indulged the outgoing tendencies for thousands and thousands of lives. The impressions thus acquired are hard to get rid of. India knows this ; therefore she leads her children through a gradual and steady process of self-discipline to the spiritual outlook on life. The entire life of India is a slow progress towards that beatitude which is renunciation.

This explains why we are not ready to replace 'renunciation' by 'expansion'. Hinduism has no objection to preaching expansion, provided the idea of renunciation prominently accompanies it. The reason stated above is a subtle one. It is nevertheless profoundly true and makes a world of difference between the outlooks on life. How the idea of expansion can be easily conceived as a mere extension of the present life, is regrettably manifest in the conclusions of S. T. He believes in realising the kingdom of heaven *on earth*. "The West," he says, "seeks the gradual raising of consciousness for the whole race, and individuals are content to be held back until the whole group can come up into realization." He adds: "There are powers in man awaiting unfoldment as incredible to most people of to-day as the power to fly or to talk over the air was incredible to their grand-parents. There are spheres of life awaiting our investigation, so exciting that the excitement of the little things at which we work so hard for a happiness that ever eludes—fade away like nursery soap-bubbles." This is all right, but this is not spirituality. S. T. forgets that psychical research and spirituality are quite different things. S. T. says: "We look for God. God in this world, is ourselves—the individual units of consciousness who together make up the Universal Consciousness. We have the power at any moment to unite and change our conditions, dispel our troubles—by following the Principle* that we know is the right and natural way for us. And we alone are responsible for all our pains. The nature of life, both individual and universal, depends on the use we make of the energy over which we have

* It is, according to the writer, conscious and intelligent co-operation of the human units.

control. We can make this world whatever we like. And when we are tired of making it a "human" world, of mixed and contradictory motives and enterprises, part selfish and part unselfish—we will make it a "divine" world, of unified and therefore, clear, comprehensive and satisfying consciousness." The writer also observes that the modern man does not like any religion because all religions emphasise the necessity of the renunciation of this life, and "it goes against, rather than with, his profound instinct for self expansion, and for joy in this life rather than scorn and condemnation of it." That is why the substitution of the idea of renunciation by that of expansion is dangerous. For what the above-quoted writer delineates may be excellent in itself, but it is far from true spirituality. We have already noted that individual and collective progress can never be simultaneous, or phases of the same process. The two are separate and different though no doubt each reacts on the other. The world-unity may or may not be realised. But every man can realise Divinity only within himself, and then for him only the outer universe will be Divine, for none else, the "whole group" will have nothing to do with it. Therefore, though it is quite up to every man to serve others and seek to realise better conditions in humanity, it would be a wild goose chase for him to realise his spiritual goal as a Divinely transformed humanity. S. T. fails to recognise the essential necessity of "turning back" in spiritual life. When India says, "Renounce!" it is not the picture of a vacuity that rises in the mind, but that of the breaking of shackles and release into infinite freedom, and of infinite illumination and bliss.

Does this ideal of renunciation hamper social progress? But are not the lives of the all-renouncing monks themselves a clear answer to this foolish query? Only a monk knows what a soft heart beats under his rough ochre garments. They judge by the exterior. They see the monk's external rejection of the world, but his brooding love for it they do not see. Besides, as we have pointed out elsewhere, no spiritual life is possible without the deification of the entire universe. This very realisation is a source of great well-being to a community. Just consider the supreme blessing of being looked upon as Divine by any one. Would not the very look illumined by such realisation emancipate?

In all that we have written above, it is not at all our purpose to assert that India has been or is perfect and needs

no improvement. We have only tried to indicate that India up till now has not done worse than other races or nations ; that it will be a mistake to judge pre-British India by modern standards ; that those customs which now appear harmful and repulsive were once the channels of beneficial influences ; that the present period of transition is no shame to us, for we have not slept but have responded at the earliest moment possible to the new situation ; that our fundamental ideals are quite sound and we need not be ashamed of them ; that we must carefully discover the deep purposes of our social workings and build up the future in the light of the past ; and above all, that we can look the whole world in the face, for we are verily the most innocent and the most spiritual and serviceful nation on earth. It is often said that we must not look back on our past lest we become careless of our present degradation. But it is time we warn our countrymen that we must not contract the habit of thinking ourselves too much degraded. What if we are poor? This present age is too much solicitous of the physical comforts and the comforts of the lower mind of man, and has devised suitable philosophies and methods of work. Surely India must scorn to submit to such low ideals. By all means let us get rid of poverty and political subjection. But let us not be led away sheep-like from our spiritual ideals to the glorification of material attainments. All that is great and noble in man can be realised and manifested even through and in spite of material poverty. Let us stand on our spiritual integrity. Have we forgotten that poverty is the badge of highest manhood according to India? When were we ashamed of poverty when it did not degenerate? And why should it degenerate when we *know* that infinite power and glory is within ourselves, which no power in heaven or earth can ever check? So let us not make too much of our material poverty. Let us not demean ourselves. Up, ye sons and daughters of India, evoke your sleeping powers and ye shall yet be the first to hail the Rising Sun.

(Concluded)

TO OUR READERS

From the Manager's Notice printed elsewhere, our readers will find that *Prabuddha Bharata* will appear in an enlarged and improved form from the next month. The price of the paper will also increase proportionately. We have long felt the urgent necessity of increased space at our disposal so that *Prabuddha Bharata* can properly fulfil its functions. *Prabuddha Bharata* has always tried to provide much food for thought, if not guidance to its readers, according to its light, in all deeper issues of life, individual and collective. It has also been sought to be made interesting and instructive. The next year is expected to reveal *Prabuddha Bharata* in a better form in all these respects.

It will be, we hope, helpful to our readers if we give them an idea of what they can expect in *Prabuddha Bharata* next year. (1) The series of unpublished letters of Swami Vivekananda which we are publishing now, will be continued throughout the year. Many of these letters will be found extremely interesting. (2) We know that the two series of conversations of Swami Turiyananda, which were published in previous years were much appreciated by the readers. We shall publish a third series next year. This series will be found specially valuable inasmuch as it contains many precious hints on practical spirituality. (3) A discussion of the practical aspect of religion is bound to be useful to many of our readers. We shall therefore print a series of articles on the Practice of Religion by Ananda, in which the writer will discuss various problems that face us in the life of religion. (4) The fountain-head of our spiritual wisdom is the Upanishads. We are sure a discussion of them will be welcome by all. Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, M.A., Ph.D., the great Vedantic scholar, will contribute a series of articles on the Upanishadic Mysticism. (5) Prof. Radhakrishnan of the Calcutta University, who has deservedly earned an international reputation as an interpreter of Hindu thought, will contribute articles on Hinduism and allied subjects. (6) Our readers are aware that the great French savant, M. Romain Rolland, has been engaged in writing two great books on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. M. Rolland is a thinker of world-wide reputation. His study of these two great sons of India is bound to be highly interesting and instructive. The

readers of *Prabuddha Bharata* will have the special privilege of reading extracts from those works month after month in its pages. M. Rolland will contribute articles also on other subjects. (7) Principal Kamakhya Nath Mitra, M.A., will contribute several valuable articles during the year. Principal Mitra is not unknown to our readers. All his past contributions to our paper have been highly appreciated by all. His future contributions are expected to prove equally learned and attractive. (8) We hope to print a series of conversations of Sri Ramakrishna, translated from the diary of M., a disciple, as published by him in Bengali. These conversations will be absolutely new to our non-Bengali readers. The value of these conversations can be understood from the fact that the original Bengali books have become a religious classic in Bengal. (9) Also we intend to publish a series of articles by the late Swami Saradananda on the philosophy of Sri Ramakrishna's life as well as on spiritual realisations. His writings throw a new light on many aspects of Sri Ramakrishna's life and on the intricacies of spiritual states. (10) We have been able to secure some unpublished writings of Sister Nivedita. She dwells with rare insight on the various national problems of India in these articles. These we hope to present to our readers in the course of the next year. (11) Madaline R. Harding will contribute articles on some of the recent religious movements in the West, which show striking similarity and even indebtedness to Vedanta. Mrs. Harding's article on Christian science and Vedanta was published early this year. Her future articles will surely be equally interesting and thought-provoking. (12) We ourselves shall contribute our (editorial) articles as usual, in which we hope to deal with various national and international problems, religious, cultural, social, etc. (13) Translation and annotation of valuable Sanskrit texts have been a feature of *Prabuddha Bharata* almost always. We want to revive it next year. Swami Nityaswarupananda will translate and annotate *Astavakra Samhita*, a masterpiece of Advaitic literature in Sanskrit. We may mention here that this book was a great favourite with Swami Vivekananda. (14) Want of space did not permit us to comment every month on the current thoughts and events and the various national and international problems that arise from time to time. We intend to revive this section next year. (15) We have been, during the last two years, reproducing interesting articles mainly from foreign journals. We hope to continue the practice next year. These articles have often been on Eastern, especially Indian, culture and religion, written by Western writers, and have indicated the

gradual spread of oriental ideas in the Western world. A knowledge of what the West thinks of us is desirable for us in India. (16) Lest our readers find *Prabuddha Bharata* heavy reading, we intend to publish also interesting religious stories and lives of saints ; and (17) illustrated articles on some of our prominent institutions in India and abroad ; these latter articles will give some idea of the practical work of the Ramakrishna order. (18) We hope to supply our readers with extensive reports of the activities of the R. K. Order in India and abroad. Many readers will find them interesting. (19) The Swamis of the R. K. Order will write regularly in *Prabuddha Bharata*, as also other eminent writers.

We are trying our best to do all possible service to our readers. *We shall attempt every month to represent in Prabuddha Bharata the spiritual, international and national aspects of our Ideal.* It is our earnest desire to make *Prabuddha Bharata* a reliable educative institution in India and abroad. In this the Lord help us !

EDITOR.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

The great thought of India seeks to realise the spiritual unity of the universe. It does not work itself along the paths of European religious thought which aims at literally "converting" other beliefs, that is to say, at despoiling them of their essence and substituting its own instead. The philosophy of India seeks to enter into all divergent forms of the spirit and, while honouring their individuality, wishes to embrace them all in order to harmonise them in the supreme unity.

The intimate *rapprochement* that has been existing between Europe and India for one century and the influx of European thought into Indian universities and its fascination for Indians, have not resulted in making them renounce to the slightest degree their ancient and vast wisdom, but have only led to the revival of their ardent intellectual curiosity and their genius for metaphysical conquest which enables them to combine foreign ideas into new accords and organise them in their appropriate symphony.

No son of modern India has worked so much, in this sense, as Vivekananda. And his powerful action owed its first

impetus and irresistible *elan* to the intuitive genius of his master Ramakrishna.

It is not possible to describe in a few lines the characteristics of two of the greatest souls whom humanity has crowned with wreaths. I have been engaged in studying them for a fairly long time ; and however difficult it may be for a European, owing to the somewhat tropical luxuriance of these souls and to the abysmal godliness which is in them (especially in that of Ramakrishna), I intend, in a future work, to convey a glimpse of their fascinating beauty.

Here I would like to give only a few essential indications about the personality of Vivekananda and his intellectual constitution. . . .

* . . . * . . . * . . . *

Vivekananda* (whose real name was Narendranath Dutt), born in 1863 and prematurely deceased in 1902, came of a distinguished Calcutta family belonging to the Kshatriya caste. Few men have shown, from their childhood onwards, so admirable a harmony of rich and varied gifts, of the body and of the soul. Handsome in appearance, of splendid physique, passionately fond of the arts and the sciences—music, poetry, mathematics, astronomy, Sanskrit and the languages, he enjoyed the benefits of the most liberal education. He read Shelley and Wordsworth, pondered over the *Imitation of Jesus Christ* and Christian religious literature, consumed the historical works of Green and of Gibbon, blazed up in enthusiasm for the French Revolution and Napoleon, studied the philosophy of the West, especially of Kant and of Schopenhauer, and corresponded with Herbert Spencer, astonishing him by his precocious intelligence and daring criticism. And all this, without sacrificing anything of the ground work of his Asiatic culture and Vedantic thought. He sought to interpret Indian philosophy in a new manner in the light of Western methods.

Between his eighteenth and twenty-first year (1881-1884) he underwent a violent intellectual crisis which was rendered more bitter by his father's death and the material embarrassment into which the family found itself plunged. At that time he had, for his guide, Brajendra Nath Seal, his senior in age by a

* This name which means "*The Bliss of Discrimination*" (or "Discernment") had been given to him by Ramakrishna. It designated the ardour of his analytical and critical intellect, as distinguished from the passive acceptance of the other disciples. [The name *Vivekananda* was not given him by Sri Ramakrishna. The Swami assumed this name at the suggestion of the Maharajah of Khetri—Ed. P.B.]

few years, who was later on to bow down in respect before his genius, but who then believed himself to be confident of the possession of Truth and claimed to impart it to him. Brajendra Nath Seal was an Indian rationalist of a particular type, who wished (as he himself said) to fuse together the pure monism of the Vedanta, the dialectics of the Absolute Idea of Hegel and the gospel of the French Revolution,—Liberty, Fraternity and Equality. To him the principle of individuation was evil ; and Universal Reason was everything. The question was how to manifest pure reason : this was the great modern problem and Brajendra thought of solving it through revolution. Vivekananda who had been cast down from his optimistic theism by his perusal of Stuart Mill's *Essays on Religion*, and who was brooding over the problem of evil, was racked by doubts and scorched by passions. His leonine nature wished to clasp everything in one grasp ; and everything excited him. Brajendra's dominating rationalism could satisfy only certain aspects of his intellect ; but he could not circumscribe his gigantic personality within it. For him immanent Reason was not enough ; the Living Revelation, the Realised Absolute was indispensable.

These he found in the prodigious man—we might be tempted to say "fabulous", if so many witnesses, many of whom are living still, had not made him actual and enabled us as it were to touch him with the hand, and if his teaching, at once familiar and exalted, had not remained for us in the Conversations collected by his auditors,—the simple, unlettered, sublime visionary Ramakrishna. That unique man, through the genius of the heart, achieved the wonder of embracing, one by one, in their totality, all the religions : Hinduism (in all its forms, from the most idolatrous to the most abstract), Islam, Christianity, etc. He "found that it was the same God towards whom all steered their course and that He who is called Krishna is also called Siva, the Primal Energy, Jesus or Allah, one only Rama, having a thousand names. . . ."

Ramakrishna initiated Vivekananda into Advaitist Vedantism, into the realisation of the One Absolute, of the Brahman complete and without divisions, entire. He imparted to Vivekananda what was much more than the evidence for it,—he put him in living contact with it. Vivekananda remained marked with its impress for ever.

Nevertheless, Vivekananda was very different from his master in his entire nature,—in the consuming impetuosity of

his temperament, in the violence of an energy which created more energy just as the wind fans up the fire, in his avid intellect which never knew repose, in the vastness of his knowledge which he augmented unceasingly, and lastly in an inquietude—new amongst the meditative thinkers of India, although Buddha had known it but fled from it—about the ever-gaping wound of universal suffering, of the misery of man, of the poor, of the stricken and even of the criminals (for these are only the afflicted in another sense). This brooding uneasiness—not abstract but vital and ever present—about the suffering of the sacrificed peoples, and first of all of his own, of the people of India, was to direct his action and that of his disciples and of the orders which he founded not less towards the service of others, the service of charity, than towards meditation. And for the first time, I think, in an Indian religious order, the supremacy of meditation was broken. Suffering cannot wait ; and for its sake must have to be sacrificed repose and meditative dream and even health (if this was necessary) in order to lighten the universal pain. Let us hearken to his moving appeals :

“Is there none amongst you who can give a life for the service of others? Let the study of the Vedanta and the practice of meditation be left over to the future life. Let this body be consecrated to the service of others ! And then I shall know that you have not come to me in vain. . . .”

“May I be born and reborn again and again and suffer a thousand miseries, if only I am able to worship the only God who exists, the only God in whom I believe, the sum-total of all souls, and above all my God the wicked, my God the afflicted, my God the poor of all the races !”

“. . . . There is no other God to seek after. He alone worships God truly, who serves all the beings.”

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. . . . Ramakrishna died in 1886. Vivekananda organised the disciples into an order. He himself travelled through India on foot as a wandering monk from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin (1889-1893) ; and it was during this travel that he became conscious both of the misery of his people and of his own mission which was to recreate the indivisible unity, moral and religious, of India. The idea came to him to send out a call to the world for the restoration of this home of the divine life of all humanity. The Parliament of Religions at Chicago (in 1893) gave him the occasion for his first voyage outside

Asia. From his first speeches, this unknown, without resources and without recommendation, loomed forth into prominence and stirred the enthusiasm of his American audiences. He remained in the U. S. A. from June 1893 to August 1895, went to England in the month of August 1895, returned to the U. S. A. in December and founded the *Vedanta Society*, and was back again in London in April 1896. There he cultivated the personal acquaintance of Max Muller. His health had already been much shaken. Some devoted English friends who dedicated themselves thenceforth entirely to his work,—the Seviars— took him to Switzerland in the month of July, 1896. And it was from there that he proceeded along with them to Kiel to meet Paul Deussen. . . .

From London where Paul Deussen accompanied him, Vivekananda returned to India in 1896. And then commenced his mission of glory and of sorrow. In May 1897 was solemnly founded the *Ramakrishna Mission*, one of whose chief aims was the establishment of fraternity amongst the followers of the various religions: "For all are so many forms of one eternal religion."

To-day the Mission has honeycombed all Hindustan with monasteries, homes of service and orphanages. It has, in the Himalayas, an Adwaita Ashrama "for the spiritual meeting of the East and the West." It publishes several excellent journals. It holds itself aloof from all political action but it is one of the densest and most luminous formative nuclei of the great Nebula India.* . . .

" COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN VEDANTISM " †

BY SWAMI SATPRAKASHANANDA

INTRODUCTION

The above-named treatise, a welcome sequel to *The System of Vedântic Thought and Culture* by the same author, is a critical exposition of the relations in which the various systems of Vedânta philosophy, propounded by Samkara, Râmânuja, Nimvârka, Madhva, Vallabha and Jîva Gosvâmî stand to one

* Translated from the original French by L.V. Ramaswami Aiyar, M.A., B.L.

† *Comparative Studies in Vedântism*. By Dr. Mahendranath Sirker, M.A., PH.D., Professor of Philosophy, Sanskrit College, Calcutta. Oxford University Press, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. 314 pp. Price Rs. 10.

another. Their agreements and divergences in all their essential bearings have been clearly set forth. The whole setting is fully illustrative of the rationale of the different schools which are characterised by two distinct types of thought, transcendentalism and theism. Samkara and his followers, known as the Advaitins, are the advocates of the former, while the Vaisnavas, to which section all the other teachers belong, are the exponents of the latter. The author studies the subjects from the view-points of fundamental metaphysical concepts and brings the vital issues into clear relief. He not only differentiates the Vaisnava theories from one another, indistinguishable as they appear in many respects, and from those of Samkara, but is also careful to note the minor differences among the Samkarites themselves. Comparisons with other philosophic systems of the Hindus and similar views in the West have also been made. A good many writings have hitherto appeared on different systems of Vedânta with attempts at comparison on narrow or wide bases. But a thorough-going comparative treatment of almost all the systems, like the present one, we have not come across heretofore. The author's direct knowledge of the authoritative works on the subjects, as evinced by his frequent references to the original texts, his clear grasp of the abstruse speculations and his graphic presentation of the subtlest ideas with the receptive, critical, and unbiased attitude of a philosopher, through a medium of expression altogether different from the original, are singularly striking.

The one remarkable feature of the Vedânta philosophy is that it is based on the direct experience of the seers. It grows out of an attempt to systematise and rationalise the Vedic truths known as Vedânta—the end of the Vedas, that stood self-revealed to the clarified vision of the perfected souls. These were systematised for the first time by Vyâsa in the form of aphorisms called Brahma-sûtras or Vedânta Darsanam. The different Vedantic systems are chiefly different interpretations of the Brahma-sûtras. Thus in Vedântic thought, as is the case with the Hindu philosophic systems in general, revelations come first and then speculations. The author, therefore, rightly observes in his prefatory remarks that “Vedântism is thus in its initiation a body of intuitions and in its growth a collective system of philosophy.”

In the search of truth, Vedântism has more closely followed the lead of psychic experience than discursive reason. The immediacy of psychological facts has greater hold on it than

mediate logical conclusion. This characteristic introspective method of Vedânta should be borne in mind while studying its views. Without some measure of self-introspection on the part of the student, a clear comprehension of the Vedântic truths is not therefore possible. The following observation offers a clue to the study of Vedânta and bespeaks the author's insight into the character of Vedântic thought :

“Vedântism, as a system, has laid more stress upon the psychological revelations, and logic has followed psychology to explain and integrate all the experiences of conscious life. Though the mystic experiences differ, their explanation and systematization differ too, yet none can deny that in Vedântism mysticism has the greater demand than logical systematization. But the trouble is that these mystic intuitions do not offer the same presentations; the appearances widely differ and different schools are anxious to claim some as real and true visions and disclaim others as psychical aberrations. In this way intuition and logic co-operate to establish truth on a humanly convincing basis. Truth in Vedântism should satisfy the claims of logic in the absence of self-contradiction (*âtma virodhasânya*), of metaphysics in the impossibility or inconceivability of a denial (of Being) (*avâdhita visayatva*), and of psychology in the direct experience. And when these three converge to the same thing, we have, humanly speaking, the truth.”

Another fact to be noticed is that in Vedântism the problems of life and its experiences have been viewed from a particular attitude of consciousness. “And in the history of Vedântism two attitudes of knowledge and love have almost become fixed, and the psychological demands have given two types of philosophical concepts and thinking.” But neither the allegiance to the Vedas nor the psychological demand to meet the requirement of a particular attitude of consciousness have arrested the free growth of philosophic thought. For, as the author has expressed, “Vedântic teachers have thought in concepts similar to those of Western thinkers, have shown the highest logical acumen and have not been lacking in philosophic boldness in pressing as they do, their conclusions to a logical end.” On the other hand, those two elements in Vedântic system have intimately related it to life, so that in Vedântism religion and philosophy stand combined. Vedântic truth is not a mere theoretical idea but an ideal which is to be realised within ourselves as the very substance and fulfilment of our being. The author aptly remarks that “Vedântism, rightly understood, is as much an art of life as a science of thinking, and life ultimately in its fullness of growth embraces truth and finds its meaning and purpose therein.”

Realisation of the Self is the one main theme of all schools of Vedânta. The author rightly says:

“Vedântism is the philosophy of the self-conscious. It is pre-eminently the search for the self. This is undoubtedly true of Advaitism. No less true is it of Vaiṣṇavism. Though Vaiṣṇavism has in it the supreme stress upon God-consciousness, still it cannot ignore that God-consciousness is metaphysically an implication of self-consciousness and psychologically involved in it.”

The subject-matter of the book has been arranged under the following heads:—(1) Epistemological Approach, (2) Categories of Existence, (3) Appearance, (4) An Estimate, (5) The Creative Order, (6) Sources of Knowledge, (7) Realisation and Discipline, each forming a separate chapter preceded by a synopsis. The author has very ably dwelt on all these subjects in their several aspects. We may at once state that we have found ourselves in perfect agreement with him in almost all his statements and conclusions. The only review we can present of this book will necessarily be a sort of summary of the main features of the treatise. The most important chapters in the book appear to us to be those on the epistemological and metaphysical views of the different schools. And it is rightly so, for it is from these views that all other aspects of philosophy naturally follow. We mean to briefly dwell on those chapters in the following paragraphs.

KNOWLEDGE AND BEING

The author approaches the subject from the epistemological view-point. The superstructure of each system is raised as it were on its epistemological foundation. The varied conceptions of life and truth arise out of fundamental differences in the theories of knowledge. For the proper understanding of a system as a whole an enquiry into its theory of knowledge is therefore of primal necessity. The idea is thus touched upon by way of preliminary remarks by the author:

“All teachers of Vedântism make consciousness the supreme fact and ground of all knowledge and experience. The most intimate fact in experience is this consciousness, and the philosophic search must, therefore, begin with a thorough logical determination of knowledge as revealed in our introspective insight and psychical analysis.”

Knowledge, according to Samkara, is a changeless indeterminate existence. It reveals thought. Its determinate form as thought, acquired through the relativity of subject and object, is the creation of nescience. Pure cogni-

tion transcends the operation of thinking process and is essentially non-relational in character. "It is processless accomplished perception." But to Râmânuja thought-activity with the correlativity of subject and object forms an integral part of cognition. All knowledge, according to him, is determinate by nature. The difference between determinate and indeterminate knowledge is one of degree and not of kind. "When knowledge is not developed in full synthesis, it remains to us as partially determinate. Such a cognition is called indeterminate in the sense that it cannot be seen in its complete connotation and fullness of relation." But the distinction of determinate and indeterminate cognition is accepted by Jîva Gosvâmî, the exponent of the Bengal School of Vaisnavism. The author continues:

"Jîva appears to have attempted a synthesis between the theories of knowledge as held by Samkara and Râmânuja. Samkara denies all qualifications, Râmânuja denies homogeneity of cognition; Jîva accepts both of them as stages involved in the development of synthetic unity or apperception. The indeterminate form is involved in the determinate as its basis; though a clear definition and a consistent conception require a rational synthesis which comes in subsequently as the demand of thought, yet in the immediacy of perception this synthesis is not in direct cognition."

This synthesis however is not real. For, as the author rightly points out, Jîva Gosvâmî's indeterminate knowledge, the homogeneous basis of all relational and unitive consciousness, is not the same as the indeterminate cognition of Samkara which transcends all relativistic consciousness. The one is "nascent thought", the other "abstract apprehension".

The whole difference between Samkara and the theistic schools is based, as the author has pointed out more than once, on the static and dynamic conceptions of knowledge. The Vedântists of all schools accept Brahman of the Upanisads as the basic reality of the cosmic order. To the static vision of Samkara the Supreme Being is the "homogeneity of consciousness and blissfulness of Existence", exclusive of all determination and qualification. To determine it is to deny its absoluteness. In the dynamic view of the theists, "the Absolute is the synthesis which does not deny qualifications, but, on the other hand, expresses its fullness through the richness of existences. It is the Being of infinite attributes, the Supreme Being of sweetness, goodness and wisdom."

The above definitions of the Absolute as non-qualified and

qualified Being have given rise to keen controversy between the two schools. The challenge thrown by Vyâsâchârya, a follower of Madhva, in his Nyâyâmrita was gallantly accepted by Madhusûdana Sarasvatî, the renowned author of Advaita-siddhi. The fine arguments of the parties on the deepest ontological problems, *e.g.*, Being as intelligence, as self-effulgent, as witness-intelligence and as bliss, have been nicely described by the author. The chief argument of Nyâyâmrita is that the attribution of consciousness and blissfulness to Being is not compatible with its impersonal character as indeterminate existence. To which Advaitasiddhi rejoins that intelligence and bliss do not form the predicates but the very nature of Being. Being is intelligence. "It is a *conscious expression*, rather than an *expressive consciousness*. It is necessarily a witness, a *sâksî*, a *percipi*." Bliss is non-different from consciousness. "The two terms—*cit* and *ânandam*—do not denote two things, they have a common reference to an identity." In the Advaita Vedânta Bliss is Being and Self is Bliss. In the theistic Vedânta Bliss is the Infinite Being, and the finite self, atomic in nature, can have the fullness of perpetual delight in fellowship with the Infinite. This is a position which cannot stand strict logic. Neither the conception of *svarûpa-sakti* as propounded by Jîva Gosvâmî nor Râmânuja's ideal of *Brahmasâmyâpatti*, equality with Brahman, explains the situation. "And the explanation is not logically possible so long as the least difference between the infinite and the finite is retained."

Being in Samkara is the absolute position. Projection has no place in the transcendence of the Absolute Being. A relation of identity between the position and the projection can be conceived from the empirical standpoint. But philosophically the relation escapes determination. It is mysterious and indefinable. It is a superimposition due to *avidyâ*. In the unitary dynamic conception of Râmânuja, the processes of self-projection and self-integration build up the endless synthesis in the concrete Being. Samkara's Being is absolute identity. It is positive sameness in every point of existence. Râmânuja's Being is concrete identity and as such has a personality and a character. He institutes a relation of non-difference between substance and attributes to maintain the identity of Being and its attributes. But "non-difference and relation are mutually exclusive concepts". Relation can exist only where there is difference. Even Jîva Gosvâmî's assertion of *svarûpa-sambandha*—relation of identity between substance and attributes—does

not improve the situation. Svarûpa is essence which cannot be related to itself. The author concludes :

“The attempt to establish a relation between Being and attributes ends in a logical confusion. Either we must say that there is no relation between substance and attributes, or we must accept an outwardness or mediateness in relational concept. Either the attributes resolve themselves into substance or they are illusory. Anything, besides this, forces us to a dualistic position.”

REALITY

Having defined the epistemological and the metaphysical settings of the Vedântic thought, the author proceeds to consider its categorical determination of existence. Though transcendently there exists only one self-existent reality according to Advaita Vedânta, yet from the relative standpoint the school of Samkara has accepted the following five categories :—jîva, Isa, the difference between jîva and Isa, avidyâ, the relation of locus, the support and the supported between Brahman and avidyâ. These have no beginning in time and vanish only with the dawn of the knowledge of Brahman. According to the theistic teachers the Absolute is a concrete unity which includes separate finite existences as parts of its being. Absolute dualism has, therefore, no place in Vedântism. The author gives a critical account of the categories as affirmed by each school. Though different enumerations have been made by different teachers, yet all include in their lists the following three as essential :—jîva, prakriti and Brahman, the others being either attributes or relations subsisting in and among them.

It has been rightly observed by the author that none of the theistic philosophers admit any absolute separateness between these categories. Here they are confronted with the great metaphysical problem of assimilating the one and the many.

“Philosophy has either to negate relational consciousness or to posit it in the Absolute. Bradley supposes that in the Absolute the differences, if not completely annulled, are transmuted and fused, but how, he does not know. Hegel and Râmânuja make a unitive synthesis of differences in the Absolute. Bosanquet is nearer to Râmânuja in assimilating the differences in the Absolute as predicates or adjectives. Bradley does not solve the mystery. Râmânuja and Bosanquet cannot give the unity they desire so much. Madhvites are anxious to retain the difference in the Absolute, but finding such a position otherwise untenable institute visesa, the doctrine of specific particulars.”

“To avoid pluralism Madhva first establishes an integral whole of existence, in which he introduces visesa. To establish a difference where

there is none or to bring a harmonious adjustment among things of absolute and ineffaceable differences Madhva attributes a mysterious power to God. With this his system justly avoids the appearance of a pluralistic system."

[Would not "just" be more appropriate here than "justly" ?]

According to Râmânuja the finite selves and prakriti inhere in the Absolute as its attributes, as moments of its being. His system is rightly styled Visistâdvaita—"concrete monism". Nimvârka accepts jîva and prakriti as dependent reals controlled by Purusottama. Purusottama is non-different from jîva and prakriti as it is immanent in them. It is different in the sense that it transcends them. His system, known as Dvaitâdvaita, is "monism with pluralistic countenance". In the Suddhâdvaita (pure monism) of Vallabha jîva and prakriti seem to be merged in Brahman. "Vallabha differs from Râmânuja in holding that all apparent differences in being and relation are dissolved in the identity, where jîva attains bliss, inert existence, consciousness and bliss." Jîva Gosvâmî has accentuated the integrity of Being by conceiving jîva and prakriti as saktis of Bhagavân. Svarûpa-sakti, the inner nature of God, supports the tatasthâ jîva sakti which again supports the vahirangâ mâyâ sakti. So mâyâ has no direct touch with Bhagavân. Sakti is neither identical with nor different from the possessor of it. Jîva Gosvâmî calls it the inconceivable relation of identity and difference—achintyabhedâbheda. According to both Râmânuja and Jîva Gosvâmî Isvara is unaffected by the transformation of prakriti and the spiritual unfoldment of jîva, though they form an integral part of him.

The author's concluding remarks beautifully clarify the theistic position :

"The theistic philosophers propound the reality of jîva, Isvara and prakriti. They do not materially differ. The formal difference originates in the logical attempt of reconciling these reals in the Absolute. And the Absolute is the divine personality which does not deny, but, on the other hand, accepts finite personalities as complementary to its own existence. The conception of personality at once necessitates the position of separate finite existences, and the understanding of it as divine and absolute immediately requires the inclusion of them in the richness of Infinite life. This implication is present everywhere in Madhva, Nimvârka, Jîva Gosvâmî and Râmânuja."

APPEARANCE

It has already been noted that Samkara assigns a relative existence to the cosmic manifold. It exists in the empiric

knowledge but has no existence in transcendent consciousness. No definite origin can be ascribed to it and it persists till we have the undivided vision of the Infinite. The whole nature, external and internal, is supported in avidyâ. All our sense-perceptions and mental operations from the grossest to the finest are in the domain of mâyâ. The mysterious nature of avidyâ, its twofold function, its different location by Vâchaspati and Vivaranâchârya, the fact of its being revealed by witness-intelligence, and the four divisions of existence by Samkara are explicitly stated with a view to explain the illusory character of the world-appearance after the Samkarites. Those to whom the doctrine of Advaita presents a dualistic countenance because of the position of avidyâ will do well to note the following words of the author :

“The position and negation of avidyâ and its location in Brahman come under conceptual thinking, but Brahman transcends it. And as long as avidyâ is operative, its basis and object are Brahman. It is posited and denied in it, though it is not denied by it. The determinate and indeterminate concepts of Brahman originate with this position and negation of avidyâ in Brahman.”

The basic difference between Samkara and Râmânuja lies in the test of truth. Samkara's proof of reality is purely metaphysical. Appearance is no mark of truth. He accepts the positiveness of experience but that does not constitute its truth. It is a fact in knowledge and as such cannot be ignored. It has no permanence and is therefore not true. It is neither real nor unreal. But to Râmânuja every fact of experience is true. Whatever appears or forms the object of consciousness is real. This difference in the test of truth is also evident in their different interpretations of illusory perceptions: the anirvachaniyakhyâti of Samkara, satkhyâti of Râmânuja, the anyathâkhyâti of Madhva and the anyakhyâti of Vallabha.

As to the nature of mâyâ, it is conceived by all schools of Vedânta as the sakti or the creative force of Isvara. In the absolute monism of Samkara, this definition has an empirical or pragmatic significance. It is positive but not eternal. In the transcendence of pure Being, man, nature and God have no existence. But to the theistic teachers mâyâ is positive and eternal and subject to the will of God. It is a power inherent in Isvara and not a mere superimposition on his being. The creative significance of mâyâ is less prominent in Samkara than in the theistic schools. There are Advaitins who deny objective existences and regards the world as transcendental illusion.

To the theistic schools also *mâyâ* has an epistemological significance, as it obscures the spiritual vision of *jîva* and attracts it to the physical plane. Then again, *mâyâ* is the only dynamic principle in Samkara. But the theistic teachers conceive, besides *mâyâ*, the "physical-dynamo" immanent in the world of nature, a "spirituo-dynamo" which operates in the supra-natural plane of God's self-expression and quickens the creative instinct of *mâyâ* in the beginning of each cycle. According to all teachers of Vedânta, *mâyâ* is the material cause and *Isvara* the efficient cause of the creative order. *Mâyâ* as a separate entity is not the cause as it has not an independent existence. The identity of the two causes is thus maintained by all except Madhava, to whom *prakriti* has an existence as a real, though subject to *Isvara*.

In whatever form *mâyâ* may be conceived, the great difficulty about it is its inexplicability. Samkara's conception of *mâyâ* has in it a mysteriousness which defies intellectual comprehension. The theistic teachers also have to conceive a mysterious power of God, which subordinates *mâyâ* and renders possible what is apparently impossible. "In both systems," the author observes, "inexplicability somewhere in some form remains." But that does not prove that the theory of *mâyâ* is untenable. It only shows that human reason is helpless beyond a certain limit.

"The rational quest of man tinged with a glow of pride to conquer truth has the rude shock of at last discovering that truth in its nakedness is not revealed in the search. Some mysteriousness, some confusion hangs in the intellectual horizon; the intellectual pursuit ultimately takes rest in humility and submission."

Though the static identity is the only truth according to Samkara, he does not sacrifice the popular view of the manifold existence to the philosophic vision of transcendent oneness. Like the *Sruti* he has to interpret, he combines common-sense theological attitude with far-reaching metaphysical insight, and attempts to make a synthesis of causation with identity, the result of which is the celebrated *vivartavâda*, the theory of illusoriness of causation. But in the dynamic unity of the theistic teachers identity and causation have distinct places. The creative manifold is the self-expression of the Absolute. *Parinâmavâda*, the theory of transformation or expression, is the natural outcome of the dynamic conception. A synthetic development of the principle of causality can be traced through the *savikâra parinâmavâda* (theory of mutable transformation) of Râmânuja, the *avikâra parinâmavâda* (immutable trans-

formation) of Vallabha and the vivartavâda of Samkara. The true import of the theory of transformation, mutable or immutable, lies in establishing the identity of being in causation. Effectuation is only apparent. It indicates only a change of form, no substantial mutation. Vivartavâda establishes the identity of being by the method of the position and denial of the manifold.

The author thus concludes his discussion of mâyâ :

“Mâyâ is non-being transcendently and being empirically. It is not therefore the Hegelian becoming, the synthesis of being and non-being. Plato's matter, Sâmkhya's prakriti, and the Vaisnavites' mâyâ are positive realities. Samkara's mâyâ is posited and consequently denied and does not belong to the same category of being.”

The idea of a personal God of unlimited power and capacity is an essential factor of the dynamic concept of Reality. The author gives a philosophic view of the divine personality and of man's union and fellowship with God through love and service in the supersensible world, which form the central theme of the Vaisnava cult. In the life of realisation, the later Vaisnavas, Vallabha and the Bengal school, attach more importance to the enjoyment of divine beauty and sweetness through love and service than the intellectual apprehension of majesty and sublimity ; and the outbursts of love and joy find greater recognition in them than the calm devotional attitude of Râmânûja and the meditative quietness of Nimvârka.

The different theories about jîva or finite consciousness have also been considered. To clear the Advaita view references are made to âbhâsavâda, avacchedavâda and prativimvavâda. The Vaisnavas draw no distinction like the Samkarites “between the metaphysical reality and the psychological or epistemological ideality of the self.” To them jîva-âtman is a dynamic reality, atomic in nature. It has the capacity of expansion and contraction. It is at once a knower, a doer and an enjoyer. So long as jîva is in touch with nature, its real concrete spiritual self does not manifest itself and it has an “individualistic, egoistic and differentiating outlook in thought, action and love.” But when, freed from the influence of prakriti, it is united to God in love and service, then its functions shine forth in their native purity. The magnifying touch of the Infinite Self expands the vision of the finite self so that it can enjoy the expansive life of the Absolute Consciousness. But its atomicity is still retained.

The theistic conceptions of the Absolute and the finite selves, however, raise some insuperable difficulties. How can

the finite selves, themselves real, be assimilated in the Absolute?

“Râmânuja’s characterization of the finite as an attribute leaves no room for the finite experience and being. Nimvârka’s description of the finite beings as dependent reals and Jîva Gosvâmî’s description of them as dependent sakti allow a reality to finite selves and admit a difference. It is not easy to assimilate them in the Absolute. The contention of Madhva, that visesa creates bheda where there is none, makes this bheda itself unreal and illusory and the being integral.”

Again :

“Nowhere in the theistic thought do we come across a satisfactory solution of the relation of nature to God. How the divine influence can act upon mâyâ is not logically explained. The influence has been merely assumed in the subordination of mâyâ to Isvara and in the conception of Isvara’s inconceivable power the theological attitude finds the convincing explanation.”

Nor do we find the theistic conception of the relation of jîva and prakriti convincing :

“To begin with pre-existent finite selves and to have a history of evolution of these souls in association with prakriti and then to urge their final emancipation in dissociation from prakriti seems to be a hopeless confusion of thought.”

The double relation of finite selves to Brahman and prakriti is also proved to be an impossibility. The author, however, does not advance direct arguments to refute the atomicity and the plurality of the finite selves.

CONCLUSION

A rapid survey of this excellent resume of the different aspects of Vedântic thought impresses us with the feeling that the author has represented the varied theories and arguments in their true colours with veracity and sober judgment resulting from a sound knowledge of the subject. The book is so full of information that it has been impossible for us to acquaint the readers even with a part of it through this very brief summary. We have only touched upon certain aspects of the book. The last three chapters on the “The Creative Order,” “Sources of Knowledge” and “Realisation and Discipline” have been left unnoticed for lack of space. We have already mentioned that we are in full agreement with the author on almost all points. One of his views expressed in more than one place does not appear to us to have any authoritative basis. In his account of creative evolution in Advaita Vedânta, in the chapter on Creative Order the author observes :

“Samkara Vedântism does not draw, like Râmânuja, any absolute distinction between jîva and Isvara. It is properly a distinction of

upâdhi and not like the theists, a distinction of Being or reality. And the distinction of the upâdhi is not an eternal distinction and can be with an effort set aside; for what after all constitutes the upâdhi of jîva and Isvara is the same mâyâ and its modification."

Then again in the chapter on Realisation and Discipline, he states :

"When the consciousness in jîva through discrimination and dissociation comes to feel its being as the object as well as the locus of avidyâ, it has its jîvahood replaced by Isvarahood. And the limitation of being and consciousness is replaced by an expansion of being and knowledge."

We do not think that the school of Samkara holds, as the author seems to imply, that there is a possibility of jîva attaining Isvarahood by an evolution of upâdhi. In his commentary on the Brahma-sûtras iv. 1. 3, Samkara admits that the scriptures aim at teaching that jîva freed from the samsâra state is non-different from Isvara. But the trend of the commentary clearly shows that the identity is implied not with Isvara, the Lord of the universe, but with Brahman, the Absolute Being. Vâchaspati and Anandagiri while explaining the passage use the words Paramâtman and Brahman respectively instead of Isvara. That jîva cannot attain perfect equality with Isvara through meditation has been maintained by Samkara in his commentary on the sûtras iv. 4. 17—21.

The fact that liberated souls become one with Brahman and not with Isvara is asserted by all the Samkarites except Vivaranakâra who opines that prativimva (jîva, the reflected self) is identified with vimva (Isvara, the object of reflection) on the destruction of avidyâ. But here the selfsame ajnâna being the upâdhi of both, vimvatva and prativimvatva are correlative, so when ajnâna is destroyed, nothing but the Absolute Being remains. Thus the identity is actually established with Brahman and not with Isvara.

We shall mention another point which has struck us. In discussing the sources of knowledge the author does not mention the Purânas. The author might have added a few words to explain the attitude of the Vaisnavas towards the Purânas as sources of knowledge. Do they include them in the savdâ-pramâna? They seem to attach as much importance to the Purânas as to the Vedas. They do not, as far as we know, doubt their authority or wait to see that their teachings conform to those of the Vedas. The Bhâgavatam is held by the Bengal school of Vaisnavism in as much reverence, if not more, as the Vedas. They call it srutisâra, the essence of the Vedas.

One point more. In the chapter on Realisation and Discipline, while speaking of realisation through upâsanâ in Advaita sâdhanâ, the author remarks :

“The Jîva-consciousness, its limitation and restricted life are replaced by the Isvara-consciousness and its expansive and free life. The dominated consciousness is now the dominating consciousness. Mâyâ no longer controls. But the Vedântic transcendence is not yet reached. . . . The transcendence is reached when the locus consciousness realises its difference from the energizing mâyâ. . . . An indifferent witnessing state soon brings in the consummation.”

Is krama mukti (gradual emancipation) or sadya mukti (immediate emancipation) implied here? The meditation of saguna Brahman (personal Being) generally leads to krama mukti. There is a possibility of sadya mukti in the meditation of nirguna Brahman (impersonal Being). The results of the two seem to have been combined by the author.

The book presents in a condensed form the most valuable ideas of Vedântic philosophy in a style calm, grave and expressive and peculiarly suited to philosophical disquisition. The author has used the Vedântic terms as sparingly as possible and represented the abstruse thoughts in elegant English philosophical expressions. Though it makes the book no tedious reading for English scholars interested in the subject, yet it will cause some difficulty to those who are accustomed to think in Vedântic terms. A full glossary and bibliography would have saved much trouble and made the work accessible to a wider circle of Vedântic students. Yet it is no small credit to the author's power of delineation that he has made the subject quite comprehensible to advanced scholars for whom the book is evidently meant. We congratulate the author on his excellent performance and hope that in future he will further advance the cause of Vedânta by writing separate treatises on the different aspects of Vedântism in a manner suited to a wider circle of readers.

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1914

Only three days following the celebration of the natal day of the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, who could have foretold the events of this Sunday after Christmas? The day

dawned fair and beautiful and all went forward as usual in the preparations for the morning, afternoon and evening services. But all was not as usual. This was the chosen day on which a great life was to be laid down as a vicarious sacrifice. Such great souls are born into this world with a definite purpose—the uplift of humanity. As their motives are selfless, their lives become one consuming desire to help other souls along the path to realization.

They are the children of the Mother and always under Her special care—for will She not care for those who have given themselves utterly to serve as channels for Her will? Nothing is accidental in their lives. They are born for the service of humanity; their life is subject constantly to the will of the Mother and She determines the manner and the time of their end.

Not one among those who came to the lecture on this Sunday afternoon had the slightest idea that this was the hour chosen for the beginning of the end and that the instrument appointed was at hand. Jesus knew as the fateful hour approached that one of those who had been nourished at his bosom and who had lived in the light of his presence had been chosen to be the means by which he was to be betrayed to those who conspired against him. So, also, one who had been a disciple and lived in the monastery, to whom Swami again and again had given loving help, sympathy and spiritual counsel in moments of mental storm and torturing doubts, was chosen as the means by which Swami was to pass out of his earthly temple.

This young man was subject to frequent fits of depression giving evidence at times of an unbalanced mind. In one of these fits of depression he left the monastery and was absent for a long period. During this time away from the beneficent influence of Swami, his mind became more and more unsettled until he conceived the idea of destruction. Possessed by this thought, he secreted a bomb and brought it with him to the service on this memorable Sunday afternoon, and before anyone could prevent, threw the bomb on the platform where Swami was standing. There was an immediate explosion and a cloud of dense blue smoke obscured the platform. Fortunately no lives were lost except that of the would be destroyer who received in his own person the major contents of his own bomb, but the auditorium was greatly damaged and Swami

received such injuries as necessitated his removal to the Affiliated Colleges Hospital.

Admission to this special hospital was arranged for by one of the members and another member provided the means for a private room. Here loving hands attended his needs and everything possible was done to relieve the suffering caused by the wounds.

On his way to the hospital Swami said, "Where is—X—, poor fellow?" In the midst of excruciating pain his mind was yet filled with pity that anyone should do such a rash act.

A number of the devotees visited Swami daily and reported his progress to the Temple. A man nurse was put in permanent charge as Swami was heavy to lift and he had to be moved very carefully. Although medical skill did all it could, the shattered condition of Swami's constitution, for years ready to disintegrate, was such that the system could not resist the infection from the wounds. Although every waking moment was one of intense suffering, no word of complaint ever passed his lips. From time to time, he gave instructions to one disciple after another to be faithful to the cause to the end and, even to the last, his thoughts were never for himself but for the Master's work and mission.

On the afternoon of January 9th, Swami aroused himself out of his apparently unconscious state and held conversation with the young man disciple in charge relative to the young man's spiritual condition, and at the same time told him that he would leave his body the next day, January 10th, the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. Just before 7-30 p.m. on January 10th, the young man was called out of the room for a few minutes and when he returned, Swami had already left the body for that plane from which he had been attracted to earth by his Master to take up the work of the salvation of humanity.

Thus, alone in a strange land, far from the sacred soil of India, without the presence or ministrations of the brotherhood, with only the All-seeing Eye as a witness, he passed out of the body which in death was offered as the last possible act in the long years of sacrifice, and entered into Mahasamadhi.

The news of Swami's death was received at 7-45 P.M. with great consternation and sorrow by all the students, and after a brief meeting it was decided to cremate Swami's body according to his wishes at Cypress Lawn Cemetery.

The memorial services were held on January 14th in the

little chapel of the undertaking establishment and were attended by a large number of disciples and friends. Mr. Petersen, the president of the Society, who was greatly esteemed by Swami, gave the address. Every available space in the room was banked with lovely flowers sent from many loving hearts. Women disciples chanted and sang beautiful songs and others read appropriate passages from Scripture.

As the words of the address and the hymns and chants with their heavenly vibrations fell upon the ears of the sorrowing students, they recalled the unfailing willingness of Swami to sacrifice himself for others, and, his great power for character-building, exemplified in the lives of those present in greater or less degree. They resolved to show their love for him by carrying out his principles and teachings in their daily lives so that every one might become a living monument to his memory.

After the close of the service, the usual invitation was given to all who desired to do so to take their final look upon the face of him whom they loved and who had served them so lovingly in the name of his Master and who had sealed that service with his life. It seemed impossible to believe that their Swami had really left them and would return in the flesh no more. A loving smile lay upon his lips and his face still shone with the reflection from the beatific state in which by the grace of the Divine Mother his spirit had been merged at the time of dissolution. Many gave way to their grief unrestrainedly, while others felt that he would always be with them, that they were a part of him and could never for a moment be separated from him in Spirit.

When all had taken their farewell, the lid was sealed and the casket was carried out to the waiting hearse by the young men whom Swami had trained and loved for so many years, the monks from the Temple monastery.

At the conclusion of the services in the undertaking parlors, the devotees and friends followed the remains to the beautiful grounds at Cypress Lawn Cemetery (present Cypress Lawn Memorial Park). Here again the women chanted and sang and the final words of farewell were spoken ; after which the casket was lowered to the cremation room and those who accompanied it saw, through the heatproof glass door of the furnace, the intense heat of the flames consume the casket which contained all that was mortal of him who was Swami Trigunatita. It seemed that even the elements were in

sympathy with the general grief, for the heavens poured forth a deluge and the wind blew a terrific gale.

The eventful day came to a close—a day fraught with much meaning to the Western world, for it marked the sacrifice for the West of the life of one of the spiritual sons of Ramakrishna, his blood the seed from which thousands yet unborn might be blessed with a knowledge of the truth as given by his Master.*

PILGRIMAGE WITH SWAMI'S ASHES

In the year 1916, on the thirteenth day of the month of April, when the wild flowers cover the Shanti Ashrama in riotous profusion, a little band of devotees led by Swami Prakashananda left for the Shanti Ashrama, carrying with them the hallowed ashes of their beloved teacher.

What emotions filled their hearts as they passed through the gate of that blessed spot! Recollection of the hours of instruction they had received there flooded their minds and overflowed in their feelings.

So it was in the full spirit of devotion that they carried out the purpose of their pilgrimage, to leave all that remained of Swami in the place which had occupied so much of his loving thought and plans, which had already been sanctified by his life and that of Swami Turiyananda, and now with his ashes, would be holier forever, for all who would come in future years to seek in this solitude, peace for their weary souls. Up the winding path, which Swami had often trod, to the top of the highest hill, the holy Siddha Giri, the "Hill of Realization," the ashes were carried by the pilgrims. After an inspired and heart-touching tribute to Swami by Swami Prakashananda and with a few simple rites, the ashes were interred beneath the northern point of the large earthen triangle on which the sacred Dhuni ceremony had often been held.

That night the full moon also added her benediction, shedding her silvery rays over the newly turned earth in memory of one to whom all nature was the face of the Divine.

Tall pine trees stand like sentinels over the triangle, overlooking the long stretch of the beautiful valley below, while

* A few days prior to his passing, Swami Trigunatita requested Mrs. Petersen to tell the students that the Temple should be restored and the work carried on. Accordingly Mrs. Petersen collected the funds and his wishes were carried out. Under instructions from Belur Math Swami Prakashananda took charge of the work.

the flowers carpet the hillsides around in spring with the magical touch of Nature in her most charming mood, and the gentle breeze of summer and the storms of winter tell of the love of the Mother for Her son.

Thus passed a great soul whose life was devoted to the spiritual unfoldment of many—a great Yogi, and the servant of all.

Though the ashes alone remain as a mute symbol of the vanished form, the spirit that animated them will never die. Its influence will be shown in the lives of the students, the affairs of the Temple and the life of the Western world. Those who were of his time were too close to grasp the significance of a life in which every thought and act were regulated by the all-inclusive requirements of Sannyasa as laid down in the Hindu Scriptures. Like one of the heroic figures of Vedic history, his figure will loom larger and larger as time rolls on and the perceptions of his followers deepen and widen. Undeviatingly holding aloft the ideal of the realisation of the Absolute as the goal of humanity, he lived the One, he taught the One, but he was also a great devotee.

As a character-builder, he knew the force of a living example. What disciple could question the validity of the teaching embodied in the life of asceticism lived daily before him? No demand on his time or energy was ever disregarded—no appeal however trifling was ignored. His mind was a deep well of wisdom unfathomable to the ordinary intellect and every day was a new revelation of the manysidedness of his unique individuality.

Like some high mountain torrent the never failing waters of which press their course resistlessly to the sea, Swami Trigunatita never rested from his purpose: his energy to accomplish the thing he had set himself to do was tireless and tremendous. "Endure to the end" was the living maxim placed before all disciples. He used to say, "Some will understand the motives behind my actions in five years, some in ten years, some in fifteen, others never."

Those to whom he imparted the truths of his own realization and to whom he bequeathed the legacy of service in the ~~cause~~ for which he lived and died, have accepted the trust and will give their lives if need be to carry on the same world-embracing cause of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna.

[Finish]

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS DISCIPLES

(Continued from the last issue)

The relations of Sri Ramakrishna with his devotees were always full of love and blessing. Here is the story of a devoted couple, as narrated by the wife :

“For a long time my husband (Navagopal Ghose) has been searching for a *Sadhu* who could tell him how to realize God. He had begun to follow the instructions of one, when a friend said: ‘Why do you waste your time on this man? Go to Dakshineswar ; there you will find a *Paramahansa* who will be able to clear all your doubts.’ So one Sunday my husband and I went to Dakshineswar and saw Sri Ramakrishna. He received us most kindly and at once I felt that he was divine.

“For three years we did not return. My husband was practising certain *Sadhanas* (spiritual exercises) and he felt that he must finish them before he went to another teacher. Suddenly one day Thakur said to a visitor at the Temple: ‘Some three years ago a man by the name of Navagopal Ghose came to see me with his wife. He has never been back since. Tell him I would like to see him.’ After all those three years he recalled the name ; and it was just at the moment when my husband had finished the *Sadhanas* that he sent for us. We went to him the following Sunday and from that time we went regularly every Sunday, going at ten in the morning and staying until ten at night.”

A profound love for the Master became the governing force of Navagopal’s life. It gave him keenest joy even to hear the Master’s name and if a little boy in the street shouted it, he would throw him a coin. Soon the urchins realized this and as Navagopal walked each morning to his bath in the Ganges, a crowd of them would dance round him shouting at the top of their shrill little voices: “Jay Ramakrishna!” “Jay Ramakrishna!” “Jay Ramakrishna!” In reply he would scatter copper coins by handfuls.

The wife too was an ardent devotee. She herself related many incidents of her association with the Master: “When I would come he would send all the gentlemen out and remain talking with me alone. Once he asked me why I came, what I found in him to draw me so often to Dakshineswar. I replied: ‘I cannot say. All I know is that that which made Prahlada forget his father, and Dhruva and others forget their parents, this I find here.’

“At Cossipore Garden he asked me again why I came to

him. 'You have children, you have jewels and furniture. What then do you want in coming to me?' I replied: 'I do not want all these things. I come because I love you, because I want you. I want your blessing.' At once he went into *Samadhi* and as he came out of it he put his hand on my head and blessed me.

"A friend had told me I should make *Haribol* (repeat the name of the Lord) and I did so. But it caused great perplexity in my mind. 'Here I am calling upon Hari (a name of the Lord),' I said to myself, 'and yet I am told that one should seek salvation through the *Guru* (spiritual teacher) alone.' I went to Dakshineswar to see Sri Ramakrishna but before I could explain my trouble, he said to me: 'Guru and Hari are one.' "

There were other disciples. Of Bhavanath, Sasi said: "Bhavanath was one of those whom Gurumaharaj spoke of as 'born perfect.' He also said that he and Narendra were affinities. But Bhavanath married. One day Gurumaharaj told me to go to him, saying I could learn much from him. I wondered why he should send me to a householder to learn; but when I saw Bhavanath I understood. As we sat talking of God, he went into meditation and tears of bliss and devotion poured down his cheeks. One could see that he was completely immersed in God."

There was another disciple, Girish Chandra Ghose. He said of the Master: "He who has enabled me to cross over the sea of this world and the no less terrible sea of scepticism, how can I repay or serve him? There is nothing in him I cannot worship. . . . If I had known I was going to have such a wonderful *Guru* (spiritual teacher) I would have been even more wicked than I was, just for the joy of being forgiven. Sri Ramakrishna was like an indulgent mother to me always. He scolded his disciples sometimes, but he never scolded me. He came frequently to my house and was unfailing in his love towards me." Sri Ramakrishna also said of him: "Girish's faith is like a rock, it cannot be overturned. It is rare in this world to find a man with such a faith."

Girish Chandra Ghose once thought that he would shock Sri Ramakrishna by singing a verse from an indecent song. It was in the early rebellious days of their association. Sri Ramakrishna smiled and with twinkling eyes sang an equally lawless verse. At once, Girish Babu felt like a silly boy trying to be funny. This manner of meeting attack was characteristic of Sri Ramakrishna.

Sasi said: "Religion as Sri Ramakrishna taught it was never vague or dismal. It went to the man where he was and lifted him up. It was not like an eagle which soars high in the air and calls to the tortoise, 'Come up here.' Can the tortoise ever hope to rise to the eagle? No, it can only say, 'If you will come and lift me up, then I can go up there.' So Sri Ramakrishna in his teaching came down and carried the man up by degrees. It gave him new hope and courage.

"Sri Ramakrishna never preached. If he went anywhere it was to be among good men and be blessed by their holy association. That was his idea. But when he was there Divine Mother would rise up in him and he would begin to talk. It mattered not whether there were few listeners or many."

"He practised *Pranayama* (breath control) so much that he formed a habit of remaining for long periods without breathing," the disciple Sasi said. "Now and then he would stop breathing entirely. Even after we came to him, he used to tell us: 'Whenever you see that I am not breathing, please remind me.' Sometimes when he was sleeping, we would see that the breath has stopped, then we would wake him up and tell him: 'Master, you are not breathing.' 'Oh, thank you!' he would say and again begin to breathe."

Not hours, but whole days and nights were spent in continuous meditation. Some one asked the disciple Sasi if his Master had not remained once for three days wholly unconscious of outer things. His reply was:

"Three days? For twelve years. Through that time he did not know when the sun rose or when it set; he did not know whether he had taken food or not. Occasionally when a moment's consciousness would come, he would feel as if some one was dwelling inside and he would ask: 'Who are you? Why are you here?' So completely had the Mother possessed him!

"His body was especially manufactured to stand the shock of these manifestations. It was not an ordinary body. He used to say: 'If one-millionth part of the emotion I feel should come to an ordinary man, his body would break to pieces; just as when a mad bull gets into a garden, it tears and uproots everything there.' He would compare his religious devotion to a mad elephant.

During his last illness Sri Ramakrishna was taken at last to the Cossipore Garden House to live there under medical treatment.** Many of the young disciples lived at Cossipore with the Master to serve him; other disciples came and went. By

degrees each was given special duties. Holy Mother prepared the Master's meals and carried them to him. Two of the boys went to the bazar and did the marketing. The other boys watched beside the Master and attended to his needs. They took turns each one remaining for six hours at a time.

One night near the close, the disciple Sasi was watching. There was a chill in the air. Sri Ramakrishna rose from his bed. Sasi who was sitting by his door came in quickly and began to scold ; but Sri Ramakrishna reached feebly for his dressing gown and gave it to Sasi, saying : "I want you to have it." Sasi took it reluctantly ; then not feeling that he was worthy to keep it, gave it to Rakhal, who lost it while on pilgrimage.

Why was Sri Ramakrishna ill? He himself said that it was because of his taking the sufferings of others on himself. But he did not regret it. When one pleaded with him not to endanger his health any more by such vicarious atonement, he exclaimed : "I would gladly give twenty thousand bodies to save one soul!"

At last the fateful hour came. Let the story of the last hours in that upper room be told by the disciple Sasi who lived through them :

"We all thought the Master was better because he ate so much more supper than usual, and he said nothing of going. In the afternoon he had asked Yogin to look in the almanac and see whether it was an auspicious day. Also he had been telling us for some time that the vessel which was floating in the ocean was already two-thirds full of water, soon the rest would fill up and it would plunge into the ocean. But we did not believe that he was really going. He never seemed to mind the pain. He never lost his cheerfulness. He used to say he was all well and happy, only there was a little something here (pointing to the throat). 'Within me are two persons,' he would declare. 'One is the Divine Mother, the other is Her devotee. It is the devotee that has been taken ill.'

"When Sri Ramakrishna gave up his body I think it was the most blissful moment of his life. A thrill of joy ran through him. I myself saw it. I remember every incident of that last day. Our Master seemed very well and cheerful. In the afternoon he talked for fully two hours to a gentleman who had come to put him some questions about Yoga. A little later I ran some seven miles to bring the doctor. When I reached the doctor's house he was not there ; but I was told he was at a certain place, so I ran another mile and met him on the way.

He had an engagement and said he could not come, but I dragged him away just the same.

“On that last night Ramakrishna was talking with us to the very last. For supper he had drunk a whole half-glass of *Payasam* (gruel) and seemed to relish it. There was no doubt a little heat in the body, so he asked us to fan him and some ten of us were all fanning at once. He was sitting up against five or six pillows which were supported by my body and at the same time I too was fanning. This made a slight motion and twice he asked me: ‘Why are you shaking?’ It was as if his mind was so fixed and steady that he could perceive the least motion. Narendra took his feet and began to rub them and Ramakrishna was talking to him, telling what he must do. ‘Take care of these boys,’ he repeated again and again, as if he was putting them in Naren’s charge. Then he asked to lie down.

“Suddenly at one o’clock he fell towards one side, there was a low sound in the throat and I saw all the hairs of his body stand on end. Narendra quickly laid his feet on a quilt and ran downstairs as if he could not bear it. A doctor, who was a great devotee and who was feeling his pulse, saw that it had stopped and began to weep aloud. ‘What are you doing?’ I asked, impatient with him for acting as if the Master had really left us.

“We all believed that it was only *Samadhi*, so Naren came back and we sat down, some twenty of us, and began repeating all together: ‘Hari Om! Hari Om!’ In this way we waited until between one and two the next day. Still the body had some heat in it, especially about the back, but the doctor insisted that the soul had left it. About five the body had grown cold, so we placed it on a cot, covered with garlands and carried it to the burning ghat.”

A large horizontal tablet on a high rectangular base now marks the spot beside the Ganges where Sri Ramakrishna’s body was cremated. When at the appointed time, Holy Mother was removing her bracelets and exchanging her wifely *Sari* for the plain white unbordered cloth of the widow, it is said that Sri Ramakrishna appeared before her and asked reproachfully: “What are you doing? I have not gone away.” In penitent salutation Holy Mother clasped her hands and bowed her head, then silently she put back her bangles and her bordered *Sari*.

(Concluded)

THE LATE LALA LAJPAT RAI

It is with deep sorrow that we have to record the sudden passing of Lala Lajpat Rai on the 17th November in his house at Lahore. We are told by his son and family doctors that Lalaji had been feeling weak and complaining of exhaustion since the unfortunate police assault on him on the occasion of the arrival of the Simon Commission at Lahore. On the night of the 16th, he complained of a pain all over the body, especially in the right side chest and in the back near the spine. The pain continued through the night. Next morning, he suddenly expired from heart-failure at about 6-45. Lalaji, it is said, had often expressed the wish of dying thus in harness: he wanted to serve his motherland to the last.

Lala Lajpat Rai was born in 1865 in the Ludhiana District of the Punjab, passed his Law Examination in 1885 and settled down to legal practice in which he soon achieved considerable success. His innate greatness, however, led him also to more disinterested fields of work. He joined the Arya Samaj movement, became one of its foremost workers and helped in founding the D. A. V. College of Lahore, of which he was Vice-President and Secretary for many years. He worked for the removal of untouchability and elevation of the depressed classes, and organised relief activities on various occasions of distress. By that time he had entered into politics and was sent to England as a fellow delegate with Mr. Gokhale in 1905 to represent Indian conditions to the people of England. He took the opportunity of travelling also in Europe and America at that time. The experience of this wide travel stood him in good stead in his subsequent career.

During the Swadeshi movement, he became one of its prominent leaders and was deported by the Government in 1907 to Mandalay. He was, however, soon released. In 1914, he again went to America where he had to live for about six years, being refused permission by the government to return to India. This period was a fruitful one for him and India. He started a paper there, called *Young India*, to acquaint the American public with the real conditions in India. He also wrote valuable books on India and America.

After his return to India in 1920, he presided over the Calcutta session of the I. N. Congress of that year. He soon joined the Non-co-operation movement and suffered imprisonment for political offence in the beginning of 1922. Mere non-co-operation was not suited to his positive nature, and during

the last few years, he became more and more realistic in his political views. He became a staunch advocate of the Dominion status for India. He was also a prominent member of the Hindu Mahasabha and presided over its Calcutta session in 1925.

Lalaji was, besides being a great political worker and patriot, also a great scholar, speaker, and writer. Of his many books in Urdu and English, the last, *Unhappy India*, was published a few months ago, was the ablest and most brilliant reply to that mischievous book of Miss Mayo—*Mother India*. His weekly—*People*, has also earned considerable reputation.

He was a bold fighter and a man of large heart. His last great gift in memory of his mother for the establishment of a Tuberculosis Hospital for women, must still be fresh in the memory of our readers. He had established a society, called the Servant of People Society, to which also he had some of his properties.

Lalaji lived for 63 years. All his life he had served the country in one form or another. As a reformer, journalist, author, traveller, politician and patriot his one great passion was the upliftment of the Indian nation, the freedom of India. Lalaji's great services to the motherland will remain immortal in the history of India, and his sincerity, earnestness, unflagging zeal, courage and untired fighting spirit will remain as models to the future generations. It will take a long time before the gap he has left behind in our public life, can be adequately filled up.

We offer our sincere condolence to his bereaved family. May the departed spirit attain Eternal Peace!

NEWS AND REPORTS

R. K. Mission Sevashram, Benares

The Report for the year 1927 of the Ramkrishna Mission Home of Service, Benares, presents as usual an interesting account of work done. The Home contains 108 beds in its Indoor Hospital and 1720 out-patient cases were admitted into it during the year. The total number of surgical cases was 183. 23,267 new cases attended the Outdoor Dispensary, of which 624 were operation cases. The workers of the Home searched out 369 cases of extreme suffering in the city during the year and brought them to the Home for treatment.

Besides the above works of service, the Home has also a Refuge for Aged Men Invalids, a Refuge for Women Invalids, a Girl's Home in which 7 girls are living under a Lady Superintendent and receiving education, a Home for Paralytic Patients, a Dharmasala for Poor

Strangers, Outdoor Help to Invalids and Poor Ladies of Respectable families and special and occasional Relief to attend to. All these works also are being properly done.

The total income during the year was Rs. 34,644-0-½ and total expenditure Rs. 33,803-13-5½.

The Home is in urgent need of Rs. 50,000 for the construction of a separate Women's Ward. The necessary land has been acquired, and also some money towards the cost of building. But Rs. 50,000 have still to be procured. Kind-hearted ladies and gentlemen may send their contributions to *Hon. Asst. Secy., R. K. Mission Home of Service, Luxa, Benares City, U. P.*

Charitable Dispensary, Shyamala Tal

Shyamala Tal is situated in an out of the way place in the Himalayas, where the poor hill people had to go almost without any medical treatment. To remove this great want, a Charitable Dispensary was opened in 1914 and since then it has been carrying on its work of service. Up to the end of 1927, 7,524 cases have been treated in the Dispensary, the number of cases treated during the year 1927 being 1,036 of which 15 were admitted into the Indoor Hospital.

The Indoor Hospital is not yet properly organised mainly owing to financial wants. Rs. 2,000 are needed to buy a piece of land with an old building on, which can be repaired and remodelled into a convenient house for both the Indoor Hospital and Outdoor Dispensary. Contributions may be sent to *Swami Virajananda, Secy., Charitable Dispensary, C/o. The Vivekananda Ashrama, Shyamala Tal, P.O. Deori, via Champawat, Dt. Almora, U.P.*

Ramkrishna Mission Balurghat and Bankura Famine Relief Work closed

Owing to the prospect of favourable crops in Bankura and Balurghat we have stopped our relief activities from the third week of November. We therefore beg to inform the public that no further monetary help is required by us now for these areas. We gratefully offer our heart-felt thanks to all who have helped us in cash or kind for conducting the work. A statement of account of the relief work will be shortly published.

(Sd.) SUDDHANANDA,
Secy., R. K. Mission,
