

# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 14.*

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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## UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I

*(To an American Friend)*

Detroit,  
15th March, 1894.

I am wearied of lecturing and all that nonsense. This mixing with hundreds of varieties of the human animal has disturbed me. I will tell you what is to my taste: I cannot write and I cannot speak, but I can think deep, and when I am heated, can speak fire. It should be however to a select, a very select, few. Let them, if they will, carry and scatter my ideas broadcast—not I. This is only a just division of labour. The same man never succeeded both in thinking and in scattering his thoughts. Thoughts so given are not worth anything. A man should be free to think, especially spiritual thoughts.

Just because this assertion of independence, this proving that man is *not a machine*, is the essence of all religious thought, for that very reason it is impossible to think it in the routine mechanical way. It is this tendency to bring everything

down to the level of a machine that has given the West its wonderful prosperity. And it is this which has driven away all religion from its doors. Even the little that is left it, the West has reduced to a systematic drill.

I am really not 'cyclonic' at all. Far from it. The thing that I want is not here, nor can I longer bear this 'cyclonic' atmosphere. This is the way to perfection, to strive to be perfect, and to strive to make perfect a few men and women. My idea of doing good is only this—to evolve a few giants, and not to strew pearls before swine, and so lose time, health and energy.

How I should like to become dumb for some years, and not talk at all! I was not made for these worldly fights and struggles. I am naturally dreamy and slothful. I am born idealist, and can only live in a world of dreams. The touch of material things disturbs my visions and makes me unhappy. But Thy will be done!

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## LOOKING BEYOND THE FRONTIER

BY THE EDITOR

During the last few months, the question of immortality has profoundly stirred many of the thinking minds of England. The immediate occasion has been a pronouncement of Sir Arthur Keith, President of the British Association. In a lecture delivered at Manchester University, Sir Arthur maintained that medical science could find no ground for believing that the brain is a dual organ,—a compound of substance and of spirit. He held that "every fact known to the medical men compels the inference that mind, spirit, soul are manifestations of a living brain just as flame is the manifest spirit of a burning candle. At the moment of extinction both flame and spirit cease to have a separate existence. However much this mode of explaining man's mentality may run counter to long and deeply cherished beliefs, medical men cannot think otherwise if they are to believe the evidence of their senses."

This categorical denial of the survival of bodily death naturally evoked a storm of controversy. Some expressed the view that the brain was only the instrument of the soul and therefore when the instrument was destroyed it was not necessary that the soul would also be destroyed. Some took an

agnostic attitude, without pronouncing either way. Some said that "just as every scrap of material energy, is never lost, but returns to the ever-constant store of energy which is the source of all physical activity in the universe, so spiritual or mental activity is not lost, but all of it returns, in some way not yet understood, to a store or pool of spiritual reality which is the non-material counterpart of energy."

Science has often fought valiantly against the cherished beliefs of mankind, but never perhaps so clumsily as against the belief in immortality. Let us see what arguments biology and materialism can produce against immortality. In this we will be much helped by Sir Arthur himself who has since put forward his case in a succinct form.

He says that he also believes in immortality. But that is only euphemism. His idea is that the whole of life from protoplasmic beginning upto man, from the very ancient past upto the present and on to endless future till the earth is extinct and unfit for life, is a continuous web. Individuals die, but the species live. "It is in this material sense that the biologist regards man as an immortal being ; we survive, if we survive at all, only in the lives of our descendants. Every man and woman is born with the seeds of immortality within their bodies."

What is death, according to the biologist? One argument advanced by them against the survival of bodily death, is that death is not an affair of an instant. If death is due to the escape of an immaterial spirit, we should expect it to be instantaneous, whereas it is found to be a process of piecemeal. When a doctor finds that his patient's heart has ceased to beat and his breath has ceased to ebb and flow, he concludes that death has taken place. But strictly speaking, this will not be considered death by the biologists. "Could the physician instantly set up an apparatus by which he could circulate fresh blood, containing oxygen, through the vessels of the dead man's head, consciousness would return ; memory and thought would revive ; mind would be restored, words uttered, as long as the artificial circulation was continued. But let the circulation and the supply of oxygen cease for ten minutes and the living units of the brain, in their serried millions, pass into a state of irretrievable death."

"The heart itself survives much longer than the brain. Two hours, four hours, or even more, after a certificate of death has been properly signed, the heart may be cut from a 'dead' body and by artificial means revived so that it will again beat

and continue beating for sometime if proper precautions are taken. Forty hours after a man is legally dead the coats of his arteries may still manifest signs of life. The human body is made up of an infinite number of microscopic living units ; medical men have removed some of these from a dead child and kept them alive and growing in their laboratories when the rest of the body was crumbling to dust."

So the biologists' first argument against survival is, as we have seen, that death is piecemeal. Their second argument is that since life requires such material things as air, food and water for its maintenance, it cannot exist when these supports are wanting. For its existence, the living spirit of the human body must consume and transform energy, consciousness, feeling, memory, will—all that we count mind—disappear from the living brain the moment we withhold its supply of oxygen and energy. "Life as we know it has always a material basis ; a physiologist cannot imagine how life could be possible apart from matter. If our minds are to survive our bodies must bear them company. The dead body is an extinguished candle."

The biologists claim that they know every stage in the wonderful miracle which transforms a particle of living matter (the ovum in which every human life takes its beginning),—smaller than the head of the finest pin—into grown men and women. "We have followed in the womb every change that carries the human body up the scale of life from the simplest beginnings to the most elaborate endings. We begin as a microscopic unit of protoplasm and we end as a multi-millioned colony of living cells. We see great battalions of these cells marshalled to carry on the work of the nervous system ; we see cousin battalions arranged to form muscular engines ; others are specialized to serve the lowly purpose of living bone levers. We see the elaboration of these delicate living instruments—the eye and the ear. Even in the life of the body there is death ; certain units are ever in the process of birth, others in process of death."

Naturally it will be asked : How are we to explain the elaborate and miraculous changes that transform a simple unit of living matter into an adult human body?—Who or what guides and superintends these intricate arrangements of the living cells? Where did life come from? Is it born out of a combination of matter, or life itself draws suitable constituents around it? These are questions on the answers of which depends a great deal of what we can legitimately conclude

about immortality. Unfortunately Sir Arthur confesses that biologists "do not know how life began" and "they have no explanation to offer of its inner significance and ultimate meaning." They find simply that life is indissolubly connected with matter and they are content to record this fact.

So much about life. What about mind? Is mind independent of matter? Just as the biologists say that life cannot exist without a material basis, so do the materialists declare that mind cannot exist without matter or rather that mind is the product of matter. The quarrel whether the body produces the mind or the mind the body, is an ancient one. It is not yet proved that the body produces the mind. What we empirically observe is that mental activity has a physiological parallel, and that changes in the body, especially in the nerves and the brain, have a remarkable effect on the mind. That the body is somehow continuous with the mind, we are convinced every minute of our life. The story of the young *rishi* in the Chhandogya Upanishad, who having fasted long forgot the Vedic texts, is typical. Food tremendously influences the mind. If body and mind were unconnected, their mutual influence would have been impossible. The common conceptions of mind and matter fail to explain this continuity. We are therefore forced to conclude that matter and mind are not really what we commonly conceive them to be. Matter must be much finer than so-called matter.

It is not sufficiently realised in this country that the present is again an age of the resurgence of materialism. We saw one phase of materialism in the last century. That was fought and defeated. Since then materialism has been giving further and further proofs in its support. It has lost its crude features. The conception of matter has become very fine. The human mind also has been subjected to strict scrutiny. Experimental psychology is an established science. Now it is found that a large part of the average mental activity of man is most often the product of physical changes. Facts have been observed and discovered which incontestably prove that mind is not so mental as is generally supposed. Thus when materialists assert that the mind is only a function of matter, they stand on surer grounds to-day than their predecessors did a few decades back.

The present claims of materialism so far as they are legitimate, are not antagonistic to Hindu thought. The domain of matters over the mind or rather the materiality (in the true sense) of mind is well recognised by it. This fact is well-

known to all who have come in intimate touch with practical Hinduism. Defects in the body are always considered as bars to spiritual progress. It is said that Swami Vivekananda as a child fell down the stairs and sustained a slight wound on his forehead. In later times Sri Ramakrishna observed that had it not been for this, a tremendous spiritual energy would have been manifested in the Swami and its impetus would have been too strong to be borne by the world. Slightest impurities in food are considered as obstructions to spiritual progress. All these form the knowledge that mind is one with matter (or rather matter is one with mind) and cannot escape its contamination.

We have no hesitation in admitting the legitimate claims of materialism. Only unfortunately, materialism itself is not sufficiently discriminative. It fails to recognise two important facts: First, that matter is being fast dematerialised. It is no longer matter in the ordinary sense. Every atom now appears to be a centre and repository of infinite power and its possibilities are immeasurable. Secondly, that it cannot fully explain our inner, mental, being and consciousness; and that the domain of matter over mind, which has to be recognised, can be explained only by conceiving matter as kindred with the mind.—It is because matter is intrinsically the same as mind that its gross aspects can influence the mind. For the close relation of mind and matter cannot be explained by conceiving the mind as material,—our inner experience will stoutly refuse it. Hindu thought, while it recognises the claims of materialism, insists that matter should be conceived as being potentially mental and spiritual; that in so-called matter particles, the material aspect is manifest to our normal sense, and that they are capable of manifesting their higher aspects and being assimilated into our mental and spiritual being, however unbeknown to our normal consciousness the process might be. All things are *all* potentially and kinetically, and are capable of manifesting their physical, mental or spiritual beings in an ascending or descending scale.

There is another difficulty which the material explanation of mind cannot solve. It is undeniable that the human mind is purposive in its actions. The whole mental life of man is reaching towards greater and greater perfection of knowledge and moral life. It conceives the entire universe as a unitary system. Can we conceive matter particles as producing this purposiveness? Does matter then remain matter?

Again, even if all mentations were explainable by matter,

matter can in no sense explain our self-consciousness. Here no explanation or evidence except that of our own self is possible, and that is decisively against materialism.

Let us study the analogy of the flame of the candle,—that picturesque argument of the materialists. What is the flame of the candle? When a candle is lighted, a disturbance is created among its molecular constituents, combustion sets in, and there is heat and light, what we call flame. If the candle be fed with more and more molecules, it would last for a long time with its flame, soul, intact. But the molecules are consumed, they get out of the candle in changed forms, and the candle eventually dies with its flame extinguished. Is man's life akin to this? Let us suppose that his soul-life is the flame, which was lighted in his mother's womb. The body is the fuel, the nerves and the brain the wick, mental energy and knowledge heat and light. So long as the body supplies enough food, the flame, soul-life, lasts, with the want of food, the body and mind die. The similarity seems complete. But there is undeniably one element in man, which is lacking in the candle,—it is his *self-consciousness*. Has the candle self-consciousness? Does it feel as "I am," even as man feels, as an entity quite apart from body and mind and yet somehow related to them? When scientists compare the soul to a flame, they ignore this extra element in the soul-life, for which there is no parallel in the candle. We cannot argue that the flame also has self-consciousness, though we may not know it. For this assumption will cut directly at the root of materialism. If matter were to have self-consciousness, it would not be matter, it would be spirit. Matter, as we conceive it and as scientists claim it to be, knows neither itself nor others. When the flame of a candle lights up its contiguous objects, it itself does not know it; it is only to beings having souls and consciousness that this lighting up has meaning. Look on the other hand at man. By the light of the flame that is in him, he not only knows his self-activity, but also knows the activities of other objects. Matter cannot do that. If man were matter, man could not do that. What explanation have materialists to offer of this peculiarity? It may be said that this peculiarity also belongs to matter. When matter and its actions are gross, it does not manifest this peculiarity, but with its refinement and complexity as in man, it does. But this argument gives materialism away,—matter becomes spirit.

Life also is similarly unexplained by materialistic theories.

We have mentioned the biologists' inability to explain the origin of life. "In spite of the efforts of thousands of workers," says Le Bon, "physiology has been unable to tell us nothing of the nature of these forces that produce the phenomena of life. They have no analogy with those that are studied in physics." When we study the locomotion, digestion, growth, regeneration or reproduction of living beings, we do not find mechanical theories adequate to explain them. There is a mysterious something which no materialistic theories can explain. Even lowly organisms show such initiative as no machine can ever conceivably do. Sometimes we hear of life being produced in the laboratory. Nothing like that has yet come about.

"Jacques Loeb discovered that he could fertilize the egg of a sea-urchin with a salt solution or the prick of a pin ; he concluded, hilariously, that he had proved the mechanical nature of reproduction. In truth he had merely shown that in certain cases the female organism can of itself generate offspring without even that casual assistance to which nature limits the male ; he had rediscovered that peculiar parthenogenesis which biologists had known for a few thousand years. That the female herself, was hardly as mechanical as the pin, or as simply chemical as the salt, might go without saying ; indeed the performance of the unaided female seems a little more marvelous than that of her more fortunate sisters. It is also more ominous, and indicates that the emancipation of the female sex will in our century proceed to unpleasant extremes.

"Far more revealing than these experiments of Loeb were the allied discoveries of Hans Driesch. Driesch had been brought up in the laboratory of Ernst Haeckel at Jena ; he had every inducement to be a mechanist of the purest dye, but he found phenomena undreamed of in his master's philosophy. He cut a fertilized egg in half, and nevertheless it developed normally. He haphazardly disarranged the cells after the second division, and nevertheless the organism developed normally. He disarranged the cells after the third division, with the same results."

Can two machines cohabit to produce a third machine? Let us also imagine, that certain parts of the parent-machines coalesce to form the model of the new one ; that the model produces the complete machine by spontaneously dividing into two, into four, into eight, and the more it divides, the more it becomes one ! Can anything be more absurd ?

To us the very recognition of the existence of the mysteri-



ous phenomenon called life which no physical theories can explain, appears to be an admission of the truth of immortality. What is that power which so brings together matter particles as to make an organism and to create the phenomena of life? That power is not in matter, it is outside it. Where does it come from? Where does it go when an organism dies? Whence it comes, whither it goes, no materialist can ever determine.

We have mentioned the biologists' argument that all their observations show that life is always associated with matter. In our opinion that proves nothing. They are simply making their ignorance an argument. Unless they try to see discarnate life, they will always find life associated with matter. By their own admission, the biologists know nothing of where life comes from. They know life only in its middle state, they know nothing of its origin or its ends, and from a partial knowledge no correct conclusion is possible. There are facts, on the other hand, which do show that life and consciousness can subsist without their usual material associations. The case of the Hindu monk, Haridas, putting himself in a box and being interred in a grave which was carefully closed with earth and rising up from it after forty days, is well-known. His nostrils were closed with wax, so he could not breathe; and when he was taken out of the sealed box, an English physician carefully examined him,—he was medically dead, there was no pulsation of the heart, the temples or the arm. He had remained in this "dead" condition for forty days; yet within half an hour of his disinterment, he could talk freely with all. How did the monk's life subsist so long, if material association were essential to its existence? During all those forty days, the monk had no air, no food, no water; his whole organism was at a standstill. Yet he lived!

The case of Sri Ramakrishna also is well-known. Often while in deep Samadhi, he would show all signs of death. Expert physicians of Calcutta sometimes examined him in that state, and found that the heart had stopped beating and there was a complete cessation of breath;—there was no sign of life anywhere in the body. This happened many times during his life. But though the body was dead, the mind and consciousness apparently existed; for it is well-known that in those hours of apparent death, he would gain high states of consciousness and perceive many supernatural phenomena. These are facts. They cannot be denied. How then can we say that life and consciousness cannot exist without material associations?

Nor do we find the other argument of the biologists that if the soul were an immaterial spirit, death would have been instantaneous, convincing. They mention the fact that apparently dead persons can be revived by artificial means. But do they mean that *all* dead persons can be so revived? Has the process been found invariably effective? We do not think medical men go so far in their assertion. If, then, there are many cases in which artificial means of revival have failed, why not consider that the cases in which they succeeded, were really not cases of death but of deep unconsciousness?

No real explanation is given by the biologists of the miraculous multiplication and arrangement of cells that constitute the human body. It is said of these cells that "that which these cells accomplish in every instant of our existence soars far above all that the most advanced science can realize. The scholar capable of solving by his intelligence the problems solved every moment by the cells of the lowest creature, would be so much higher than other men, he might be considered by them as a god." Such intelligent and intricate working cannot be explained by materialistic theories, unless we conceive matter to be as intelligent as spirit itself. One is forced to assume the existence of a great intelligence guiding and working the cells. Also, we must not forget that human life is not merely an aggregate of cell-lives. Though they are contributory to it, yet human life has a distinct individuality and purpose of its own, apart from those of the cells. That larger life has to be separately explained. Biology has not done that.

The fact is, there are in human beings certain things,—self-consciousness, mentation and life, which cannot be explained by any materialistic theories. If material science cannot explain them, if they are found to transcend the nature of matter, why should we conclude that with the destruction of matter, they also will be destroyed? All reason points, on the contrary, to their survival. The defect of modern science lies in its looking at things from the wrong end. It begins with matter and seeks to conceive life, mind and self-consciousness in terms of matter ; whereas the more helpful and natural course is to begin with the other end, the Self or Spirit, and understand mind, life and matter in terms of Spirit. Could modern thought cognise the whole of reality, it would have at once inverted its present procedure. Hindu thought has always begun with the One and sought to understand the many in the light of that First Principle. Thus it has come to know

that it is the reflection of the Transcendental Self that makes all perceptions real and significant. Itself no part of the cosmic phenomena, it yet illumines them by its own effulgence and makes them exist. Somehow, in an inexplicable way, ignorance, the idea of duality arose,—the sense of the subject and the object. Hence the mind. Mind experienced and desired. And desire created the body. It will be out of place to explain here in details the process of this evolution. Suffice it to say that this is no mere theory. For through countless ages, many souls have testified to the truth of this with their own experience,—have acted on the basis of this theory, gone beyond the bonds of desire and mind, realised their identity with the Transcendental Effulgence and become immortal. It is not through biology and physiology that we can understand the nature of death, but through that which is beyond the body ;—for it is the primal ignorance that has conjured up the vision of the many, made the mind know and desire them, and eventually produced life and body with its sense-organs in order to taste the objects of desires. So long as desires will last, they will again and again create around them a body suitable to taste the sweets and bitters of the world. We carry our desires with us from body to body until they are consumed in the fire of knowledge. This view of life is infinitely more reasonable than what is promised by modern science.

If we ask people why they believe in immortality, they will give us various replies. Christians will cite the resurrection of Christ as a proof of immortality. This argument necessarily cannot convince all. Others will cite the moral argument that unless we assume a future life, the present life has no sufficient moral justification,—here good often suffers and evil flourishes. The inequalities of the present demand a readjustment that only immortality can supply. Another argument which Swami Vivekananda considers forceful is that often when man reaches high states of perfection, he dies. This seems to point to a state in which further perfection is a reality. In fact the purposefulness of human life inevitably leads to an assumption of life hereafter. Man's life-long struggles for perfection are not meant to end in nothingness. Another argument is that man cannot conceive himself to be dead ; even when he thinks himself so, he lives as the thinker of the thought. In fact immortality is woven into the very texture of man's inmost being. All false knowledge is capable of being eradicated by a knowledge of truth. If belief in immortality were false, man could at least conceive himself to be mortal. But no

stretch of intelligence or imagination can make this conception possible. This sheer inability is a convincing argument. In a sense our fear of death is itself a proof of our post-mortem existence. Why are we afraid of death? If man be only a combination of atoms, mere matter, who is it that is afraid of death? The atoms? That is absurd because death does not harm them any way. Fear of death cannot be explained except on the supposition that a something in man outlives bodily death, and that this something, having previous experiences of the agonies of death, now shudders at its thought.

In an article which Swami Vivekananda contributed to *The New York Morning Advertiser* on the immortality of soul, he gave the following argument in its support. Having shown that human mind cannot get rid of, or conceive anything of the internal and external world without, the ideas of permanence and freedom, the Swami continues :

“Now the problem resolves itself into this dilemma : Either the whole universe is a mass of never-ceasing change and nothing more, irrevocably bound by the law of causation, not are particles having a unity of itself, yet is curiously producing an irradicable delusion of permanence and freedom ;—or, there is in us and in the universe something which is permanent and free, showing that the basal constitutional belief of the human mind is not a delusion. It is the duty of science to explain facts by bringing them to a higher generalisation. Any explanation, therefore, that first wants to destroy a part of the fact given to be explained, in order to fit itself to the remainder, is not scientific, whatever else it may be.

“So, any explanation that wants to overlook the fact of this persistent and all-necessary idea of freedom, commits the above-mentioned mistake of denying a portion of the fact, in order to explain the rest, and is, therefore, wrong.

“The only other alternative possible, then, is to acknowledge, in harmony with our nature, that there is something in us, which is free and permanent.

“But it is not the body ; neither is it the mind. The body is dying every minute. The mind is constantly changing. The body is a combination and so is the mind ; and as such can never reach to a state beyond all change. But beyond this momentary sheathing of gross matter, beyond even the finer covering of the mind, is the Atman, the true Self of man, the Permanent, the Ever-Free.

“It is his freedom that is percolating through layers of thought and matter, and in spite of the colourings of name and

form, is ever asserting its unshackled existence. It is his deathlessness, his bliss, his peace, his divinity, that shines out and makes itself felt in spite of the thickest layers of ignorance. He is the real Man, the Fearless One, the Deathless One, the Free."

In all ages and in all countries, the survival of bodily death has been persistently believed in, not merely as a theory, but as an actually experienced fact by people. It is true that spirits are not always seen by all people. But such evidence as is available is quite trustworthy. It is easy to deny things, but more scientific to test them. And we cannot say that those who deny post-mortem existence, have truly tested it. We do not mean through the present-day spiritualistic contrivances, but through the realisation of that state of consciousness to which the supersensible world is as real and normal as the sensible world is to our present state of consciousness.

Such a realisation, in our opinion, is the only cogent and convincing proof of immortality. As we have indicated above, reason no doubt points to the survival of certain elements of man. But it cannot be denied that where men go after death and what become of them, are beyond the ken of the average man. Of course modern spiritualists have developed certain means of communicating with the dead, which may or may not be believed in. But man need not feel helpless. Even as he is, he has means within his power, by which he can transcend his present limitations and reach a state in which post-mortem conditions will be directly perceived. By such a realisation, the survival of bodily death becomes doubly demonstrated. First, man can directly perceive supersensible beings, some of whom at least have been incarnate before. Secondly, he realises himself as a much finer being than he feels himself in his so-called normal state;—he perceives that the range of body and matter is very limited and that the mind can surely exist without the gross body. He *feels* that he is far above the region of death. Such experiences leave infinitely deeper impression and effect on the mind than our so-called normal experience and scientific proof. The most convincing proof of immortality, in our opinion, is therefore the realisation of the superconscious state. There are of course gradations in this realisation,—the highest alone is the surest proof of immortality.

True immortality lies in the realisation of oneself as the Eternal. So long as there is any idea of change, there is death. So long as the mind exists, man is mortal. Mind exists in the

existence of desires and desires will drag the soul from birth to death and from death to birth. Therefore desires have to be killed. Thus will the mind be free of *vrittis* or modifications and die in the bosom of the Eternal. Immortality is at last attained. Till then, the fear of death and doubts about immortality will trouble the human mind. Spiritualism proves nothing but the continuity of existence ; but mere continuity does not ensure true immortality any more than our present existence does. We are existing now. Yet why is not immortality a patent fact to us? Why can we not taste its joy? So the true way to immortality lies through practical spirituality. We must divest ourselves of our mortal adjuncts and realise ourselves as the eternal spirit. When Nachiketa approached Yama, the god of Death, for the knowledge of what happens after death, Yama did not place before him philosophical arguments ; nor did he tell him of the various *lokas* (worlds) where the dead go. Instead he asked him to learn self-control, get rid of the vision of the manifold and realise the Atman, in which alone lay true immortality. Hinduism has always sought to develop in man this superconscious or subjective sense. It was convinced that the deeper problems of life, on the solution of which not only individual but also collective good and solidarity depends, cannot be solved objectively. Every man must have his own demonstration. And that demonstration is not possible without developing the subjective vision through the concentration and purification of the mind. The larger the number of persons in a community, who have experienced superconscious realities, the more stable and noble the spiritual ideals of that community and the less its susceptibility to scepticism. It is said that even a little of religion saves one from great fear. It means that even a little superconscious experience convinces one of the non-material nature of one's being, and what is fear if not a form of death? So long as there are two, there is fear, there is death. Only in the realisation of oneself as the One Eternal does true immortality lie.

Modern science and thought is suspicious of this subjective vision. The objective method of knowledge, so typical of material science is unduly emphasised by it. There is not a ghost of reason why the subjective method should be considered less reliable and valuable than the objective. It is only the prevailing fashion that considers the objective method more fruitful of truth. The modern age emphasises the objective method for no other reason than that each age has its peculiar tendencies. But the subjective method is not therefore less

correct ; on the other hand, it penetrates much deeper and is alone capable of knowing the highest and inmost truths. If we credit the subjective method of knowledge as much as we should, the question of immortality is at once solved. For immortality is the very essence of our being, and whatever is one is indestructible and the self is assuredly one.

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## REMINISCENCES OF THE HOLY MOTHER

FROM THE DIARY OF A LADY DISCIPLE

(Continued from the July issue)

One day Mother came to the upper veranda overlooking the street and asked me to spread there a seat for her and bring her beads. It was evening. Just on the other side of the street, there lived many labourers with their wives and children. It so happened that day that one of the men was furious with his wife for some reason and began to beat her, and at last gave her such a brutal kick that she rolled down with a child in her arms into the courtyard of their house. The man followed her there and gave her a few more kicks. Mother could no longer proceed with her *japam*. Though habitually so shy that none could ever hear her voice from downstairs, she stood up by the railings and loudly rebuked the man, saying, "I say, man, are you going to kill your wife?" The man looked up ; but as soon as he saw Mother, he bent his head and left off beating his wife. Having Mother's sympathy, the woman now began to cry bitterly and the man also shortly regained his senses and began to beg for her forgiveness. We learnt that the fault of the wife was that she had not prepared the evening meal in time.

Mother returned to her room, and presently was heard the voice of a beggar from the street: "Radhe-Govinda ! O Mother Nandarani, be kind to the blind one !" At this Mother said: "This beggar often passes along this street at night. Formerly he used to say: 'Be kind to the blind one !' But Golap said to him: 'Do add the name of Radha-Krishna also to your prayer, so that the householders may hear the holy names and you also may be benefited. What is the use of always declaring your blindness only?' Since then whenever he comes here, he cries 'Radhe-Govinda.' Golap gave him a piece of cloth. He receives also coppers."

Another evening when I went to Mother, I heard her saying: "The new devotees should be given to perform the ceremonial worship of the Lord; for theirs is new love, they will serve well. The older devotees are now tired of serving. Mere performing the ceremonies will not do,—one must be careful that there is no defect in them. Any carelessness is bound to be sinful. But of course, the Lord knows that man is ignorant and therefore pardons him. . . . The servitor of the Lord must see that there are no hard grains in the sandal paste, and the flowers and the *bel* leaves are not worm-eaten. One should not touch one's limbs or hair or cloth while worshipping or preparing materials for worship. One must perform everything with whole-hearted care and make offerings to the Lord at the right time and in the right way."

Another evening, myself and my sister went to Mother at about 8-30 P.M. We found her sitting in the northern veranda engaged in her devotions. After we had rested for a while in an adjoining room she came and welcomed us with a smile. The evening service at the shrine presently began and we went to attend it, but when it was over we came back to Mother, for it was indeed difficult to be ever off from her when in her place. . . . An old lady was learning a devotional song from another. At this Mother said: "She will teach nicely indeed! If she teaches two lines she will omit other two lines. Ah, how beautifully he (the Master) used to sing, so sweetly as if he floated on his song! His music fills my ears; and now other songs seem insipid. And to what a high pitch Naren would sing! Before he left for America, Naren came to see me at Ghusuri where I then lived, and sang me a song. He said: 'Mother, if I ever become a man, I shall return to you, otherwise this is my last visit.' 'Why so?' said I. At that he replied: 'No, no, I shall soon come back through your blessings.' And Giris Babu also could sing well. He came only the other day and sang to me."

Mother's niece came and urged her to go to bed. So we all repaired to her room where she lay down and I fanned her for a while. An old lady was describing to another the psychic *chakras* and the mystic letters pertaining to them. Golap-ma forbade her to speak of these sacred things so openly, but she still went on. Hearing her, Mother said smilingly: "The Master drew for me with his own hand the Kundalini and the six *chakras*." "Where is that drawing now, Mother?" I asked. "Alas, mother," she replied, "did I then feel that there would



be so much interest in his movement? The drawing was lost somewhere, I could not regain it."

We saluted her and took her leave at about 11 P.M.

I had scarcely sat down before Mother on my next visit when Golap-ma came and said to me: "A Sannyasini has come from Benares to beg money to clear the debts of her Guru. You will have to contribute something." I gladly consented. Mother said smilingly: "She had also asked me. But how could I beg money of others? I said: 'Stay here. You will have something.'" . . . Mother whispered to me that Golap-ma herself had contributed three guineas.

A short time after the Sannyasini herself came. Before she renounced the world, she had been the mistress, so I was told, of a large household and mother of seven sons. The sons are now well established in life, she therefore has renounced the world.

She said: "It is wrong to speak ill of one's Guru,"—here she made salutations to her Guru—"but he was very fond of litigations. . . . Now he is old and incapable; his creditors are heavily on him. That is why I had to come out begging for him."

Mother recited a verse the meaning of which was that the truth may be spoken even to one's Guru—that won't be sinful. She added: "But then, one must have devotion to one's Guru. Whatever the Guru may be himself, if the disciple is devoted to him, he will be spiritually emancipated. . . ."

The Sannyasini practised *sadhana* every night from three to eight in the morning. She wanted a pure washed cloth which was given her. To me she said: "Would you stay here for the night? Then I can teach you some spiritual secrets." "No," I replied.

I returned when the evening service was over, after saluting the Mother.

(To be continued)

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## REALITY

IN MAYA-VADA AND SHAKTI-VADA

BY SIR JOHN WOODROFFE

Discussion on the subject of the reality of the World is often vain and tedious because the word "Real" has several meanings and that in which it is used is not stated.

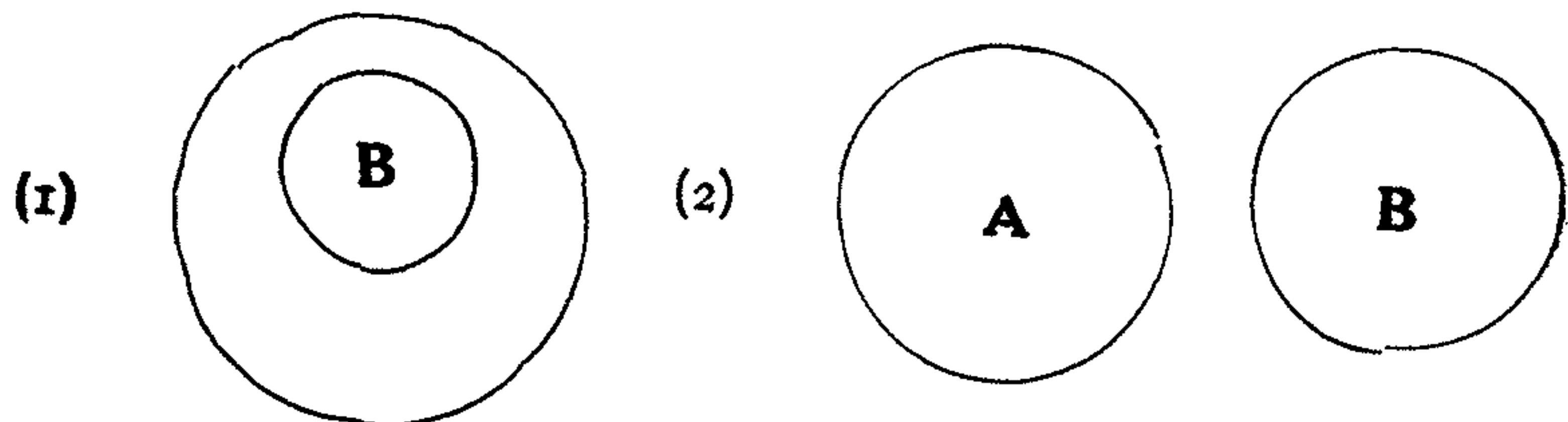
The terms "Absolute" and "Transcendental" also should be clearly defined ; *the distinction between Mâyâ-vâda and Shakti-vâda hinges on these definitions.*

Both "Absolute" and "Transcendental" mean "beyond relation". But the term "beyond" may be used in two senses : (a) exceeding or wider than relation ; (b) having no relation at all. The first does not deny or exclude relation, but says that the Absolute, though involving all relations within Itself, is not their sum-total ; is not exhausted by them ; has Being transcending them. The latter denies every trace of relation to the Absolute ; and says that the Absolute must have no intrinsic or extrinsic relation ; that relation, therefore, has no place in the Being of the Absolute.

Shakti-vâda adopts the first view, Mâyâ-vâda the second. From the first point of view, the Absolute is relationless Being *as well as* Manifestation as an infinity of relations. This is the true and complete Alogical Whole. Inasmuch as the Absolute exceeds all relation and thought, we cannot say that It is the Cause ; though It is the Root of Creation ; and so forth ; but inasmuch also as It does involve relation and thought, we can say that It is the First Cause ; that there has been a real creation, and so forth.

The Mâyâ-vâda view by negating all relation from the reality of Brahman negates from its transcendent standpoint the reality of causation, creation, and so forth.

"Beyond" may, therefore, mean (1) "exceeding", "fuller than," "not exhausted by", or (2) "excluding," "negating," "expunging". By diagrams :—



(1) A is beyond B, *i.e.* exceeds B.

(2) A is beyond B, *i.e.* excludes and is quite outside B.

In Shakti-vâda, the Supreme Reality is fuller than any definition (limitation) which may be proposed. It is even beyond duality and non-duality. It is thus the Experience-Whole, the Alogical. In Mâyâ-vâda Pure Brahman is an *aspect* of It : but It is not the Whole (Pârna).

The expression "wider than relation" may be thus illustrated: I am related in one way to my wife; in another way to my children; in yet another way to my brothers, friends and so on. I am not fully expressed by any one of these relations, nor even by their aggregate; for, as a member of an infinite Stress-system I bear an infinity of relations. Pragmatically, most of these are ignored, and it is thought that I am expressed by a certain set of relations which distinguish me from another person who has his own "set". But Brahman as Absolute can have no such "Set". It is expressed, but not fully expressed, even by the infinite set of relations which the Cosmos is, because relations, finite and infinitely, imply a logical and therefore segmenting and defining, thought; but Brahman as Absolute = Experience = Whole = the Alogical.

Since Brahman = Experience = Whole = *Chit* as Power-to-Be-and-Become, it is nothing like the unknown and unknowable Being ("Thing-in-Itself") of Western Sceptics and Agnostics.

In all Indian Systems the World is real in the sense that it has objective existence for and is not a projection of, the individual mind. In all such Systems Mind and Matter co-exist. And this is so even in that form of *Ekajiva-vâda* which holds that Brahman by Its own veiling and limiting power makes one Primary Self of Itself, and that all other selves are but reflexes of the Primary Self, having as reflexes no existence apart from that of the Primary One. The world of matter is not a projection of an individual mind, but its reality is co-ordinate with that of the individual mind, both being derived from the Self-veiling and Self-limiting operation of Brahman appearing as the One *Jiva* or Primary Self. Brahman in appearing as Primary Self also appears as its (logical) correlate or Pole—the Not-Self; and this Not-Self is the Root-Matter on which the Primary Self is reflected as multiple selves and their varied relations. Matter, in this fundamental sense, is not therefore the product of the First or Primary Individual (Self); it is with Self the co-effect (logically speaking) of a common fundamental activity which is the veiling and limiting action of the Supreme Being.

The version commonly given of *Ekajîva-vâda*, namely, that the one Primary Self is Me, and that You, He and the rest, and the world of objects are the projection of Me—is loose and unpsychological. In the first place, "Me" cannot be there (logically) conceiving without its Correlate or Pole—the "Not-Me", so that, by the very act by which Me is evolved from Brahman, its Correlate is also evolved, and this Correlate is

Root-Matter. In the second place, projection, reflexion, and so forth presuppose not only the projecting or reflecting Being (that which projects or reflects) but also something on which the projection or reflection is cast. Projection out of nothing and projection into nothing will give only nothing.

Where then there is Matter there is Mind. Where there is no Matter there is no Mind. One is meaningless without the other. Each is every whit as real as the other. But there is no Indian system which is Realist in the sense that it holds that Matter as experienced by man exists when there is no Mind of man to perceive it. Such a state is inconceivable. He who alleges it himself supplies the perceiving Mind. In the First Standard<sup>1</sup> Mind<sup>2</sup> and the so-called "atoms"<sup>3</sup> of Matter are separate, distinct and independent Reals.<sup>4</sup> Matter does not derive from Mind nor the latter from the former. In the Second Standard<sup>5</sup> both Matter and Mind are equally real but derive from a common source the Psycho-physical Potential<sup>6</sup> which, as such, is neither. "Psychic" here means Mind as distinct from Consciousness in the sense of *Chit*. This Psycho-physical Potential is a Real independent of Consciousness which is the other Real.<sup>7</sup> In the Third Standard as non-dual Vedânta the position is the same, except that the Psycho-physical Potential is not an independent Real but is the power of the One Supreme Real as God. The world is then Real in the sense that it has true objective Reality for the individual Experiencers for the duration of their experience of it. No-one denies this.

The next question is the problem of Monism. If ultimate Reality be One, how can it be the cause of and become the Universe? It is said that irreducible Reality is of dual aspect, namely, as it is in relation to the World as Ishvara the Lord or God, and as it is in Itself beyond such relation which we may call Godhead or Brahman. According to Mâyâ-vâda, Ishvara is Brahman for Ishvara is Brahman as seen through the Veil of Mâyâ that is, by the Psycho-physical Experiencer. But Brahman is not Ishvara because Brahman is the absolute alogical Real, that is, Reality, not as conceived by Mind but as it is in Itself beyond (in the sense that it is exclusive of) all relation. The notion of God as the Supreme Self is the

1 Nyâya-Vaisheshika.

2 Manas.

3 Paramânu.

4 Dravya.

5 Sângkhya-Yoga.

6 Prakriti.

7 In Sângkhya one, in Sarva-Darshana-Sangraha many.

highest concept imposed on the Alogical which, as it is in itself, is not a Self either supreme or limited. The Absolute as such is not a cause. There is, transcendently speaking, no creation, no Universe. The Absolute is and nothing happens. It is only pragmatically a Cause. There is from this aspect no *nexus* between Brahman as Godhead and the World. In the logical order there is. What then is the Universe? It is said by some to be an "illusion". But this is an inapt term. For to whom is it an "illusion"? Not to the Psycho-physical Experiencer to whom it is admittedly real. Nor is it an illusion for the Experience-Whole. It is only by the importation of the logical notion of a Self to whom an object is real or unreal that we can speak of illusion. But there is in this state of Liberation no Self.<sup>1</sup> More correctly we say that the World is Mâyâ. But what is Mâyâ in Mâyâ-vâda? It is not real for it is neither supreme Brahman nor an independent Real. Nor is it altogether unreal for in the logical order it is real. It is neither Brahman nor different from it as an independent reality. It is unexplainable.<sup>2</sup> For this reason one of the scholastics of this System calls it the doctrine of the Inscrutable.

In the doctrine of Power (Shakti-vâda) Mâyâ is the Divine Mother Power or Mahâmâyâ. The two aspects of Reality as Brahman and Îshvara are each accepted as real. The Lord is real but that which we call "Lord" is more than Lord, for the Real is not adequately defined in terms only of its relations to the Universe. In this sense it is alogical that is "beyond Mind and Speech". As the one ultimate Reality is both Îshvara and Brahman, in one aspect it is the Cause and in the other it is not. But it is one and the same Reality which is both as Shiva-Shakti.\* As these are real, so is their appearance, the Universe. For the Universe is Shiva-Shakti. It is their appearance. When we say it is their appearance we imply that there has been a real becoming issuing from them as

<sup>1</sup> As the Buddhists said—in Nirvâna even the knowledge that the phenomena have ceased to appear and are therefore unreal is not found.—Das Gupta, *History of Indian Philosophy*, 142

<sup>2</sup> Anirvachanîya.

\* Sir John Woodroffe says in his *Shakti and Shakta* (page 74, 1st edition): "Shiva Tattva and Shakti Tattva are not produced. They thus are even in dissolution. They are Saguna-Brahman; and Parâsamvit is the Nirguna-Brahman." So he recognises Parâsamvit (Transcendental Consciousness) to be a Higher Reality than Shiva-Shakti and calls it Nirguna-Brahman which is the Absolute according to Mayavada. He says further: "Where there is pure experience there is no manifested universe." Is not Pure Experience the Experience-Whole?—*Ed.*

Power. Reality has two aspects. First as it is in itself and secondly as it exists as Universe. At base the *Sangsâra* or worlds of Birth and Death and *Moksha* or Liberation, are one. For Shiva-Shakti are both the Experience-Whole and the Part which exists therein as the Universe. Reality is a concrete unity in duality and duality in unity. In practice the One is realised in and as the Many and the Many as the One. So in the Shâkta Wine ritual the worshipper conceives himself to be Shiva-Shakti as the Divine Mother. It is She who as and in the person of the worshipper, Her manifestation, consumes the wine which is again Herself the "Saviouress in liquid form".<sup>1</sup> It is not only he who as a separate Self does so. This principle is applied to all Man's functionings and is of cardinal importance from a Monistic standpoint whatever be its abuse in fact.

Real is again used in the sense of eminence. The Supreme Real is that which is for itself and has the reason for its being in itself. The Real as God is the perfect and changeless. The Universe is dependent on the *Ens Realissimum* for it proceeds from it and is imperfect as limited and changeful and in a sense it is that which does not endure and in this sense is called "unreal". Though, however, the Universe comes and goes it does so eternally. The Supreme Cause is eternally "creative". The Real is then both infinite Changeless Being as also unbeginning and unending process as the Becoming. In this system the Real both is and becomes. It yet becomes without derogation from its own changelessness, as it were a Fountain of Life which pours itself forth incessantly from an infinite and inexhaustible source. Both the infinite and finite are real.

Real is again used in the sense of interest and value and of the "worth while". In this sense the worshipper prays to be led from Unreality to Reality but this does not mean that the world is Unreal in itself, but that it is not the supreme worth for him.

In whatever sense then the term Real is used the Universe is that. All is real, for as Upanishad says "All this Universe is verily Brahman".<sup>1</sup> The Scriptural Text says "All". The whole is an alogical concrete Reality which is Unity in Duality and Duality in Unity. The doctrine does not lose hold of either the One or the Many, and for this reason the Lord Shiva says in the Kulârnavâ Tantra, "There are some who seek dualism and some non-dualism but my doctrine is beyond

<sup>1</sup> Târâ Dravamayî.

<sup>1</sup> Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma

both." That is, it takes account of and reconciles both Dualism and Non-dualism.

Reality is no mere abstraction of the intellect making jettison of all that is concrete and varied. It is the Experience-Whole whose "object" is Itself as such Whole. It is also Partial Experience within that Whole. This union of Whole and Part is alogical, but not unknowable, for their unity is a fact of actual experience just as we have the unity of Power to Be and Power to Become, of the Conscious and Unconscious, of Mind and Body, of freedom and determination, and of other dualities of Man's experiencing.

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## THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

PUNCTUALITY

Swami was exceedingly punctual himself and expected everyone else to be so. If any disciple manifested a tendency to be late at appointments, Swami was sure sooner or later to give him or her a lesson in punctuality.

Every Saturday at 6-30 A.M. sharp, Swami used to leave for the colony at Concord. One of the young men accompanied him to the Ferry Building, in order to help him carry a heavy suitcase of supplies for the man in charge at Concord. Noticing an occasional tendency of the young man to be a few seconds late, Swami would unexpectedly leave two minutes earlier and be on the street car for the Ferry, while the young man would be left behind knowing that because of his tardiness Swami was carrying the heavy suitcase alone.

In pursuance of this same idea of punctuality, Swami had clocks installed in the monastery, the office hallway, the temple auditorium, and elsewhere in the building and deputized one of the young men to keep them all timed to the exact second by Lick Observatory time.

This discipline in punctuality was all the more remarkable when it is remembered that, in the first place, it was not natural to him, and in the second place, his mendicant life aimed to destroy the very idea of time itself. However, seeing

the value of the virtue of punctuality in the character and lives of spiritual aspirants and its important and necessary place in the social and business life of the West, he bent his will to be punctual himself and then required it of his disciples.

Behind all this idea of discipline was an unfailing thoughtfulness in every detail of life, for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of the disciple. To their amazement, Swami's mind seemed to anticipate their every thought and to provide the means by which all obstacles to progress were removed. Every moment of their discipleship was one of increasing education, conscious and unconscious. One of his precepts was "Consider the feelings of others. Thoughtlessness is the worst form of selfishness".

#### EXAMPLE

His constant thought was the influence of example. Early in the charge of the work in San Francisco he noted the relation of smoking to drinking in America and its pernicious influence, especially the smoking of cigarettes upon the health of the youth of the country. So, although no habit could control him whose spirit always dominated the senses and despite the fact that smoking seemed to soothe his nerves and ease the constant rheumatic pain, he voluntarily relinquished it for the sake of example.

Swami always maintained his practice of a vegetarian diet, both from the standpoint of a principle and as an example.

He believed that a vegetarian diet was the most conducive to spiritual culture, but in this he was not extreme. He actually prescribed a limited form of meat diet, for special reasons, to individual students, knowing that all constitutions and temperaments differed, but to the mass his own example and instructions were for total abstinence from every form of flesh diet. Even when some of his physical troubles approached a crisis and advice from friendly physicians and appeals from disciples strongly urged a meat diet for his various ills, he still maintained the example of a vegetarian diet to the end. He had made a careful study of the body-building elements contained in various foods and saw to it that his own diet and that of those under his care were rounded out with all the necessary units needed for a balanced diet.

#### ECONOMY

As mentioned previously, Swami observed the closest economy in small things. In this he had been trained by his



Master, Sri Ramakrishna, who was a good housekeeper, careful in all expenditures and naturally qualified as a keen buyer. Swami was an apt pupil and often quoted to his disciples the maxims laid down by his Master, one of which was: "Only be satisfied with any purchase when you are fully convinced that you have received the very utmost for the money spent." Of course, this was meant in a broad sense, as Sri Ramakrishna with his generous disposition could never be niggardly, simply implying that business should be conducted on business principles even by spiritually-minded people.

In India these precepts came into practical expression in the successful publication of the fortnightly magazine "UDBODHAN" and in America in the building of the first Hindu Temple in the Western world with all of the activities associated with it.

#### MONEY

Swami regarded money as sacred and taught his disciples that no money could belong to them—the heirs of immortal blessedness. Money only passed through their hands and theirs was the responsibility of expending it wisely to the best advantage, but under no circumstances were they to regard it as their own. Swami himself was a perfect example of all this. Notwithstanding his many activities, no one could ever find in him a single worldly thought. In building the Temple and the subsequent addition of the third story with its roof and towers, Swami found it necessary to execute a mortgage for the unsubscribed balance of the building cost, but he never allowed the thought of this mortgage to stand in the way of his other plans for the extension of the work. When the money was needed for the other plans it magically came to hand from somewhere.

Meanwhile, from time to time, Swami made purchases of real estate in various growing sections of San Francisco and vicinity with the idea that, as the value of city real estate increased, in a few years the increase would substantially liquidate the mortgage. This he did not live to see.

First and last Swami was always a Sannyasin. He was always willing to endure any hardship or privation. When called away on journeys he would frequently patronize cheap hotels and eating places that others might feel willing to follow his example.

On the other hand, however, he was always particular about personal appearance. He always desired the students

to be neat in appearance and to dress as well as their station in life would allow, as such things had a bearing on their self-respect and the opinion of others regarding the cause they represented. At the Ashrama classes, the reverse was the case. There the students had to practice forgetfulness of personal appearance, to help subdue the ego and live only in an atmosphere of spiritual recollection.

#### DISCIPLINE

To repeat, Swami insisted on discipline for the disciple, and would hesitate at nothing for his good. Once a disciple, the rules might not be broken. For repeated infractions, disciples were dismissed but always the way back was open if an assurance was given of a sincere determination to conform to the rules.

Swami's spirit of forgiveness was divine. He truly obeyed the Scriptural injunction of "seventy times seven". "Some day they will understand" were the words of assurance which he spoke of those who misjudged his motives.

That mind which had been illumined and filled with the love divine could never hold any feeling of animosity against anyone, no matter what wrong they may have committed or how unjustly they criticised.

Any methods of discipline that were employed were unflinching and only for the highest good of the one at fault.

#### DIVINE UNSELFISHNESS

It was to be expected that the direct disciples who sat at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna and passed through all the steps of discipleship prescribed by the Master, could not but partake everyone according to his capacity of the qualities flowing from the Master's divine presence.

The force of that divine example developed in every disciple his latent tendencies to the full, nor would the Master be satisfied with anything less. Utter selflessness, willingness to completely sacrifice for all, particularly the poor and lowly, were absolute requirements of their discipleship.

To their credit be it said that none were found wanting. In Swami Trigunatita these qualities were apparent even from childhood and the Master's touch brought them quickly into the fullest expression. The deep hearty appeal which the contact with Swami held for every class of Society in the West had a large part of its foundation in these traits. Before their very eyes and in close relation to their own lives

was the example in actual practice of virtues which they had hitherto held as precepts only. The magnet of selflessness drew them despite preconceived ideas and they learned to find in one from the shores of India, a source of divine inspiration and wisdom.

#### HIS GREAT HUMILITY

When selflessness is enthroned in the heart of the seeker after truth and the mind becomes illumined from the spirit within, there comes to the devotee an overwhelming realization of the vastness of Divine Omnipotence and the tremendous power of Divine Love, before which, the utter nothingness of the ego stands revealed.

In such a great soul this results in an adjustment of standards in the light of true values, wherein identity with the source of all wisdom and bliss is realised.

The result is a feeling of great humility on the one hand and a true independence and freedom on the other, for on whom shall he depend and by whom shall he be bound, who feels that his Divine Mother is never absent from him even for a moment?

As the deepening dusk at the close of day serves but to bring out in full relief the beauty of the evening star, so humility is the quality by which the character of the truly great shines in all its brilliance.

“Blessed are the meek for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven” was truly spoken of humility, for it is only in greatness of soul that humility is seen in full manifestation.

In the Swami Trigunatita this spirit of humility welled up in full volume from the very depths of his being. He who was honoured by the great of his time, yet felt that he was inadequate to carry on his Mother’s work and like a child he leaned constantly on Her who was at once the source and the inspiration of all his undertakings. To Her he gave full credit for all the success of the work, disclaiming the least merit for himself and accepted Her will as final in everything.

#### PUBLIC SPEAKING

Swami Trigunatita was often called upon to address different organizations, including the University of California. Classes were also organized in different nearby cities in response to requests. Later on these outside activities had to be discontinued because of pressure of the work at the Temple.

## WIDE ACQUAINTANCE

The many activities connected with the work under Swami brought him in touch with all classes of people, all of whom he met on their own plane. Many of them were among the leading business men of San Francisco and neighboring cities, who also attended the lectures and at times came to him for counsel. They were proud to call him their friend and they never forgot their acquaintance with him. The business part of these activities concerning such matters as tax exemption for the Temple property, permission to plant trees on the edge of the sidewalk surrounding the Temple and other matters, at times required consultation with the city authorities. In this way he met the Hon. James G. Rolph, Jr. Mayor of the city, who, with other officials, became his friends. Today, in 1927, the same mayor is still in office and remembers Swami with great pleasure and interest.

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**WHAT THE ENGLISH HAVE DONE IN INDIA\***

BY PROF. JADUNATH SARKAR, M.A., C.I.E.

The Portuguese were the first among the Europeans to settle in India. They have enriched Indian vocabulary and medical science to some extent ; their descendants (usually of mixed breed) spread through all the provinces of India and were a noticeable element of the population in the Mughal age. But the Portuguese as rulers created a strong feeling of repulsion in the Indian mind, by their cruelty, their religious bigotry such as the conversion of the temples of Santi-Durga into Christian churches, their establishment of the Inquisition at Goa, and their rapid moral decline. The Indian territory under their rule was very small in area and situated in an obscure and rather inaccessible corner of the peninsula. Hence the influence of the Portuguese on Indian life and thought has been negligible.

The modernization of India is the work of the English, and it has affected the entire Indian continent.

The Europeans have struck the undefended seaboard of India. The sole condition of their power is naval supremacy,

\* The fifth in a series of six lectures on "India through the Ages," delivered under the auspices of the Madras University.

and their hold on India can be maintained only by a regular flow of reinforcements from their distant homeland in every generation. Thus, unlike the Indo-Greeks, Indo-Parthians, Scythians, Pathans and Mughals, the English have not made India their home, they must ever be sojourners in this land and keep up a constant intercourse with their European home, in the form of the double stream of incoming recruits and home-returning veterans. Their rise and fall depend not on what happens in India, but on the military and political position of their mother country, which is the central power-house of their far-flung empire.

In many respects the English have continued, but in a more thorough fashion and over a much wider area of India, the work begun by the Mughal Empire, and in some others they have introduced new forces which were unknown in the Mughal age. The English influence on Indian life and thought, which is still working and still very far from its completion, is comparable only to the ancient Aryan stimulus, in its intensity and its all-pervasive character.

(i) The first gift of the English to India is universal peace, or freedom from foreign invasion and internal disorder. How valuable peace is for national growth can be best understood by contrast if we study the history of Western India before 1817 or of the Punjab in the 18th century. The British Indian Empire extends over the whole of India as well as the neighbouring lands east and west of it. A peace so profound and spread over such an extensive territory had never before been seen in India. The English have completed and carried to perfection the task undertaken by Akbar, but reversed by the anarchy that followed the dissolution of the Mughal Empire after Nadir Shah's invasion.

(ii) Secondly, the English have restored our contact with the outer world. The Mughals had communicated by sea with Persia and Arabia, Zanzibar and the Abyssinian Coast, the Malay Peninsula and Java, and by land with Central Asia. But even this limited range of intercourse had been interrupted by the decline of the Mughal Empire, when Persia and Arabia, Bukhara and Khurasan ceased to send their adventurers and traders to India.

The English have admitted us to the entire outside world,—not only in Asia, but in all other continents as well,—and they have admitted the rest of the world to us, in a degree not dreamt of under Muslim rule. India has now been switched on to the main currents of the great moving world outside, and

made to vibrate with every economic or cultural change there. An isolated life is no longer possible even for our remotest villages. A medicinal discovery in Paris or Toronto becomes available in India in two months. A poor harvest in Poland or Canada makes people in Lyallpur starve by sending up the price of wheat. The telegraph, railway and newspapers have completed the suction of India into the whirlpool of world movements of every kind. We cannot now sit down self-contained, secluded within our natural barriers.

(iii) And not only have these modern agencies connected us with the outer world more extensively and fully than ever before but joined by the uniformity of administrative system which characterises the British age, they have also been tending to fuse the various races and creeds of India into one homogeneous people and to bring about social equality and community of life and thought, which are the basis of nationality. The process has just begun, though its completion is yet far off.

(iv) Fourthly, the direct action of the State and even more than that the indirect example of the English people have infused a spirit of progress into the Indians. Our best thinkers are no longer content with adoring the wisdom of our Vedic ancestors, they feel an eternal discontent with things as they are and translate that discontent into action by trying to make our State and religion, education and industry, life and thought better and still better. Our most effective leaders do not repeat the pessimism of pre-British days by despising the moderns as a race of degenerate pigmies and sighing for the return of the golden age of the far-off past (*Satya Yuga*). Their gaze is fixed forward. We have now accepted the principle of progress in practice, even when we profess on our lips to reject it and worship our old indigenous institutions and ideas.

One effect of this attitude of mind on the part of our rulers and wiser leaders is the increased efficiency and purity of the administration and the various agencies of social service, by conscious persistent effort. To take one instance only, official bribery was admitted to be immoral even in Mughal times, and yet almost all the officials practised it and no edict of the emperor could stop it. The English in the days of Warren Hastings and Cornwallis, took over the rotten remnant of the Mughal administration, and set about reforming it. Their strength lay not only in the solid phalanx of absolutely honest and dependable English officers (after deducting a small number of corrupt or weak ones),—but also in their perseverance and activity, their long-thought-out plans and ceaseless

continuity of exertion for purifying the administration. The removal of this abuse has been possible because it has not been dependent on the personality of this governor or that, but has been adopted as the policy and pursued as a generally desired thing by the entire European society in India—both official and non-official. The public have cordially helped the State in purifying the administration.

In fact, modern European civilisation contains within itself a spirit of self-criticism and a perennial desire for reform by voluntary effort. The shock of foreign conquest or the screech of a foreign prophet is not required to waken the nation to a sense of the moral canker that is eating into its vitals. The people are too self-conscious to forget the malady in their body politic. It is daily proclaimed to them from the press and the pulpit.

#### THE INDIAN RENAISSANCE

(v) The greatest gift of the English, after universal peace and modernisation of society—and indeed the direct result of these two forces,—is the Renaissance which marked our 19th century. Modern India owes everything to it. This Renaissance was at first an intellectual awakening and influenced our literature, education, thought, and art; but in the next generation it became a moral force and reformed our society and religion. Still later, in the third generation from its commencement it has led to the beginning of the economic modernisation of India.

When the English power first asserted itself in India in the middle of the 18th century, the country had reached the lowest point of moral decay and political weakness. Northern India had enjoyed a fairly long spell of peace and growth of wealth during the 160 years of stable rule under the Mughal emperors from 1570 to 1730. But thereafter material prosperity had been destroyed, the population thinned, trade and communication interrupted, and culture thrown backwards, by incessant warfare among small States, or between rival claimants to the throne, and the incursions of predatory bands that took advantage of the anarchy and administrative weakness following the eclipse of the great empire of Delhi. Over the Mysore plateau and the Madras Karnatak, the fall of the Vijayanagar empire (1565) had let loose the dogs of civil war and rapine. After 1687, the dissolution of the sultanates of Bijapur and Golkonda—which had maintained peace and order in these parts for about a hundred years—left this country a prey to four sets of contending but weak authorities,—the representa-

tives of the old Hindu rulers, the now masterless vassals and captains of Bijapur and Golkonda, the Mughal conqueror (who claimed to be their heir-at-law), and the Maratha intruders. The economic desolation caused by these forces is graphically described in the old Factory Records of Madras and the memoirs of the founder of Pondicherry.

In the next century, (i.e.) the eighteenth, began the succession wars in the families of the Nizam and the Nawab of Arcot, which ravaged this unhappy land for a generation.

On the western side of the Deccan, the downfall, first of the Bahmani Empire (c. 1526) and then of its successor, the monarchy of Ahmadnagar (c. 1600), caused local aspirants to kingship to fight out their ceaseless wars of ambition throughout the first half of the 17th century, while in the second half of that century, the rise of the Marathas and then the Mughal-Maratha struggle denied peace and quiet to the troubled country till the rise of the Peshwas (c. 1730).

Northern India became a scene of plunder and slaughter after the death of the Emperor Muhammad Shah (1748), and this anarchy ceased only with Lord Lake's victorious entrance into Delhi in 1803.

Bengal had greatly prospered under the Mughal peace from the reign of Jahangir (when the last remnant of Pathan power and the refractory independent zamindars were crushed by the Delhi forces) to the battle of Plassey (1757). But that battle had encouraged up-country robber-bands, calling themselves *Sannyasis* or *fakirs*, to flock to the province which was supposed to be masterless after the fall of its old Nawabs. It taxed all the energy and organising genius of Warren Hastings to stamp out the Sannyasi pest, but he succeeded in the end.

In fact, the unsettled condition of the country and the decay of normal civilised life among the people can be best judged from the fact that just before Wellesley imposed British suzerainty over the country, i.e., at the end of the 18th century, there were a million mercenary soldiers seeking employment at any Indian Court that would hire them. These men had no loyalty, no local patriotism, no discipline. The ruin of agriculture and trade over most parts of India as the result of the disintegration of the Mughal empire, drove all strong and ambitious men to seek their livelihood by flocking to the profession of soldiers of fortune or to that of robbers.

Thus it happened that in the middle years of the 18th century, Mughal civilisation which had done so much good to India from the reign of Akbar to that of Aurangzib, was like



a spent bullet ; all its life and vigour were gone. This rottenness at the core of Indian society first made itself felt in the form of military and political weakness. The country could not defend itself ; royalty was hopelessly depraved and imbecile ; the nobles were selfish and short-sighted ; corruption, inefficiency and treachery disgraced all branches of the public service. In the midst, of this decay and confusion, literature, art and even true religion perished.

Just at this time the West struck India with irresistible impact, though its full force was concealed for one generation, namely the period from Clive to Cornwallis. Then followed what we may rightly call the dark age of modern India; the period extending from Cornwallis to Bentinck (or roughly 1790 to 1830), during which the old order was dead, but the new had not yet begun, and nobody could foresee what shape the life and thought of India to come would take.

In the interests of efficiency and public good, the Indians were totally excluded from the public service, the command of the army, and the control of education.\* The future seemed hopelessly dark to the great grandsons of Aurangzib's generals and Ministers, poets and scholars who found themselves reduced to obscurity and unemployment in the early British administration.

But the destruction of the old order which took place under Warren Hastings and Cornwallis was a necessary process before the new order could come into being. It was a painful, but indispensable operation, like the burning of the stubble on the reaped field, as a preparation for the next crop. . . .

I therefore prefer to call it the "seed time of New India."

At the end of this period, i.e., in Lord William Bentinck's time, we find Indians again beginning to take an honourable and responsible part in guiding their countrymen's thoughts, shaping the national life, and conducting the country's government. But these were Indians of a new breed ; they drew their inspiration and their strength not from the East but from the West. They had acquired English learning and had thus properly equipped themselves for the work of the modern age. They were the first fruits of the Indian Renaissance and their

\* "The system established by Lord Cornwallis was based upon the principle of doing everything by European agency. . . . The plan which Lord William Bentinck substituted for this was to transact the public business by native agency under European Superintendence." (Trevelyan).

prophet was Ram Mohan Roy, whose life (1774-1833) exactly bridges this dark age in the history of modern India.

#### ENGLISH EDUCATION

The history of the Indian Renaissance is profoundly interesting and deserves a detailed treatment. It began with our study of English literature and modern philosophy and science from books written in the English language. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the first Indian to write books in English and he visited England. The beginnings of English education can be traced even earlier than his time, but the knowledge of English acquired by his predecessors,—whether in Bengal or in Madras,—was limited to the requirements of clerks and interpreters serving English masters, it was not pursued as an instrument of culture by our entire literate class. As early as 1790 we find appeal published in a Calcutta paper by a Bengali gentleman inviting some European to write a grammar of the English language for the benefit of the Bengali people.

But from 1810 onwards we find English education, at first of the school standard, spreading throughout Bengal, thanks to the efforts of the Christian missions. Two external causes contributed to this development of schools: (i) Lord Wellesley's conquests not only established British paramountcy and gave internal peace to India, but extended the English dominion throughout that ancient home of civilisation, the Gangetic valley up to Delhi.

(ii) The missionaries were allowed by the Marquis of Hastings to carry on their propaganda in British territory instead of being confined to the Danish settlement of Serampur, as they had been by the East India Company's orders up to 1810.

The College of Fort William, which the far-sighted Wellesley had founded in 1800, though it was soon afterwards starved and curtailed, gave a great impetus to English education, by bringing European officer-students and Indian teachers together, and compelling each to learn the language of the other. This college, however, did not tend to diffuse the knowledge of English among our countrymen. Up to Lord William Bentinck's time (1835) it was held by Government that European philosophy and science should be taught to the Indians by translation into Sanskrit and Arabic, and not through the medium of English.

But long before that date the people had taken their destiny into their own hands and begun to flock to the English

schools started by the missionaries and by a few enlightened Indians. English education was not a gift of the E. I. Company's government, though some financial aid was given to it by the State from 1835 onwards. Previous to that date\* all the expenses of the schools had been borne by the pupils, the missionaries, or Indian donors and English subscribers. As late as 1850, nearly 47 per. cent. of the total educational expenditure in Bengal was met from the pupils' fees and private subscriptions.

The passion of young Bengal to study English literature, even before Lord William Bentinck opened the subordinate civil service to them in 1834, is well illustrated by Sir Charles Trevelyan.

"On the opening of the Hughli College, in August 1836, students of English flocked to it in such numbers as to render the organization and classification of them a matter of difficulty. Twelve hundred names were entered on the books of this department of the college within three days . . . . There appears to be no limit to the number of scholars except that of the number of teachers whom the Committee [of public instruction,] is able to provide. Notwithstanding the extraordinary concourse of English students at Hughli, the demand was so little exhausted, that when an auxiliary school was lately opened within two miles of the college, the English department of it was instantly filled and numerous applicants were sent away unsatisfied." ["On the Education of the People of India" 1836, p. 82.]

He continues: "The curiosity of the people is thoroughly roused, and the passion for English knowledge has penetrated the most obscure, and extended to the most remote parts of India. The steam boats, passing up and down the Ganges, are boarded by native boys, begging not for money, but for books. . . . Some English gentlemen coming to Calcutta were astonished at the eagerness with which they were pressed for books by a troop of boys, who boarded the steamer from

\* There was one exception. The General Committee of Public Instruction, constituted in 1823, undertook "to take under their patronage and greatly improve the Hindu College at Calcutta, which had been founded as far back as 1816, by the voluntary contributions of the natives themselves for the instruction of their youth in English literature and science." English classes were afterwards established in connection with the Muhammadan and Sanskrit colleges at Calcutta, the Sanskrit College at Benares, and the Agra College; and a separate institution was founded at Delhi in 1829 for the cultivation of Western learning (Trevelyan, 3-4). The Scottish missionary, Dr. Duff, opened his college in Calcutta in 1830.

an obscure place called Kumarkhali [120 miles north of Calcutta.] . . . . The gentlemen at last hit upon the expedient of cutting up an old *Quarterly Review*, and distributing the articles among them." (p. 167).

From 1835, when Government adopted the policy of giving State aid and supervision to schools teaching English, in preference to those teaching Oriental classical languages, English schools multiplied very quickly, their number was trebled in Bengal in the next five years (1836-40). Another impetus was given to the movement by Sir Henry Hardings, who, on 10th October 1844, issued a resolution announcing that in future preference would be given, in first appointments, to candidates educated in the Government English schools. Ten years rolled by, and then our educational edifice was crowned by the establishment of a University on the model of the London University in each of our three Presidencies,—as ordered in the Despatch of 1854 and passed by legislation in 1857.\*

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\* From this rapid survey of the beginning and establishment of English rule in India, as given in Prof. Sarkar's article, the unwary reader may be led to infer that the Indians all along remained passive and dull under the growing foreign influence. Whereas it is quite true that the meeting of the East and the West in India was accomplished mainly through the agency of the English and that India in seeking to adjust herself with the modern world has to adopt many Western ideas and forms, it will be quite unhistorical to think that India passively swallowed things without any consciousness of her precious heritage—a heritage which, as is being increasingly realised, has a very potent and significant message for India and the world. What happened is this: India naturally was in a very weak condition at the disruption of the Mughal rule. When the Western culture was introduced, India could not make an immediate response. But very soon the undying ancient spirit asserted itself. It is very significant that Sri Ramakrishna who represents the highest synthesis of Eastern and Western thought, was born in a village where the Western culture was totally unknown, and that his upbringing and self-realisation were absolutely untouched by any direct or indirect Western influence. Swami Dayananda who also represented modernism to a degree in his teaching and outlook was a monk and scholar of the purely ancient style. The Indian Renaissance was not, in fact, a *gift* of the English, but a product of the Indian spirit seeking adjustment with the new and foreign outlook and culture. Ram Mohan Roy who was a pioneer of the new era in India, surely drew his main inspiration from the Upanishads. It will be dishonouring his memory to say that he drew his strength and inspiration from the West and not from the East. Similarly, to say that the progressiveness of modern India is a *gift* of the English is to deny all the past progress and achievements of India. No race can rise up to new situations or even learn new lessons, unless it has the motive power already within itself. The new situation and the circumstances may have been created by the English, but the tendency and power to meet them are surely India's. It does not take away from the originality of any nation if it assimilates foreign forms and ideas to serve its own intrinsic purpose.—Ed.

# THE HINDU AND HIS PHILOSOPHY

By S. T.

[We extract the following interesting article from *The Century Magazine*, (New York), May, 1928. It is the third in a series entitled *A Modern in Search of Truth*, the first and the second being on Christianity, and Mental Science and Occultism (including Theosophy). The *Century* Editor thus introduces the writer :

“For the past ten years S. T.—with the exception of a year’s service in France—has devoted his time to the study of philosophy and world religions, investigating each faith or cult on its home grounds and with the best of its people. For Buddhism he went to its stronghold, Ceylon, and to its High Priest, the Reverend Nanissara; for Hinduism to the order founded by the famous Swami Vivekananda, in Benares and Calcutta, and was a guest in the guest-houses of Hindu monasteries. In England, Europe and America S. T. lived with Anglican and Roman Catholic groups, and studied Christian Science, New Thought and Theosophy in their respective centres and with their own leaders, among them Mrs. Besant. He made four journeys to the Orient, stopping with all sorts of people from missionaries to Ambassadors, from high British officials to Eurasian working men and women. His last foreign residence was an international club in London where he lived for eight months among young people of every faith and nationality. S. T. is of course American, of an early Victorian Protestant family, though he himself has never been formally allied with any church or religious body of any description.”—*Ed. P. B.*]

The chief dilemma of modern spiritual life in the Occident has been the deadlock between religion and science. Theology and evolution, church and laboratory, faith and fact, have been declared irreconcilable, and any meeting or rapprochement between them impossible. It is, then, highly exciting and a tremendous moment for the modern in search of truth, when he discovers that four thousand years ago in the forest hermitages of her ancient seers, India achieved the impossible.

When our proud Western civilization was yet undreamed of, in those forest retreats of the early Indian philosophers, logic and God, accurate science and profound spirituality, did meet, were reconciled—nay more, permanently welded together—and have thus remained in that country, through the ages. By a curious irony, to be brought to-day from the pure peaks of the Himalayas to the top-heavy magnificence of the skyscraper—sheltering its spiritual starvation. A scientific

religion! India might pardonably ask Miss Katherine Mayo if this is not as important as a scientific system of sanitation?

“Hinduism”: what a strange medley of grotesque images that word evokes in most Occidental minds. With Indians there is, of course, no such term. Nor is there, oddly enough, throughout the Sanskrit language of this intensely religious people, any word signifying “religion.” There is, instead, the word *dharma*—that which is to be held fast or kept: the law of life, “the eternal and immutable principles which hold together the universe in its parts and in its whole.” And within that general law there is a religion, a natural path and belief, for every type of man and every grade of intelligence—from the lowest fetishism of the illiterate Pariah, to the highest absolutism of the yogi who has literally “realized God.”

“All religions,” said one of the greatest of Hindus, Swami Vivekananda, “are so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realize the Infinite—each determined by the conditions of its birth and association and each of them marking a stage of progress.” It has been this inclusive viewpoint, this broad and comprehensive spirit, that has made of India “a perfect university of religious culture,” including every shade of spiritual thought and conception.

The Hindus worship God in three aspects: first, the *Absolute God*, the impersonal and changeless Principle, the Unity behind all these varieties of phenomenal life; second, the *Immanent God*, “God-with-attributes,” the Universal Soul immanent in and through all (corresponding with the Universal Mind of the Western metaphysicians); third, the *Personal God* appearing to man in form—the Lords Krishna, Rama, Buddha and others; these, like the Personal God of the Christians, being considered as Incarnations of the Second Person of the Hindu Trinity.

Hindu seers say that the Absolute, the Ultimate Reality, is a state of Spirit or consciousness, pure and simple; unlimited by any concept of time or space, and untouched by any relation. Permanent or absolute reality is that which exists in the same condition throughout all time. The real never changes. And the ultimate object of the Hindu religion, and the ultimate goal of every Hindu—however humble his immediate form of worship—is to “realize” or enter into that state of the Absolute, or all-comprehending and all-blissful consciousness.

But while this Absolute state is Reality, and (Hindus declare) can be experienced, must eventually be experienced by every one of us—our ordinary life is a relative existence, which

has a relative value for us while we are in it. This relative existence is simply a reflection or misreading of the Absolute ; the vision of it vanishes for the liberated soul, but remains for the yet unliberated and ignorant. And this relative existence has two aspects : microcosmic and macrocosmic, individual and collective. Just as the universe and the aggregate of tiny individuals of which it is composed are one in principle and interdependent, so also are the Universal Soul and its aggregate of individual souls that energize the small individual bodies. "Samashti" or "collected" equals the Universal Soul or God ; "Vyashti" or "analyzed" equals the individual soul. The existence of the one necessitates the existence of the other.

The amount of good in the world being vastly in excess of the amount of bad, the sum total may be said to be All-Good. Omnipotence and Omniscience are obvious qualities from the very fact of totality. So this is the Hindu "God-with-Attributes," God the Cause and Controller of the relative universe.

These seem to us highly philosophical conceptions. To hundreds of thousands of Hindus—to every Hindu school-boy—they are as real and familiar as is the story of Jesus to the boy and man of the West. But the non-intellectual masses of Hindus, like the masses of Europeans and Americans, worship a Personal God—God in the human form of some God-man, or Incarnation of all pure and perfect qualities. However, the Hindus never claim any one such "divine" man as the *only* Incarnation and Son of God. Wherever certain qualities and a certain state of "God-consciousness" appear—whether in the Buddha, or Krishna, the Lord Rama or the Lord Christ—there they see and worship a divine being. And to them every holy man is a savior.

Then there are the lesser gods and goddesses whom we call "idols," but whom Hindus consider as attributes of the Immanent God—as Ganesh, God of Wisdom ; Sarasvati, Goddess of Learning ; Lakshmi, Goddess of Beauty and Wealth, and so on. They stand as do the saints in Christian theology, each for some special quality and form of good ; and their images—so little understood by the tourist and missionary—are designed dramatically to call to mind that special quality. Ganesh, representing Wisdom, is pictured in the form of an elephant, because that great beast typifies the acme of knowingness and power. Hanuman, representing the highest Service and Devotion, is pictured as a monkey—because, it is supposed, the original Hanuman of the great Indian epic, who helped the

Lord Rama with never-failing faithfulness and devotion, was one of the monkey-like aborigines of Lower India. And so on, throughout the Hindu pantheon.

The Hindus say that the vast majority of men need some concrete form round which to center their thoughts and aspirations ; and that they use these forms of their images for this purpose, just as people of other religions use crosses, crescents, pictures of saints and images of Christ. In fact, the superstition that has grown up round the gods and goddesses in India, is very like the superstition that has grown up round the magic powers attributed by the ignorant masses of the Christian world to certain saints : ability to heal, to find things, to send children and so on. Ignorance is a human, not a Hindu or a Christian quality. It is a matter of social and educational, rather than of religious, inferiority. And in the older civilizations—Christian Russia, Hindu India—the masses have not had the opportunities that the newer social orders bestow upon their children. Hence the scenes in Hindu temples, and in certain churches of Mexico and Europe, that frequently shock onlooking travelers.

So much for the Hindu ideas of God. Next, as to their ideas of Creation and the nature of the Universe.

Instead of beginning with a suppositious Creator, a person like himself, who created the world out of nothing and man in the "divine" image, and then having by hook or crook to extricate himself from this exceedingly involved philosophical situation—the Hindu begins, like every true scientist, with the facts of man's actual experience.

What is the process of creation going on around us? A seed becomes a plant, grows to a certain point, dies, and breaks up into a seed again. It undergoes a period of rest (or as the Hindus say, a period of very fine unmanifested action) beneath the ground, and once more comes forth and becomes a plant—grows, dies, and again completes the circle.

So with animals, so with men, so with rivers, mountains, great planets, and even planetary systems : everything is proceeding in these circles or cycles. The raindrop is drawn up in vapor from the ocean, changes into snow, descends upon the mountain, changes again into water, and rolls back as a great river into the mother ocean. The mountain is being slowly pulverized by rivers and glaciers into sand, the sand drifts into the ocean and is heaped layer upon layer on the ocean bed, to become the mountains of another age. The planet—our earth for example—comes out of nebulous form, grows colder



and colder, throws up this crystallized form on which we live, and will continue growing colder and colder until it "dies," breaks up, and returns to its first rudimentary fine form.

So with all lives and all existence that we know anything about. All creation is progressing in these cycles or waves, rising and subsiding, rising again and subsiding again. And to the universe as a whole, because of the uniformity of Nature, the same law must apply. The whole cosmos must at some time or other melt down into its causal form—sun, moon, stars, earth, all the things of which the universe is composed, must melt down and return to their finer causes. But all the things of which it is composed will live as fine forms, and out of these fine forms all things will emerge again, and earths, suns, moons and stars will once more be formed. The whole universe, just like the seed, has to work for a period in minute form—unseen, unmanifested, in what is called chaos or the beginning of creation—and only after that can it manifest itself as a fresh projection.

Out of what then has this universe been produced? Out of the preceding fine form. The manifested or grosser state is the effect, and the finer the cause. The "coming out" of the fine form, the change in position of the fine parts into the gross, is what in modern times is called evolution. But every evolution is preceded by an involution. The seed is the fine form out of which the great tree comes, but another tree was the form which had become involved in that seed. The whole of the tree was present in it. The whole of the human being was in the embryonic protoplasm which unfolds little by little. The whole of this present universe was once infolded in the cosmic fine universe. You cannot get out of a machine anything that you have not first put into it.

This is a summary of Swami Vivekananda's very fine resume of the Hindu cosmology and of the lessons from my own teacher in Benares.

Evolution is perfectly true, say the Hindus, but it is not complete without the complementary theory of involution. Progression in an eternal straight line is mathematically impossible. More than that, it is contrary to the facts of our known experience—which facts all point to the cycle theory. So the Hindus—their philosophers of 4000 years ago—have the honor of out-sciencing science in their logical analysis of the universe. And their conclusion is that there is no such thing as any primal "creation," any more than there can be any such thing as final destruction. (Thus they

antedated the Law of the Conservation of Energy by which not a foot-pound can be added to or subtracted from the ever-constant sum total.) Creation means simply manifestation, the coming forth of a new mode of something already in existence ; destruction means going back to the fine causes. And thus life and all these phenomena are eternal, in the form of a flux.

Every object is the effect of some causes, and again in its turn is the cause of something else. This applies to the mind and body of the individual being, as to everything in the world. No life comes into existence accidentally. The present birth is the result of our own past acts in previous incarnations, as our present acts are determining our future incarnations. All relative life is severely bound by that one Law of Causation, or "Karma" as it is called in Sanskrit. And it is from this endless chain of causation, this perpetual round of the eternal wheel of birth, death, and all these recurring changes, that the Hindus (and also the Buddhists) seek liberation.

For all this is Nature. This is not God. The Absolute, the Unity behind all these changes, the Principle of Consciousness, and Light by which all these are perceived (like the sun in front of which the wheel of evolution-involution is turning) —that never changes. That (according to our definition given above) is eternally, unaffected, eternally perfect and the same. And That is our own real Self. For Hindu philosophy boldly asserts that there is absolutely no difference between the soul and God.

Somehow or other—the Hindu frankly says he does not know how—the Soul has come under the delusion that it is in bondage ; that it is this body, this mind, and is in thralldom to matter. We do not know how this delusion with all its attendant miseries originated. But we do know the remedy. It is to lose the individual self-consciousness that creates all our difficulties, and to become conscious as the Absolute, Infinite, perfect and unchangeable One. And this, Hindus declare, is not a theoretical dream of a hypothetical state to be realized ages hence in some remote Heaven ; but a possible and practical experience to be attained here and now in this immediate life. You are not to take God or spiritual knowledge on any one's authority (another great point throughout the Hindu religion)—you are to find it out, and know it actually and personally for yourself.

Hindu philosophers are uncompromising on the point of the entire difference between the Absolute and the relative. They do not, like so many schools of religion and metaphysics,

take the relative existence and idealize it, imagine themselves doing all the things they have never been able to do and would like to do, and call that the Absolute. They do not, be it said to their unique and brilliant credit, create God in the image of man, or Heaven out of all the possessions and powers man would like to have control over. They say flatly that the Absolute and the relative are two opposite and antithetical states. You leave the one when you enter the other. And in the Hindu mind there is no question as to which state is the more desirable.

Finite life means inevitably bondage and misery—always something outside ourselves that we lack and want, ever something more that we are struggling to obtain. Therefore the ideal is the abandonment of the finite and the realization of the Infinite—the One within whom all is contained. And the realization of the Absolute state of consciousness means the negation of the consciousness of our separate individuality, as well as of all relative existence. This is the “annihilation” the West shrinks from—because Western people have misunderstood and misinterpreted this “self-extinction.”

When you are reading a book, or watching an intensely interesting play, in a certain sense and for the time being, your individuality is extinguished. You “forget yourself”—your precious “personality,” your individual relations and obligations—entirely; and you are “absorbed,” as the popular phrase accurately describes it, in the drama going on before you. Yet certainly your life, your consciousness, is not annihilated. Rather is it more vivid than usual, because more concentrated.

Suppose that the drama you are witnessing were to be changed from the limited play in the theater, to the stupendous Drama of the Life of the Universe. Suppose that instead of the affairs and activities of half a dozen people playing their little game in one tiny corner of the stage, there was unrolled before you the play of all the life of the cosmos—birds, beasts, stars, tides, the men and women of this world, beings of worlds beyond and below ours. If that amazing pageant were unfolded before you, and you saw it in its myriad parts and felt yourself merged into the Whole in whose perfection all parts vanished—could you, while absorbed in that great experience, be conscious of or interested in your separate individuality?

Further, were you given your choice between beholding that Drama—the vision of life and the world as it is—and playing one little part in one tiny corner of that drama, tightly

bound by the laws governing that particular corner: which would you choose? Would it not be the cramped individual consciousness that would seem death and extinction—and the Absolute that would seem, and truly be, Life?

This is the “absorption into the Absolute,” or Nirvana, so resented and repudiated by us individualistic Westerners. Not extinction, but *expansion* of consciousness. With Buddhists, expansion into Absolute Truth—Nirvana means “the state of *complete enlightenment*.” With Hindus, it is the expansion into “Sat-Chit-Ananda”: Absolute Existence, Absolute Knowledge, Absolute Bliss—in other words, all the life, knowledge and happiness there is. Is not this the ideal and strongest wish of every one of us? And if the men of the East have found that such a state is a possible experience, can you wonder that they are ready to abandon everything to attain to it?

(To be continued)

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## REVIEW

WITH GANDHIJI IN CEYLON. *By Mahadev Desai. S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras. 159 pp. Price Re. 1/4.*

Mahatma Gandhi's achievements and teachings have certainly become a part of the history of modern India, and S. Ganesan is doing well in perpetuating their record in his publications. The book under review contains an account of Mahatmaji's tour in Ceylon last year and all the various speeches he delivered there. The subjects he covered in his speeches are too innumerable to mention, but the speeches are all, as usual, full of light and truth and deserve therefore to be seriously studied.

THE PATH OF THE ELDERS. *By G. E. Power. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 233 pp.*

The sub-title explains the subject-matter of the book.—It is “A Modern Exposition of Ancient Buddhism.” In fact the writer explains the fundamentals of *Theravada* (The Teaching of the Elders) or *Hinayana* as it is generally called, under the following chapter-headings: The Great Recognitions; The Noble Eightfold Path; The Soul; Kamma; The Five Constituents; Nibbana; The Universe; Deity; and The Brotherhood.

The book is well-written.

THE WISDOM OF THE RISHIS. By T. L. Vaswani. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 62 pp.

"In this little volume is embodied the substance of some of my addresses on the Wisdom of the Rishis." All the chapters deal more or less with the central theme, Atma-vidya. T. L. Vaswani's writings are always full of thought. But of course one cannot expect a sustained treatment of the subject in a booklet of this kind.

HIS HOLINESS MEHERBABA AND MEHERASHRAM. By K. J. Dastur, M.A., LL.B. Meherabad, Ahmednagar, Deccan. 32 pp.

The writer claims Meherbaba to be a man of God-realisation. The first spiritual awakening of Meherbaba is said to have come in May 1913, as a result of a saintly old lady's embrace, who became his Guru and is said to have brought him the highest spiritual realisation in January 1914. Meherbaba has his Ashrama at Arangaon, Ahmednagar, where he has lately established a school in which boys of all races and creeds are given free spiritual and secular education.

CHAITANYA TO VIVEKANANDA. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. 152 pp. Price Re. 1/8.

The book contains sketches of the lives and teachings of five Bengali and one Assamese saints,—Chaitanya, Sankara Deva, Haridas, Ramprasad, Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda. The sketches are well-written and afford a clear outline of the saints' lives and teachings. The book will surely prove valuable to all non-Bengalees.

INDIAN CHRISTIANS. G. A. Natesan & Co. Madras. 360 pp. Price Rs. 3/-.

The book contains biographical and critical appreciation of leading Christian poets, publicists, reformers and ministers of the church in India. The following lives have been included in the volume: Krishna Mohun Banerji, Rev. Lal Behari Day, Prof. Ramachandra, Michael Madhusudan Datta, Rev. W. T. Sathianadan, Dr. Imad-ud-Din, Nehemiah Goreh, Kali Charan Banerjea, Paudita Ramabai, Rajah Sir Harnam Singh, L. D. Swamikannu Pillai, Narayan Vaman Tilak, Susil Kumar Rudra and Sadhu Sundar Singh.

# THE TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY

It is with great pleasure that we place before the public the humble work done by this institution during the year 1927. This Charitable Dispensary has been doing its silent and humble work of service among the hill people for the last 24 years through its Outdoor and Indoor Departments. Moved by the extreme helplessness and suffering of the poor and ignorant villagers in times of illness, the Swamis of the Ashrama in the early years distributed medicines to those who came from long distances to them and also went out to succour such as were too ill to come to the Ashrama for help. Slowly the work grew up till at last the authorities of the Ashrama felt the need of a regular dispensary which was opened in Nov. 1903, and ever since have been conducting this work with conspicuous efficiency under the charge of one or another of its members with medical knowledge and experience. The percentage of cure has all along been satisfactory as the figures for the Indoor Department show. The Dispensary administers help irrespective of caste, creed or sex.

The total number relieved during the year at the Outdoor Dispensary was 2094 of which 1509 were new cases and 585 were repeated cases. Of these new cases 714 were men, 278 women and 226 children. As many as 297 were patients of other faiths than Hinduism. In the Indoor Hospital the total number admitted was 74, a number much greater than in the previous years. Of this number 49 were discharged cured, 24 were relieved or left the hospital and one died. Among them 47 were men, 16 women and 11 were children. Here also as many as 14 were adherents of faiths other than Hinduism.

## STATEMENT OF DISEASES (Indoor included).

Dysentery	...	...	30	Skin Diseases	...	...	134
Fever	...	...	221	Ulcer	...	...	19
M. Fever	...	...	49	Burning	...	...	15
Rheumatic Fever	...	...	83	Injury	...	...	32
Debility	...	...	76	M. Diseases	...	...	51
Headache	...	...	15	F. Diseases	...	...	9
Eye Diseases	...	...	371	Worms	...	...	41
Ear Diseases	...	...	20	Gout	...	...	9
Paralysis	...	...	2	Lumbago	...	...	5
Influenza	...	...	1	Toothache	...	...	20
Bronchitis	...	...	6	Operation	...	...	5
Pneumonia	...	...	2	Ozcena	...	...	1
Asthma	...	...	5	Phthisis	...	...	6
Cough	...	...	82	Leprosy	...	...	1
H. Cough	...	...	4	Dyspepsia	...	...	91
Colic	...	...	63	Boil	...	...	13
Piles	...	...	3	Pain Local	...	...	33
Spleen	...	...	32	Tumour	...	...	1
Dropsy	...	...	2	Diarrhoea	...	...	30

Total: Indoor 74 and Outdoor 1509.

## SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS FOR 1927.

INCOME.		EXPENDITURE.	
Last year's Balance ...	2,605 14 7	Medicines ...	290 5 9
By Interest ...	100 0 0	Cooly & Railway Freight	
Donations and subscrip-		for Medicines ...	21 7 9
tions* ...	465 0 0	Hospital Requisites ...	19 1 0
	<hr/>	Doctor's maintenance	
	3,170 14 7	and travelling ...	309 0 9
			<hr/>
			639 15 3
		Balance ...	... 2,530 15 4
			<hr/>

We take this opportunity to record our sincere gratitude on behalf of the suffering hill people to the kind-hearted donors and subscribers who have made it possible for us to do this work of service to our fellow men. We record our special thanks to His Highness the Maharaja of Morvi and to His Highness the Thakur Saheb of Limbdi for their annual donation of Rs. 350/- each which has helped much to put the dispensary on a stable basis.

## AN APPEAL.

The figure of the Indoor Department shows the increasing demand on the Dispensary. The Dispensary is a two-storied building with five rooms. The first floor is mainly used for Outdoor purposes and stocking of medicines. Of the three little rooms on the ground floor one is used as a dressing and operation room for minor cases and the other two rooms are used as wards for Indoor patients. These two rooms accommodate 4 patients, a number too small to meet the increasing demand. We are therefore contemplating an extension for 4 more beds with all accessories, which means an expenditure of Rs. 5,000/- roughly, an amount which the Dispensary can hardly afford at present. We therefore appeal to our kind-hearted countrymen to come forward and help us in the matter so that we may be able to open this new ward by the end of the next year as a memorial to the twenty-five years of useful service the Dispensary would do a fitting gift on its silver jubilee day from the generous public who appreciate its work.

All contributions however small either for the building or the upkeep of the Dispensary, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

(Sd.) SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA,  
President, Advaita Ashrama,  
Mayavati P.O., Almora Dt.,  
U. P.

\* The subscription of His Highness the Thakur Saheb of Limdi for the year 1927 was not received during the year, and is not included in this account.

## NEWS AND REPORTS

### Swami Nirmalananda's Tour

During the last several months, Swami Nirmalananda who is in charge of the Ramakrishna Ashrama at Bangalore, and under whose fostering care a number of monastic centres have grown in Malabar, Cochin, Travancore, and Coorg, has toured through various places in Northern and Southern India to the great benefit of the places visited. His tour included Belur, Calcutta, Rangoon, Mandalay, Akyab, Chittagong, Comilla, Narayanganj, Dacca, Mymensing District, Dinajpur, Purnea District, Chapra District, Patna, Benares, Lucknow, Bombay, Trivandrum, Aleppi, Haripad, Ottapalayam and Coorg.

At Rangoon, the elite of the city and the representatives of all communities and creeds gave him a most cordial reception and presented him an address of welcome. The citizens of Akyab also presented him with an address of welcome. Wherever the Swami has visited, he has been received with great respect and cordiality, and his instructions have undoubtedly benefited all who attended his most interesting conversations.

### Balurghat and Bankura Famine—Ramkrishna Mission Activities.

As public are aware, our relief measures have been, hitherto, confined to the famine-stricken area of Bankura. We could not begin work at Balurghat on account of paucity of funds, though harrowing tales of peoples' sufferings frequently reached us from that quarter. We have been, also receiving donations from some kind-hearted people intended for Balurghat sufferers. On enquiry, we have been also convinced about the acute famine condition prevailing at Balurghat. Further we have come to learn about certain affected areas at Balurghat where immediate relief has been urgently necessary. Therefore we have decided to open a centre at Balurghat also, and accordingly despatched a batch of workers. The public fully know that we are greatly handicapped in our present work of famine relief for want of funds. The extreme gravity of the situation at Balurghat compelled us to open another centre there in spite of our very poor resources. Therefore our earnest appeal goes to all to help us with their kind contributions to enable us to continue the work.

It is now about four months that we have started relief work in the famine-stricken area of Bankura. At present, we are distributing rice and cloths from four centres. About 1200 people are getting weekly doles of rice amounting to nearly 70 maunds, covering an area of 120 villages. The total amount of rice distributed upto now is about 600 maunds and about 1050 pieces of new clothes besides old ones have been distributed among needy persons.

All contributions, however small, in cash or kind, may be kindly sent to any of the following addresses and will be gratefully acknowledged by the Treasurer of the Ramkrishna Mission.

1. President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math, P.O., Dt Howrah.
2. Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Bagbazar, Calcutta.
3. Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Muktaram Babu Street, Calcutta.

(Sd.) SUDDEHANANDA.