

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. III. 14.

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

VOL. XXXIII.

OCTOBER, 1928.

No. 10.

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

II

(To a Sannyasin,—an American Disciple)

BELLE VUE HOTEL,
BOSTON.

13th September, 1894.

Forgive me, but I have the right, as your Guru, to advise you, and I insist that you buy some clothes for yourself, as the want of them stands in the way of your doing anything in this country. Once you have a start, you may dress in whatever way you like. People do not object.

You need not thank me, for this is only a duty. According to Hindu law, if a Guru dies his heir is his disciple, and not even his son—supposing him to have had one, before becoming a Sannyasin. This is, you see, an actual spiritual relationship, and none of your Yankee “tutor” business!

With all blessings and prayers for your success,

Yours,
VIVEKANANDA.

AS WE KNOW HER

BY THE EDITOR

Once again India has to be our theme. And it is well that it is so. For we require nothing so much at this juncture of history as a true understanding of India, her ideals and her ways to their realisation. We are in many respects unique in our choice of ends and methods of procedure. These are now being called in question. Their efficacy is being challenged. We stand or fall with their validity or invalidity. For if the ends for which our whole past has been working, prove futile and chimerical to-day, we become almost a nation without history ; and a nation unrooted in the realities of its past is like a dry leaf before the fitful winds. So we must above all be convinced of the wisdom of our fathers. This is the supreme task before us. Such an understanding will like an armour protect us against the mad buffetings of the present and like an unflickering lamp illumine our path into the glories of the future.

We have reproduced in our last and present issues an article by S. T. from the *New York Century Magazine* on "The Hindu and His Philosophy." Having given an appreciative exposition of some of the fundamentals of Hindu religion and philosophy, the writer has raised a few questions regarding the practical and material consequences of Hinduism. He asks: "If this religion and philosophy is so remarkable, why is it not practically apparent? With such enlightened seers as guides and spiritual directors, how can there be such things as child marriage, such treatment of women and outcasts, such a generally backward, and it seems to us in many ways even degraded social system?"

It will be noted that it is not merely S. T., or the average Westerner that asks this question of India. Even Indians are asking this question. Why, if India is so spiritual, and her ideals so great, are we materially so degraded? Bound in the chains of political thralldom for the last so many centuries and now reduced to the lowest states of economic prostration? Our critics say and we avidly believe that it is religion that is at fault and if we can only throw it off, we may smile our way to the heaven of our dreams.

But it may be pertinently asked, is a religion to be justified by the material blessings it brings, or by the spiritual blessings? Where is the proof that spirituality and material prosperity should go hand in hand? Rather it is found that material prosperity often blocks the path to noble life, blinds spiritual vision and degrades man to the life of the flesh. History has repeatedly shown that material prosperity has often been the prelude to a nation's emasculation and eventual fall. We also find that great religions and philosophies had often their birth among peoples who were at those times suffering from material disadvantages. A nation's cultural and spiritual efflorescence has not often synchronised with its material prosperity. Why then should we think that India's spirituality has failed, simply because it has not been so fruitful of material blessings? Does Hinduism preach truth? Are its findings rational and real? That is the only question we are justified in asking of it. Truth must be accepted even if it means eternal destruction.—Such indeed should be the attitude of one who is an earnest seeker of truth, be he ancient or modern. It is the infinite credit of India that she never flinched from truth even when it appeared in terrible forms and meant the dashing down of the fond dreams of earthly life. To-day we are proving unworthy of our courageous fathers. We have lost the eagle's vision of looking unshrinking at the sun of truth; our eyes are wandering from its emperean glory to the grossnesses of the immediate life. This certainly is not to our credit.

The fact is, man cannot have all on this earth. God and the world seem for ever antithetical. You cannot worship God and Mammon at the same time. You have to choose one at the exclusion of the other. And can there be any question as to which is the better choice? And is it not enough if we have been true to the ideal of our choice and striven earnestly for its realisation? We know there are some amongst us who aver that India is not more spiritual than the West and that her efforts at the conservation of spirituality has not borne better fruit than the material self-aggrandisement of the West. It is an irony of fate that this liberal view is expressed more often by our own people than by Westerners. Westerners often think differently. The writer of the *Century* article says: "They (Hindus) are the natural spiritual teachers of the universe; and, I believe, have developed and cherished the subtle science of theirs through the ages—at the expense of other sides of life—to give it to us all now, in the day of the world's great spiritual crisis. Their penetrating insight, their

clear and brilliant minds—minds trained in the philosophy of Bradley and Bergson as thoroughly as in their own, and at home in every religion—their superb logic, their uncompromising love of truth unobscured by passion for organization or dogma, their tolerance and sympathy with every form of belief, their sensitive searching for the right path for each individual, above all their understanding of the furthest deeps of the human spirit: these things naturally fit them to be spiritual guides and teachers.”

[One wonders if such achievements are not enough justification for the choice of our ends and methods.]

We quoted the verdict of C. F. Andrews on Indian morality and spirituality in our August number. Here is another verdict of a Christian missionary, John S. Hoyland, which appeared originally in the *Calcutta Guardian*. We are indebted for the extracts to *The Friend* (London) which quoted the article partly. Says Mr. Hoyland:

Some years ago the writer of this article embarked upon an investigation into the characteristics of adolescent psychology in India. The method adopted was that of the questionnaire, upon the insufficiency and disadvantages of which method it is unnecessary to enlarge; but at the same time certain general results emerged clearly from the examination of the many hundreds of answer-papers received; and as these results have been substantiated in the writer's subsequent educational experience, it may be of interest to go through them. The use of psychological jargon will, as far as possible, be avoided. . .

In the first place, with regard to the psychological development of the Indian adolescent mind. The following appeared from the investigation to be the dominant elements in each year of the adolescent's growth:—

At ten.—Fear.

At eleven.—Self-interest.

At twelve.—Materialistic ambition (*i.e.*, for money, power, etc.)

At thirteen.—Intellectual, ethical and religious interests begin to show marked development.

At fourteen.—Conscience is very strong.

At fifteen.—Hero-worship.

At sixteen.—The altruistic and religious elements are at their maximum; patriotism makes a great appeal.

At seventeen.—Intellectual interests are at their maximum (with boys), and the critical faculty is strongly developed; but egotistic and materialistic considerations again begin to show a deep influence, whilst disregard for law and discipline are at their highest point.

At the present time and for many years past, the writer has been in close contact, both educationally and in other ways, with Indian

students ranging from small boys of ten or twelve at the bottom of the Middle School up to M.A. students; and his experience goes to show that the general course of psychological development outlined by the investigation quoted above is in the main correct. Especially is this true with regard to the breezes of political ferment which continually ruffle the waters of Indian education. Students round about the age of seventeen are very much more easily swept off their balance by rash appeals to their patriotism than students of an earlier or later stage.

But whilst this is true, it is also true that the student at this stage of his development, *i.e.*, about the seventeen years, is open as never before or after, to religious and ethical idealism. He is ready to resolve to devote his life to his country not only in response to the clamorous cries of political extremism, but also in response to the appeal for unselfish public service amongst the poor and degraded. The stage is rapidly passed, partly under the influence of absorbing intellectual interest—generally expressed in a prolonged bending of all his powers to the effort to pass the Matriculation examination,—and partly because of a revival which seems to take place towards the close of the eighteenth year in motives of personal ambition, especially of ambition for wealth and power, which appeared in a crude form several years before, but because less evident through the four years of idealism from the fourteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth. Whilst it lasts, there can be no question of the supreme importance of this stage of development. It gives the educationalist his golden opportunity for impressing upon his students the necessity that they should live their lives for ends beyond themselves, in unselfish service for their unfortunate fellow-countrymen.

In the second place, with regard to a comparison between the psychological characteristics of the Indian adolescent and those of the Western adolescent. It was found possible, by means of adopting similar procedure to that carried out in certain psychological investigations conducted both in England and in the United States, to obtain sufficient data for, at any rate, a rough-and-ready comparison of adolescent psychology in West and East. As a result, it appears that the following principles may be enunciated with a certain amount of confidence.

The Indian adolescent shows himself (and herself) to be markedly more susceptible than the Western adolescent to religious and ethical idealism, and markedly less susceptible to materialistic considerations. It is possible to formulate this principle as a result of an investigation into the reasons given in East and West for the choice of vocation in life, for hero-worship, for the naming of desirable possessions, and for personal ambitions. The reasons assigned are strikingly higher in moral tone in the East than in the West. But what has just been said must be qualified by the conclusion that the ethical ideals of Indian adolescents lack definiteness, and their conceptions generally are more abstract and subjective than in the West. Their ambitions are also

much vaguer. Their mentality is other-worldly and impractical in comparison with the mentality of Western adolescence.

An enquiry into the attitude towards money—couched in the form of a question as to what would be done with the gift of a certain sum—brought out the fact that Indian adolescents are much more improvident in their attitude to money than Western adolescents. They have less idea of saving, and show less prudence in the uses to which they imagine themselves putting such a gift.

The general results of the investigation show that altruistic considerations make far more appeal in India than in the West. This was brought out in the answers to many of the questions, but most markedly in that concerning the uses to which an imaginary gift of money would be put. The parallel investigation has been conducted in the United States, and showed that the proportion of American adolescents who would spend such an imaginary gift altruistically was amongst girls 2 per cent. and amongst boys zero. The corresponding figures for the Indian adolescents were amongst girls 46 per cent., and amongst boys 27. Obviously we have here a striking and fundamental dissimilarity. . .

It can be expected that the above testimony is somewhat convincing. Even if India be lacking in the secular blessings, she is infinitely rich in spiritual possessions, and if she continues to pursue her ancient policy, she would be doing much better than her sisters on the earth and deserve well of their grateful thanks.

So far we have assumed that India has been lacking in secular achievements. We have taken for granted that the charges brought against her by S. T., which we have quoted in the beginning of our article, are true. But are they really so?

There are generally two schools of the critics of the ideals and policies of India. One school is directly anti-religious. They are frankly for a renunciation of India's spiritual policy and adoption of the Western ideals and methods. They do not deserve to be taken seriously. The other school believes that though the spiritual ideals have been quite right, the methods hitherto adopted in realising them have been defective and thus brought about the political and socio-economic degradation of India. S. T. is one of them. What they propose therefore deserve to be considered carefully. But it must be pointed out at once that India has always maintained that though the fundamentals must remain the same through the ages, the details should vary from time to time. India has never said that the same rules of life and customs and practices should be imposed on people in all ages. With the change of conditions, she has adopted now modes and rules of life. The claim of

those who want the orientation of a new policy in India, is nothing new.

But before we admit the claim of any new policy, let us consider the conditions that it is going to meet. Without a proper estimation of those conditions we cannot truly determine the efficacy of the new policy. And unfortunately, we must confess, the claim of the new policies has always been based on a misunderstanding of India's past. The position and treatment of women is considered to have been infamous. The caste system which is mainly a socio-economic system, has come in for a good deal of adverse criticism. India has been considered lacking in what is called the spirit of progress. S. T. also mentions these defects which, it will be seen, relate to the very foundations of collective life. Are these charges valid? Has India always erred in these things? Our critics, even the friendly ones, seem to maintain that she has. Here, we think, they make a tremendous mistake and this mistake often blurs their vision of the present and the future.

It is now well-known that Miss Mayo in her "Mother India" has also brought forward these charges. We have read most of the replies to that book. Each of them we have found to be apologetic of India's past and earnestly pleading that we have reclaimed ourselves from our past errors and are doing well now. We do not think that we need be ashamed of our past, that we did worse than any people could be under those circumstances and that the results obtained were anything to be ashamed of.

The fact is, we often forget that India that was should not and cannot be judged by the standards that prevail now. The social and the economic system have undergone tremendous changes in the present age. The present writer remembers the happy days of his early boyhood in his native village and looks to the dire conditions now prevailing there, and is struck by the sudden doom that overtook his village. And the changes of his own village seem typical of the whole of India. In the early years of the first decade of the present century, the village referred to was smiling in plenty. People were happy and comfortable. They were perfectly sanitary. They did not neglect their roads and tanks, and were happy in serving the common needs of the village. They were joyful and there was plenty of play and music. The men and women were strong and healthy, as strong and healthy as any average man or woman on earth. This aspect of the village has now totally vanished. Now the village looks half-dead. There is no sign

of normal life anywhere. People no longer care to be sanitary in their habits. The stalwarts of the older generations are gone and those that represent them now are physically and mentally moribund. There is scarcely a healthy man, woman or child. Music has fled from the village homesteads, and only children play. The newer generations have considerably deteriorated physically. Why this sudden change? How did it come about? The poor villagers do not know the secret of their doom. But others knew and they did not care. We remember how the terrible Bengal famine came in 1906-7. We still remember the dire conditions that we had to face there. There was no rice available in the country. Not that the crops entirely failed. But there was no money. The price had gone fourfold high, and people had not enough to buy with. The little rice that was available in the country had been drained away by the wholesale merchants, and for the first time we had a sight of the Rangoon rice which was imported into the village by truck-loads, and this saved us. But that saving was really killing in slow measures. For the prices never came down again. All necessaries became doubly and triply costly, and the happy days never came back again. This famine was the first manifestation of the undermining process that had gone on unknown to us for many decades and eventually brought about the ruin of India.

For it was not this particular famine that was the cause of the prostration of our villages, but something deeper and more fundamental. With the coming of the Westerners into India, India was faced with a new economic and industrial system which was in many respects almost antithetical to Indian systems. As we know, the going out of the Europeans in search of new lands to conquer and trade in, was a fruit of the new awakening that had come over Europe. It had different aspects. In one aspect it freed Europe from Papal tyranny and secularized her view of life. In another it gave a tremendous impetus to the acquisition of new knowledge with the eventual birth of science. In a third, it urged for expansion which resulted in the discovery of America and of the sea-route to the East. All these were interrelated. Out of this resurgence of life, came the new industrialism. We know how the new industrialism has been made possible and necessary by the invention of the steam engine and electrical machineries, which have given rise to large-scale production. This new industrialism was introduced into India by the Europeans. We do not mean they set up factories here by numbers, or taught India the new

industrial methods. We mean that the commerce that they brought into India had behind it the advantages and disadvantages of the new industrialism and set up a keen competition with the indigenous system. European merchants deliberately tried to throttle industries in India,—the case of Bengal cloth industry is well-known. But even apart from those brutalities, European trade slowly killed Indian enterprises. Indian village economics was mostly a local affair. Daily necessities were provided for by village industries. But slowly western commodities with their cheapness and nicer finish replaced the village productions. This process had gone on for decades. But the conserved prosperity of the Indian villages had withstood it for a long time without immediate collapse. Villagers gradually lost their industries and became agricultural in greater and greater measure. But a time came when agriculture could not do enough. And when at last the famine came in Bengal in 1906, the village life collapsed to rise no more. In our opinion the substitution of the old economic system by the new industrialism is at the root of the most economical and social unhappiness in India.

Let us see what followed from the collapse of the indigenous systems. People wanted money and money was not available in the villages. The lure of the literary education had caught the village mind in the meanwhile. They wanted to pass examinations and hold posts under the Government, for that meant cash and respectable position. So villagers went out in search of employment. Villages were neglected. For villages could not provide livelihood any more. And when the active population of a village goes out, how can you expect that village sanitation should be properly looked after? When people are busy searching for the bread of their hunger, it is scarcely possible for them to be quite sanitary; for all joy has fled from life. People cannot do more than provide bread; and bread is also difficult to find. It is said that the village cows are underfed and not properly cared for. But how can it be otherwise? When villagers, being deprived of their industries, took to agriculture for their livelihood, the grazing lands also gradually came under cultivation. When it is a question of life and death between the cow and man, it is scarcely unnatural that man should usurp the privileges of the cow. So now there is not enough grazing land in villages. The result has been not only the deterioration of the cattle, but also a scanty supply of milk, and under-nourishing of

children and men and women ; for milk and its products have been for ages the main nourishment of Indians.

Under these circumstances, the only feasible course was for the existing Government to initiate the people of India quickly into the mysteries of the new industrialism. For it is evident that the establishment of the new industrialism in India with necessary modifications was its only economic salvation. For that a new system of education was necessary. New facilities ought to have been provided for bridging the old and the new. But the Government did little in this direction, and the bulk of Indian population were left drifting into chaos.

This is a story the pathos of which can scarcely be felt by a foreigner. Only those whom it concerns and who have felt the doom coming slowly with its growing menace and at last received its stunning impact, can know. We are now a disorganised race, deprived of our inheritance and we are forced with a problem the like of which has never faced any other race. But we do not despair. We shall conquer yet.

But the story is not yet complete. The economic is only one part of it. There remains the social and domestic tragedy yet to recount.

(To be continued)

JUSTIFICATION BY COURAGE

BY WICKHAM STEED

Editor, The Review of Reviews, London

“Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him; but I will maintain mine own ways before Him.”—*Job. 13. 15.*

If any warrant were needed for the presence in this pulpit* of a layman, associated with no church and wholly innocent of dogma, it might perhaps be found in a statement recently written by the Dean of St. Paul's (Dean Inge). He wrote :

“The real trend of religion among the younger generation is away from dogmatic and institutional Christianity, and towards an individual and personal faith resting not on authority but on experience. This movement has weakened all ecclesiastical bodies which are exposed to it. It is quite natural that this decline should be most apparent in those sections of believers who are most in touch with modern influences.”

* The City Temple, London.

The substantial truth of these words is unquestionable. What are the "modern influences" that are estranging the younger generation from "dogmatic and institutional Christianity"?

However this modern age may be defined, it can hardly be called an age of faith. Nor can it be denounced as an age of unbelief. It may be an age of transition, one in which men and women of sincere mind are groping their way towards views of the Universe, and of their relationship to it, less dogmatic than those which their forefathers held, yet lofty enough to give some satisfaction to their hearts and minds. It is emphatically not an age of fear, not an age in which men, convicted of sin, seek to flee from the wrath to come by repentance, mortification of the flesh, fasting and prayer. It is undeniably an age of physical and, perhaps, of moral courage, for it is an age marked by willing self-sacrifice in the service of knowledge for good of mankind.

To such an age, what have the Churches to offer? Shall they appeal to fear? Shall they say with St. Mark—"He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned"? Shall they discuss the respective claims of justification by faith and justification by works, after the manner of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians? Or shall they not rather, speaking a tongue understood of the people, preach justification by courage, and bid men fearlessly maintain their own ways before God?

Fear has lain at the root of dogmas and practices innumerable, in religion, magic and sorcery. It has been the mother of credulity and the foe of knowledge. It has succoured falsehood and hidden the truth. It has insulted humanity by deeming it afraid to look, open-eyed and undismayed, upon the Unknown. It has belittled and demeaned the idea of God, making Him out to be a resentful, revengeful Being, creating Him in the likeness of an ill-tempered tyrant and bidding men tremble before Him. It has taught that only by confessing themselves miserable sinners in whom there is no health, who have left undone what they ought to have done and who have done what they ought not to have done, could wretched mankind hope to find mercy. All this in the name of a Deity of whom the highest testimony given on this earth bore witness that He is Love!

Many Christian theologians and some moral philosophers have proclaimed that the sole purpose of the Universe and of its Creator is the redemption of mankind from original sin—a sin for the alleged commission of which it could not, on any

fair showing, be held responsible. They have propounded a complicated and abstruse doctrine of Atonement to explain that an offended Deity needed to be propitiated by the sacrifice of His Son. There may be a purpose in the Universe—reason rebels against the thought that there should not be—but this theological explanation of it revolts the sense of justice in modern men. Rather than assent to such a definition of the Creator's purpose, many honest souls have preferred to refrain from ascribing to Him or to the Universe any comprehensible purpose at all. They have disdained to beg the main question, to take as proven the very point at issue. They have confessed their ignorance of ultimate ends, and have been content with such limited truths as they could prove, or postulate, without violence to their reason and to their nobler emotions. They have maintained their own ways before the God of Truth as they perceived His truth. Of them, a great French scholar, whose deeply religious spirit worked under a veil of scepticism, wrote finely: "The purest cult of the Divine lies hidden at times behind seeming negations; the most perfect idealist is often he whom frankness compels to declare himself a materialist. How many saints wear a mask of irreligion! How many, among those who deny immortality, would deserve to be gloriously undeceived!"

There are still, in the Christian Churches and outside, simple souls whose childlike faith asks no questions and is content to believe. These may, indeed, be the "babes" to whom have been revealed things hidden from the wise and prudent. Unlike the multitudes who doubt, they need no physician. But who can affirm that even a majority of professing Christians in this country to-day hold unchanged the faith of their fathers? Is there not a growing demand for a restatement of belief that shall satisfy the heart without repelling the brain? And how can belief be restated in defiance of such finite truths as we can perceive in our own dimensions of time and space? To suggest that knowledge is vain because, in the words of Tennyson's "fool,"—

"All we have power to see is a straight staff bent in a pool"—

is to ignore the conditions of human life and of human endeavour. We cannot serve God by discarding such truth as our own senses and minds may enable us to apprehend or, even, to ascertain.

* * * *

A part of this truth relates to the nature of the material Universe. How many of us acquaint ourselves with it and

weigh, in the light of it, our own importance, as individual members of the human race, upon an earth that is but a speck in the Cosmos? One of our leading mathematicians and astronomers, Dr. J. H. Jeans, has recently suggested some standards for our judgment in a notable book called "Astronomy and Cosmogony". The moon, our nearest neighbour in the sky, he says, is 240,000 miles away. Light, travelling at 186,000 miles a second, reaches us from the moon in little more than one second. Travelling at the same speed, the light from some stars that are visible through telescopes, takes over 100,000,000 years to reach us; and it is by no means certain that these stars lie on the outskirts of the Universe. Could we look upon our own solar system from those immense distances, the sun itself would be an invisible, and our earth an ultra-microscopic cosmic particle. Upon this particle lives man who, for some 200 years, has been trying to study the science of the Universe. It would be as presumptuous to assume that man's present knowledge is more than primitive and rudimentary, as to assume that mankind can be of great account in the universal scheme of things. We may, indeed, ask, with Dr. Jeans: How did this Universe begin and what will be its final end? We may admit the force of his reasoning that, if the heavenly bodies can no longer be regarded as having been created merely to minister to man's pleasure and comfort by illuminating the earth, the question arises what purpose, if any, do they serve? And if life on this earth, and human life in particular, can no longer be supposed to be the central fact which explains everything, what is its relation to the magnificent, stupendous, almost terrifying Universe which astronomy reveals? Do we not need a faith that we can still hold, even though knowledge persuade us, in the words of one of our deepest and most upright religious thinkers, Dr. L. P. Jacks; that "the ultimate goal, or final privilege, which the Universe holds in store for the human race may be nothing more and nothing less than the opportunity to die like gentlemen"—after the manner of Captain Oates?

Yet, if we contemplate or accept such a faith, can we still call ourselves Christians? Can we still affirm the Fatherhood of God? How is our wider modern view of the Universe to be reconciled with the saying of Christ—"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows"?

A tentative answer may perhaps be found if we turn from

the astronomer's view of the immeasurably great to the physicist's vision of the immeasurably small. Physical science suggests, nay, believes, that the whole Universe is constructed of the same materials, that the visible "garment of God" is of uniform pattern, though its texture may vary. It is formed of various atoms, in combination, each atom being composed of a nucleus charged with positive electricity, and of electrons charged with negative electricity, the sum of the positive charge in the nucleus being always equal to the sum of the negative charges in the attendant electrons. These atoms range from the one-electron atom, which is hydrogen, up to the 92-electron atom, which is uranium. Between the atoms and their electrons there is an apparently empty space the nature of which is unknown ; nor do physicists know what electricity is. They only know something about the way it behaves. And they do not really *know* that atoms exist. They believe in them, by an act of reasonable faith, since their nature and structure are not directly perceptible by the senses, inasmuch as the atoms may be 10,000 times smaller than the smallest object that can be seen with the most powerful microscope. The discovery of radio-activity and of X-rays has, as it were, given men new eyes and has enabled them to conceive each atom and its electrons as analogous to the solar and stellar systems which astronomers observe in the regions of celestial space.

Now, these solar and stellar systems work in accordance with intelligible law ; and in so far as human enquiry can discover, these laws do not vary but are subject to some principle or spirit inherent in the Universe itself. May we not be justified in concluding that the ultra-microscopic planetary systems, called atoms, are equally subject to law and equally embody the spirit of the Universe? If our bodies, which are relatively vast aggregations of atoms, are infinitesimal in comparison with the whole earth, and still less considerable in comparison with the Universe of which the earth is itself a tiny particle, is there not some warrant for believing that, in very truth, even the hairs of our heads are all numbered and that no sparrow is forgotten before God? Can we not repeat, with added conviction, Tennyson's famous lines—

The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills, the plains
 Are not these, O Soul, the Vision of Him who reigns?
 Is not the Vision He? though He be not that which He seems?
 Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live in dreams?
 Earth, these solid stars, this weight of body and limb,
 Are they not sign and symbol of thy division from Him?

Dark is the world to thee; thyself are the reason why;
 For is He not all but thou, that hast power to feel "I am I"?

* * * *

"The power to feel 'I am I,'" the consciousness of human individuality, lies near the heart of our problem. Sceptical reasoners have denied the possibility of proving either the existence of God or the existence of man. To them the great French philosopher, Descartes, replied "Cogito, ergo sum" (I think, therefore I am). Tennyson, the poet—and poets are not seldom gifted with deeper insight than philosophers—framed the answer more truly when he expressed it in terms not of thought but of feeling. He said, in effect, that men have power to feel that they exist. They are conscious of themselves and of a Universe that is not themselves; and they feel there is a purpose in their existence. Hence they attribute consciousness also to the principle of Spirit of the Universe, and ascribe to that consciousness a purpose higher and vaster than their own.

This is a reasonable faith. It makes an assumption, knowing it to be an assumption, not a scientifically ascertained fact. Then, like the physicists who form a hypothesis about the nature of invisible atoms and verify it by experience, men find that something within themselves corresponds to their hypothesis of a consciousness and of a purpose in the world transcending their own individual consciousnesses and purposes. This experience is the foundation of religion.

But religious experience needs ever to be on its guard against self-deception. When it assumes and dogmatizes without semblance of intellectual justification, it is on dangerous ground. At its best, it is an alliance between pure thought and pure feeling or, if you prefer it, pure aspiration. At its worst, it treats pure thought as Luther once treated reason—when he called it "the devil's foremost harlot"—and lets emotion run riot and credulity reign. The faith of modern men is the offspring of a reverent alliance between pure thought and pure aspiration. It is not faith in the power of finite, human beings to attain either absolute knowledge of, or absolute harmony with, the purpose of the Universe. Rather is it made up of willingness to believe that, however wide our range of relative knowledge may become, there will still be more to learn; and, however lofty our aspirations or noble our feelings, there will still be room for courage in facing the Unknown.

Innumerable attempts have been made to reconcile thought and faith, science and religion. They need no reconciliation. Courageously disciplined, they are natural allies. One of our

greatest scientists, Sir William Bragg, has put the point convincingly. "To my mind," he has declared, "the real scientific outlook upon life, the scientific spirit, depends upon our recognising that it is of the first importance to know as much as we can about things and our relation to them, to understand what we are doing, to learn from the experience of others and, not stopping at that, to find out more for ourselves so that our work may be the best of which we are capable. That is what science stands for. I know very well that it is only half the battle. There is also the great driving force which we call religion. From religion a man's purpose may come; from science his power to achieve it. Sometimes people ask if religion and science are not opposed to one another. They are—in the sense that the thumb and fingers of my hand are opposed to each other. It is an opposition by means of which anything can be grasped."

Yet, some may object, science has played havoc with the Christian creeds. If Christianity is the true, or the truest, religion, how can science, that has tended to demolish parts of it, be its ally? Did not Darwin, with his hypothesis of evolution, discredit the Biblical story of the Creation? Have not the "Higher Critics" ruined the belief of many a simple soul in the plenary inspiration and unquestioned authority of the Christian scriptures? Have they not appended notes of interrogation to all the Gospels, and shown the Fourth Gospel in particular to have reflected neo-Platonic philosophy and other strands of pagan thought? Where, moreover, in the whole range of science, is there evidence of the redeeming purpose which Christians ascribe to their God?

These questions are pertinent. Science has wrought havoc with many an ancient article of Christian belief. Yet, despite the destruction it has wrought, despite or because of the wrappings it has torn away, it has brought out in increasing grandeur the central fact of Christianity, the figure of Christ, and the sublimity of his teaching. What reverent scientist cavils at His saying to the Woman of Samaria: "God is a spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in Truth"? In such worship is there no saving grace? Have not the investigations of archeologists and historians proved that revelations of religious truth have been persistent and continual? Was there not, in Egypt, thirteen centuries before Christ, and two centuries before Moses, a Pharaoh, Akhnaton, who proclaimed a God of Love, a universal Spirit, the source of the sun's energy and light, whose children

men are and whose glory the heavens show forth? So exalted was his conception of the Deity that he would suffer no graven image of him to be made, and conceived the whole duty of man as that of living and worshipping in spirit and in truth. Shall we doubt his perception of the Divine Spirit because he was pre-Christian? Shall we doubt the same perception in men more modern—poets, thinkers, saints and scientists? Has human consciousness no meaning? Is man's sense of responsibility towards his fellow-men—which is morality—and towards the Spirit of Truth—which is religion—of no account? If we argue that our freedom of will and, therefore, our responsibility, is an illusion; if we say that we are irresponsible microscopic cogs in an immense cosmic gear, we overlook the truth that our consciousness, our power to feel "I am I," is a fact as well established as any other fact—a fact, moreover, that makes it incumbent upon us, whatever the degree of our trust in God, fearlessly to maintain our own ways before Him.

And when death comes—death that gives dignity to life and saves it from being a sordid comedy—shall we not meet the "Arch Fear" without flinching? In all the annals of the saints I know nothing finer than the letter written to Sir James Barrie by Captain Scott of the Antarctic while waiting for death with his companions in their frigid tent: "We are pegging out in a very comfortless spot. Hoping this letter may be found and sent to you, I write you a word of farewell.....We are in a desperate state—feet frozen, no fuel and a long way from food, but it would do your heart good to be in our tent, to hear our songs and our cheery conversation.....(Later). We are very near the end. We did intend to finish ourselves when things proved like this, but we have decided to die naturally without."

This was Courage, indeed, this "greeting of the Unseen with a cheer". May it not be that in the Unseen, thus faced, upright and fearless souls will be justified before the Eternal Light in which there is no darkness nor shadow of turning?

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS DISCIPLES

Thus Swami Ramakrishnananda (or Sasi as he was called as a boy), a prominent monastic disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, described an incident of the Master's life while he was lying ill at Cossipore:

"There came the question who was to take care of Sri Gurumaharaj (Sri Ramakrishna). We were at that time all

studying in the Colleges. Narendra (Swami Vivekananda) was just preparing to pass his B.L. degree ; I, my B.A.; and Sarat (Swami Saradananda), I believe, his F.A. But we could not fix our minds on our books, so we gave up attending the classes and devoted all our time to attending on the Master.

“With so many of us there, it became necessary to hire a cook, and we got a man from his village. He was a Brahmin but such a rustic that he could not even sit cross-legged without great difficulty. He was used to working all day in his fields and when he sat, he squatted on his legs. His cooking was so bad that we all began to go down under it. Then Holy Mother begged so hard to come and cook for Gurumaharaj that he said she might come.

“One day, however, for some reason she was not there, so the cook carried Gurumaharaj’s food to him. With great difficulty he got up the stairs, so lumbering and awkward was he ; and when he had placed the food before Gurumaharaj, he wanted to run away. But Gurumaharaj called him back and told him to sit down. Although he was such a rustic, he was simple ; there was absolutely no crookedness in him. Gurumaharaj merely reached over and touched him and at once the man went into *Samadhi*. He stayed in that state for fully two hours. When he came back to his senses and opened his eyes, they were fiery red and he asked me : ‘Where am I?’ He could not walk and Gurumaharaj asked me to lead him away. As I did so, I asked him what he had been experiencing. ‘Oh ! I was not here,’ he replied. ‘All this while I have been worshipping my Divine Mother.’ ”

This interesting incident has been recorded in a recently published book on Sri Ramakrishna and his disciples by a devout American follower of the Master, Sister Devamata.*

Of Sri Ramakrishna, the story can never be exhaustively told. Thousands saw him during his life-time, and to most of them, the experience was often out of the common. Many came to him again and again and saw him day after day in many singular moods. Very few of them have spoken of their unique experiences to the public. Naturally we may always expect more revelations about the Master, though no doubt the chances are getting fewer and fewer with the passing of the direct disciples.

Sister Devamata’s little book fortunately contains much new and interesting information about the Master. Though it

* *Sri Ramakrishna & His Disciples*, Ananda-Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, U. S. A.

is regrettable that it contains mis-statement of some well-known facts, yet we cannot but be grateful to the author for the new materials which she has published. When she came to India, most of the men and women disciples of the Master were living. She became intimate with them and gathered whatever information was available about the Master. Those notes are incorporated in the present book. We are sure our readers will be much interested to read the following extracts.

Of the Master, Swami Ramakrishnananda said :

“Sri Ramakrishna’s life was so peculiar that many things, if told, would be regarded as mere stories. He knew from the beginning why he had come and he began teaching from the time of his birth. Even as a baby and later wherever he was, those about him always recognised that there was something strange and unusual about him, something divine.

“He always had his Divine Mother beside him. Just as a baby of two or three months has a loving mother always beside it to look after it and provide its needs, so his Divine Mother was always by his side. Whatever he wanted he asked for and She, being all powerful and all-loving, at once brought him that.

“In Sri Ramakrishna, there was absolutely no ego left. He could not use the first personal pronoun ‘I.’ He would say : ‘Why do you not come here?’ (meaning to him) ‘Mother will illumine you.’ In him the divine was fully manifested. He preached God, nothing but God, but his whole nature was God-like. We never knew what purity was, we never knew what perfection was, what God was, until we saw him.

“He knew everything. Did any one go to him with a morose or sorrowful heart? At once he would feel it in his own heart and would give peace. Everything he did was for others. He was not necessitated to come to this world, but he came to help mankind ; and every movement of his body, every movement of his mind was directed towards the amelioration of his fellow-men.

“Ramakrishna was able to supply to every man just what he needed. Sometimes a man would come from a distant place with his heart panting for God, but seeing the room full of people, he would shrink back and hide himself in a dim corner. Without a word Ramakrishna would walk to him and touch him and in a moment he was illumined.

“By that touch, Ramakrishna really swallowed ninety-nine per cent. of the man’s *Karma* (results of actions). Taking others’ *Karma* was the reason he had his last long illness. He

used to tell us: 'The people whose *Karma* I have taken think that they are attaining salvation through their own strength. They do not understand that it is because I have taken their *Karma* on me.' We do not know how much we owe to him; but some day we shall realize what he has done for us and then we shall know how to be grateful to him.

"Ramakrishna was the embodiment of truthfulness. He always said: 'No man can hope to realize the Truth who is not absolutely truthful.' Once he had been invited by a certain gentleman to assist at a religious discussion. When the day came, it was pouring rain. With great difficulty we procured a carriage two miles away from Dakshineswar and because of the heavy down-pour the coachman asked three times the usual price; but Gurumaharaj said: 'I have given my word, so I must go.' He got in the carriage, drove four or five miles and when he reached the house, he found the gate bolted on the inside. He knocked but no one came, so he repeated three times to the gate: 'I have come, I have come, I have come.' Then he got into carriage again and drove back to Dakshineswar, perfectly satisfied because he had kept his word.

"Sri Ramakrishna practised the most perfect simplicity in his habits. Once some one brought him a silver tongue-scraper; he refused to take it and sent me to buy a most ordinary brass one for a quarter of an anna. He showed that the simpler is the man, the happier he is. His spirit of renunciation was without reservation or compromise. One day he saw an especially fine mango and he had a mind to take it, but he could not raise his hand to pluck it. Another day he tried to pick a fruit, but with the same result. He was unable to lift his arm; the muscles refused to obey him. 'You see,' he explained, 'a *Sannyasin* should never store anything, so the Divine Mother will not let me lay by this fruit even for a few hours.'

"Ramakrishna could read the true nature of every man. He used to tell us that these eyes were like window sashes; and as a person looking through a window can see everything in the room, so by looking through the eyes, he could see everything inside a man. Unmasked frankness came to him in certain states of consciousness. When he would come back to his consciousness he would be much distressed and ask anxiously: 'Have I said anything wrong? Oh! I beg your pardon!'

“Christ’s teaching, If a man strike you on one cheek, turn to him the other, our Master perfectly exemplified. If he went to a house where people insulted him, he would bless them and come away. Those who would not bow before any man, he would bow low before them and despite themselves they would have to bend a little.

“Although Sri Gurumaharaj seemed so fragile, he manifested at times the strength of a giant. Once with another he was crossing the wide plain going to his native village. Just in the middle there came the cry, ‘Decoits are coming.’ In those parts these robbers are very terrible. The palanquin bearers without a word dropped their burden and ran away, leaving Gurumaharaj alone with his companion who was at a loss to know what to do. Gurumaharaj, apparently not in the least anxious, stood silent until the decoits had almost overtaken them, then he gave such a blood-curdling yell that they fled in terror. It seemed to fill all space and not to come from any human throat. As he saw the robbers run away he smiled. Then he set out and walked to his village with such long, rapid strides that his companion, although a much more robust man, scarcely could keep pace with him.”

But there were also other ways in which he used to encounter the evil-minded.

In one house to which he went often there was a lawless youth who resented the special privilege accorded this unknown *Sadhu*. The man was a fraud, he declared, merely pretending to be a *Sadhu* in order to gain access to the inner quarters of the house; and he determined to get rid of him. He proposed to his associates that they give him a good lesson to frighten him away. Not long after, Sri Ramakrishna came again to the house and the boys gathered in a room beside the entrance and awaited their opportunity. Sri Ramakrishna was taken at once to the inner court where forty or fifty ladies were assembled.

Yogin-ma (one of Sri Ramakrishna’s prominent lady disciples) was one of those present. She said that after the Master had talked for a while, suddenly he rose, left the room and walked hurriedly towards the outer court. After a time he returned and without comment resumed his teaching. Later they learned that he had gone straight to the room beside the entrance door where the boys were watching for him and, laying his hand on the arm of the leader of the band, he had said in quiet tones: “So you mean to give me a good thrashing,

do you?" The boy, she said, started, turned and saw Sri Ramakrishna. As he looked into the gentle eyes and at the smiling face, all his resentment melted away and a shadow of shame fell over him. He paused for a moment, then raising his arm with clenched fist, he called out: "If any boy here dares to lay a hand on this man, I will give him a sound beating."

Sri Ramakrishna went back to the inner court and remained for more than an hour. When he came out again he found the boy standing by the carriage. He helped Sri Ramakrishna in, closed the door, and ran beside the carriage for a long distance. When Sri Ramakrishna protested that he was tiring himself unnecessarily, the boy explained that his companions, angry at the unexpected swing of events, might still try to carry out their plan and he wished to be near to protect him. From that day he was a staunch defender and admirer of Sri Ramakrishna. He did not come to the Temple as others did, but he lost all the lawlessness which had marked his nature and his whole life was remoulded.

This boy—then a young man—came to visit the Master while he lay dying at Cossipore.

He had dressed himself as a *Zamindar* in great elegance that he might gain surer admission, but he was not allowed to enter. No word of it was carried to the Master, but suddenly Sri Ramakrishna began to weep, saying: "Why do you keep my devotee from me? I must see him." Then he was told of the visitor.

"When he heard who it was, he had him brought in at once." Swami Ramakrishnananda related: "I was in the room at the time, but Gurumaharaj sent me out and the two were alone for a long while. Then the Master called me back and told me to bring one of his photographs. This he took and with his own hand gave it to the gentleman. The gentleman took it and without speaking a word to any one, ran out of the house as if he was mad. From that moment he lost all consciousness of the world, of everything, and day and night he sat repeating '*Priya Nath, Priya Nath*' (Beloved Lord, Beloved Lord). When all the rest of the community was sleeping, one could hear those words sounding out in the silence of the night. He did not even remember to eat unless his wife put food into his mouth.

"He never returned to Gurumaharaj. Like the pearl oyster he had got the drop of *Swati* rain and needed nothing more. But after Gurumaharaj passed away, he used to come

often to our *Math* (monastery) at Baranagor. For several months he came every evening. He would go straight to the Shrine, sit and meditate there for some time, then go away without even coming to the part of the house where we lived. Sometimes he would sing and he had a very beautiful voice. There was one song of which Sri Ramakrishna was particularly fond and he would sing it again and again."

Such was Sri Ramakrishna's method of transforming a life. Said Swami Ramakrishnananda: "He never condemned any man. He was ready to excuse everything. He used to tell us that the difference between man and God was this: If a man failed to serve God ninety-nine times, but the hundredth time served Him with even a little love, God forgot the ninety-nine times he had failed and would say: 'Oh! my devotee served me so well to-day.' But if a man serves another man well ninety-nine times and the hundredth time fails in his service, then man will forget the ninety-nine good services and say: 'That rascal failed to serve me one day.' So Sri Ramakrishna, if there is the least spark of good in any one, sees only that and overlooks all the rest.

"Just by looking at a man he could tell what he was fitted for. If he saw that he was falsely leading a religious life, he would say to him: 'Go and get married.' If he saw that a man was ready to renounce, he would not ask him directly to give up, but he would direct his mind in such a way that the man would of his own accord give up. He used to say that by seeing even one corner of a man's toe, he could make out just what sort of man he was.

"At one time there was a very poor boy who used to come almost daily to Sri Ramakrishna, but the Master would never take any of the food he brought. We did not know why. Finally one day Sri Ramakrishna said: 'This poor fellow comes here because he has a great desire to be rich. Very well, let me taste a little of what he has brought,' and he took a small quantity of the food. The boy's condition began to improve immediately and to-day he is one of the most prosperous men of Calcutta.

"He had the power by a word or a touch to transform the whole life and character. Something went with the word or touch which lent it impelling power. There was a certain young man who came often to Sri Ramakrishna. He was a great devotee, but being the son of a rich man, he had been brought up in luxury and his body was as soft as butter—beautiful to look at, but with no strength or endurance in it.

One day in speaking of him to some one, our Master said: 'He is a good boy and has true devotion, but his body is against him. With that body he cannot do much in this life.' The boy overheard the remark and at once he began a regular course of training, which in two years made his muscles like iron.

"There was another boy who came often to Dakshineswar to see Gurumaharaj. One day he took him into the Temple and touching his heart, gave him a vision of the Divine. Afterwards he explained that the boy would not be able to realize God in this life, but he wished to show him what he would attain in his next birth, that he might be encouraged to struggle for it. I remember once he took the *Karma* of a certain devotee on himself and suffered from a serious bodily disorder for six months."

Swami Ramakrishnananda (Sasi) himself gave this account of his going to Sri Ramakrishna: "I had a desire to see the *Paramahansa* at Dakshineswar because Keshab Chandra Sen had spoken of him in such high terms, so one day I went with fifteen or twenty other boys. I was then reading for F.A. (First Arts) and the others were all preparing for their matriculation. Being the eldest of the band, the conversation was addressed to me.

"I talked a great deal that first day, but never again. After I had listened to Ramakrishna, I had nothing more to say. I did not have to talk. Often I would go to him with my mind full of some doubt which I wished him to clear away; but when I reached the Temple I would find his room full of people and would feel very much disappointed. As soon as he saw me he would say: 'Come in; sit down. Are you doing well?' Then he would return to his subject, but invariably he would take up the very doubt that was troubling my mind and would clear it away completely.

"He was extremely fond of ice. One day when it was very hot I walked from Calcutta to Dakshineswar (six miles) to carry him a piece of ice wrapped in paper. It was just noontime and the sun's rays were so strong that they blistered my body. When Gurumaharaj saw me, he began to say 'Oh! Oh!' as if he was in pain. I asked him what was the matter and he said that as he looked at my body, his own began to burn. Strange to say the ice did not melt at all on the way."

Sasi made no compromises in his discipleship. He was devotion embodied. Once at the Temple when he was studying Urdu in order to read the Sufi poets in the original, the

Master called him three times before he heard. When he came Sri Ramakrishna asked what he had been doing and Sasi told him. 'If you forget your duties for the sake of study, you will lose all your devotion,' Sri Ramakrishna remarked quietly. Sasi sensed the deeper significance of his words. He had bigger things to learn. He took his Persian books and threw them into the Ganges.

(To be continued)

INDIAN RENAISSANCE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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

The first effect of the Indian Renaissance was felt in our vernacular literatures, which have undergone a complete change and at the same time approximated to one parent standard, namely, English literature. The work of centuries has been crowded into a few decades in this evolution of our modern literatures. My illustrations are all taken from Bengal but my hearers can easily supply parallels from Madras or Bombay.

The first generation of Indians educated in English accepted European literature, philosophy and history—and to a lesser extent science—with enthusiasm and tried to diffuse them among their countrymen by translation, while attempting a little or no original composition of their own. They did not display any literary genius except in manipulating the language for a new need. To this earliest generation belonged Krishna Mohan Banerji (1813-1885), Rajendra Lal Mitra (1821-1892), Peary Chand Mitra (1815-1883) and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1821-1892). They wrote translations, adaptations and epitomes of English works, and did not create any revolution in Bengali thought or style.

A little later came another group of authors, who introduced the new order in its full majesty. They were Michael Madhusudan Dutt, the poet (1824-1873), Dinabandhu Mitra, the dramatist (1830-1874), and Bankim Chandra Chatterji, the novelist (1838-1894)—each of whom reigned supreme over one branch of literature and turned it into a new channel, where it has since flowed at their bidding. Their work has been continued by their successors, notably by Hem Chandra Banerji (1838-1902), Nabin Chandra Sen (1847-1909) and Rabindranath Tagore (born 1862). In their work the influence of English is

unmistakable, but equally unmistakable is their success in adapting the foreign spirit and literary model (and even technique) to the Indian mind and tradition. The best specimens of this new vernacular literature are European in spirit, in outlook, in literary devices, in the choice and treatment of subjects; but they retain a close connection with the best in the literature and life of ancient India. They represent the spirit of England clad in a half oriental garb. There has been no wholesale borrowing, but an assimilation of foreign models, while retaining a surprising amount of originality.

Our vernacular languages have been wonderfully developed and in some cases almost revolutionised by the example of the English style and the needs of the modern world. Our literary language has become both simpler and harder at the same time. It has acquired an unwonted flexibility, variety, and naturalness of movement, while the vocabulary has been greatly amplified. Madhusudan and Vidyasagar, (middle 19th century), greatly modernised the Bengali tongue and made it a proper vehicle for expressing the varied thoughts and feelings of the present day. Both followed the classical style, *i.e.*, they used Sanskrit words by preference and avoided colloquial or homely expressions. But at the same time there is no stiffness, no pedantry, no obscurity in their style, and their genius was shown in combining clearness, sweetness and beauty of expression with strength and purity of diction and a certain music of sound. The Indian drama has been completely transformed since the middle of the 19th century, and is now really a close imitation of the modern European drama. Our greatest divergences from our older literature have been in the departments of the drama and the novel, in which we have been wholesale borrowers from the West. And this has been the case in every Indian vernacular.

The influence of Europe has also enriched our literature by kindling the patriotic spirit and developing our regard for our historic past. This awakened sense of nationality has added a manly and noble element to the Indian literature of our day. Here the Tagores showed the way.

The net result of this literary evolution has been that the best pieces of modern Indian literature do not appear foreign or grotesque to European readers, as they really approximate to the spirit of Europe in plot, in treatment of the subject and in the general characteristics of style.

Then, again, in the 19th century we recovered our long-lost ancient literatures, Vedic and Buddhistic, as well as buried architectural monuments of the Hindu days. The Vedas and

their commentaries had totally disappeared from the plains of Aryavarta (Northern India), where none could interpret them, none had even a manuscript of the text. The English printed this ancient scripture of the Indo-Aryans and brought it to our doors. A similar restoration of the ancient literature of Buddhism to the land of its origin has taken place through the enterprise and scholarship of Europeans. From Nepal, China and Japan Englishmen have sent the lost Buddhistic works to Europe, and Europe has printed them and made them available to us.

SOCIAL REFORM

But the mere study of a foreign or long-lost literature does not constitute a Renaissance. There must be a new birth of the spirit, there must be reforms in society, religion and morals, following the intellectual awakening before we can truly call the movement a Renaissance.

As surely as the Renaissance in Europe was followed by a Reformation, so, in India too a modification of our social relations, our general outlook upon life, our religious doctrines and practices was bound to result from the action of English education on India. Attempts at Hindu social reform began to take shape from 1855, under Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-1891) who fought and obtained legal sanction to the marriage of Hindu widows (1856) and tried without success to forbid polygamy. Schools for Hindu girls began to be founded at this time, the Christian missionaries having opened schools for their converts' daughters 30 or 35 years earlier. But social reform received its greatest impetus and spread outside Calcutta to the country districts after the Sepoy Mutiny, under the personal magnetism and organising genius of Keshav Chandra Sen (1838-1884). In addition to spreading female education and widow marriage, he organised temperance associations, night schools, "uplift work" for the lower classes, intercaste marriages, the creation and diffusion of cheap and pure popular literature, famine relief, and many other forms of social service. In Bengal, the most conspicuous followers in the path thus marked out were Shiva Nath Shastri (1847-1919) and Ananda Mohan Bose (1847-1906).

The Renaissance continued unchecked and in full swing for more than one generation crowded with events, and everything old or purely indigenous seemed to go down before it. But the very completeness of its victory led to a reaction in favour of orthodoxy, which was as curious in its nature as it

was grotesque in its garb. At the first flush of the Renaissance, our ardent youths had been drawn to Christianity, because the inner spirit of Hinduism had never been taught to them and they could find nothing but unreason and repulsiveness in the externals of Hinduism as practised in their day. To them the reform of such a religion seemed an impossibility. This explains the conversion to Christianity of K. M. Banerji (1813-1885), Lal Behari De (1826-1894), the father of Miss Toru Dutt and several other highly educated Bengalees of the pre-Mutiny days. Others remained in the fold of Hindu society, but with hardly concealed scepticism about its faith and practices.

Then the Brahmo Samaj, founded in 1828, remained dead or somnolent for twenty-five years, and finally revived by Devendra Nath Tagore (1818-1905), began an active propaganda outside Calcutta under the leadership of young Keshav Chandra Sen about 1860. Its intellectual appeal, refined spirituality and active social service brought many converts to it. The purely philosophical and aristocratic section of the educated Bengalees were attracted to the Adi Brahmo Samaj under Devendra Nath Tagore, the saintly father of Rabindranath.

MODERN HINDU REVIVAL

Thus, Brahmoism rose up to arrest the conversion of educated Hindus to Christianity. But Brahmoism proved only a halting place for the straying Hindus of the new school. Hinduism again asserted its marvellous assimilative power, and changed its colour like the chameleon. Internal reforms were carried out and age-old abuses were removed in Hindu society, silently under the pressure of public opinion on the part of the rapidly increasing educated Hindu population. And then, early in the eighties of the 19th century began the modern Hindu revival. Champions sprang up to defend its philosophy and ritual and proclaim them to the world as the perfection of human thought. An "aggressive" Hinduism replaced the shy retiring creed that used formerly to be ashamed of itself and to stand ever on the defensive against growing foes and a diminishing number of adherents. The conversion even to Brahmoism ceased. The first philosophical exponents of this new or aggressive Hinduism in Bengal were Pandit Sasadhar Tarka-chudamani (1843-1928) and Bankim Chandra Chatterji. The former called science to his aid to prove that Hindu religious practices surcharged the body with electricity from the atmosphere and the earth. It was pseudo-science, no doubt,

but his audience knew no better science. He proved to his own satisfaction and to the exultation of his half-educated audience that the perfect development of a man's mind and body is possible in India only, because here the succession of seasons is so regular, the climate is so free from extremes, the land is so fertile and well-watered. There are, he held, two currents of electricity, one upward and one downward, through the earth, and the tuft of long hair at the back of the orthodox Hindu's head enables him to purify and invigorate his mind by helping the passage of these currents, through the body, for had not his hearers seen a horse-hair brush used for carrying away electricity in laboratory experiments? Therefore, all other religions and civilisations were defective, unscientific and harmful in comparison with Hinduism.

These theories may raise a smile to-day, but their effect was extraordinary. The Pandit had no natural gift of eloquence, his subject was new and not yet popular or familiar. But hundreds of clerks, school masters, compositors and even shop assistants, on the way back from their places of business after a hard day's toil, would cheerfully stop in his lecture hall in the evening and listen spell-bound to Sasadhar for hours. Soon the movement spread to the district towns and everywhere a new Hindu organisation raised its head. Touring preachers completed the work, and one of them, Srikrishna Prasanna Sen, added an emotional appeal and an eloquence which carried everything before them, while Pandit Shiva Chandra Vidyanava made the deepest impression by his high Sanskrit scholarship, original thinking and refined oratory.

At a still later stage, in the closing decade of the 19th century, even the service of mankind (regardless of caste or creed) ceased to be an exclusive distinction of the Christian and Brahma churches. At the trumpet call of Swami Vivekananda, the wealth and manhood of Hindu India rose to the need of the day and absorbed this form of moral activity, as more than a thousand years earlier Vaishnavism had absorbed the socialistic features of Mahayan Buddhism. The immense size of Hindu society and the newly acquired facility for making organisation embracing the whole of India, almost completely took the wind out of the sails of the Christian and Brahma churches, whenever public calamities called for voluntary relief-workers. Miss Margaret Noble, who entered Vivekananda's order under the name of Sister Nivedita, most vigorously and eloquently carried on the intellectual propaganda of this "aggressive Hinduism" and succeeded in kindling among us a new

sense of the aesthetic aspects of Hindu art, Hindu domestic life, Hindu folk tales and Hindu ritual by her wonderful power of sympathy and delicate interpretation.

Earlier than Vivekananda, but in another part of India, Swami Dayananda had started the Arya Samaj, which aimed at taking Hinduism back to what he understood to be the pristine purity of the Vedic age. Opinions will differ as to the spiritual value of his dogmatic creed, and the philological correctness of his translation of the *Rig Veda* (*Satyartha Prakas*), but there cannot be two opinions as to the energy, spirit of progress and philanthropy that he succeeded in infusing among his followers, who now number several hundred thousands and whose devotion to the service of suffering humanity extorts the admiration and emulation even of their opponents.

The latest form of the Hindu revival we owe to Rabindra Nath Tagore. It is a very close but unconscious copy of the movement which began in Russia about 1870—the very language of the Slavonic leaders being repeated by the Indian poet. Its aim is exactly expressed if we replace the words *Russia* and *Russian* by *India* and *Indian* in the following description of the earlier movement as given in the *Cambridge Modern History* :

“Like the Slavophiles, Chernyshevsky wished to preserve the primitive socialism of the village commune; but he looked forward to a Russia which, by a chance of history, should escape the capitalist stage of modern Europe and achieve its development in accordance with the theories of modern socialism.”
 “To the struggle for existence, Mikhailovsky opposes the struggle for individual completeness, which, he says, involves the fullest sense of the world around us.” [XII, 296, 302.]

POLITICAL AGITATION

Political agitation by Indians began with academic speeches delivered on a few set occasions by Ram Gopal Ghosh (1815-1868) and the newspaper writings of Girish Chandra Ghosh (1829-1869) and Harish Chandra Mukherji (1824-1861),—all of them being confined to Calcutta and having the most limited audience. Its next expansion was due to Krishna Das Pal (1838-1884) and M. G. Ranade (1842-1901), whose appeal did not go beyond the small educated middle class. At this stage it consisted of the delivery of grave methodical speeches and the presentation of formal petitions to Government. Agitation became a living force for the first time during Lord Lytton's viceroyalty (1876), thanks to the efforts of Sisir Kumar Ghosh (1842-1911) and his brothers, who founded the “Amrita Bazar

Patrika," as a democratic rival to the staid and aristocratic "Hindoo Patriot" of Krishna Das Pal. The formal orderly upper class school of politicians attained to their supreme of achievement in the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1887. Their aims and methods were still far from democratic, and it was almost inevitable that they should be devoured by their children,—the middle class democrats, at the Surat Congress of 1907. But even then politics was still far from having been brought to the doors of the common people. That consummation was left to the period following the Great War and the initiative of Mahatma Gandhi. An appeal to the heart of the real *people* of India is no longer an impossibility, though their opinion cannot be made to crytallise on a purely political issue, because of their total lack of political knowledge and experience and dispersion among many provinces and castes.

The question will be naturally asked—What has been the fruit of this long course of political agitation by the Indians and of the gradual liberalisation of the constitution by Government? When the dust of contemporary controversy is laid, when the din of our daily papers has passed into silence and oblivion, it will then be found that a nation has begun to be formed in India. The people have not gained liberty, but they are now on the way to attaining that equality which is the indispensable preliminary to political liberty. The people have begun to be slowly standardised all over India. A steady advance is being made by the silent and irresistible force of the time-spirit and the insistent example of European society, to free us from the mediaeval distinctions of status and convention, of locality and caste.

The French revolutionists fought and bled for liberty, equality and fraternity. In the end, they gained neither the first nor the third, but only the second, and that enabled them to win liberty seventy years afterwards, under the Third Republic, because there cannot be political liberty without social equality and the standardisation of the people in the externals of life, in intellectual processes, and in outlook upon the world.

A people with watertight class or caste distinctions, even when freed from foreign domination, cannot enjoy political liberty; it will be subject to the autocracy of a clique or a family. The *sine qua non* of democracy is absolute social equality, equal rights not only before the law, but also in society, equal opportunities for all in life, and the reward of merit irrespective of birth, not only by the State but also by public opinion.

We already see the faint dawning of such a sense of oneness among all the Indian people. The victory of a Bengali football team over a British regiment at Simla now causes Punjabi spectators to rejoice. The sufferings of Tamil emigrants in South Africa or Fiji are keenly resented in Calcutta and Poona. There is a monotonous sameness in the agenda paper and procedure of an orthodox Hindu caste conference and, say; an All-India Muslim Educational Conference.

ECONOMIC AND MILITARY DECLINE

This survey of India in the modern age would be incomplete and misleading, if we do not notice two points of vital importance in which we have lost ground in comparison with the Mughal age. If we do not modernise ourselves and become capable of competing with the outer world to the fullest extent in these two respects, we are a doomed race.

Ever since the middle of the 19th century, Europe has been so rapidly and steadily advancing by the application of science to arms and to the industrial arts that India is to-day much less able than in the age of Akbar to wage an economic or military contest with Europe. We are to-day helpless in production and exchange and the economic drain will dry the country to death if we do not modernise our industry, arts, transport and banking. In warfare, India, standing by itself without any aid or leadership from Europe is unfit to face a modern army even for an hour. No nation can exist by merely employing its brain, without developing its economic resources and military organisations.

OUR FUTURE

This survey of our country's history leads irresistibly to the conclusion that we must embrace the spirit of progress with a full and unquestioning faith, we must face the unpopularity of resisting the seductive cry for going back to the undiluted wisdom of our ancestors, we must avoid eternally emphasizing the peculiar heritage of the Aryan India of the far-off past. We must recognise that in the course of her evolution India has absorbed many new elements later than the Vedic Aryan age and even than the Mughal age. We must not forget that the modern Indian civilisation is a composite daily-growing product and not a mummy preserved in dry sand for four thousand years. To India the message of the Time-spirit is:—

“Give up your dream of isolation, standardize and come into line with the moving world outside or you will become

extinct as a race through the operation of relentless economic competition in a world which has now become as one country.”*

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[Personal Reminiscences]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

THE CONCORD COLONY

It was constantly in Swami's mind to make the Shanti Ashrama self-supporting, but he also had in mind a much larger idea, and that was a colony on a tract of land in some beautiful and fertile spot where members of the Society might support themselves in peace and comfort on their own individual plots of land. A portion of the land was to belong to the Society, the returns from which would help to enlarge and spread the work at the Temple. The cultivation of the land and participation in the various industries incident thereto would also give employment in a spiritual cause to a number of the workers in the Society.

It so happened that a large tract of land had been set out in young walnut trees and the lessees, hearing that Swami was interested in establishing a colony, came to see him making special purchase prices. They took Swami to see the land, which was on the outskirts of the little town of Concord, only one and one-half hours' travel from San Francisco.

Swami found the tract located in the fertile Moraga Valley, close to the base of Mt. Diablo, one of the highest mountains in that region. The climate was very healthful and plenty of water could be obtained from wells. Swami felt much pleased with the land, the climate and the delightful surroundings, and organized several parties of the members to look at the land, so that they could intelligently give their opinions. The members who saw the land were unanimous in its favour, and on their favourable opinion Swami entered into the necessary arrangements for purchase. The number of acres purchased was 200, of which 25 acres were reserved for the support of the Society, and the balance distributed among those members who wished to settle in the colony.

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

A suitable building was put up on the Society's section in which to house the young men who were to work on the land. This house also served as Swami's headquarters during his weekly visits and here all the colony business was transacted and spiritual classes were held on Saturday evenings by Swami. There were various buildings for animals already on the Society land, also a good well.

One by one the members moved in, built houses, sunk wells, planted orchards and started crops, and it was not long before the colony was well under way. The horses were housed in stables on the Society land and drawn upon by the members as needed. It was Swami's hope that this might be a place to which members would be able to retire and live comfortably in their old age.

Swami resolved to make this a real center of Vedanta activities and to that end planned for a Temple with a library attached, one to be fully representative of the Vedanta philosophy, a treasure house of the Vedanta literature in America. His plans also included a home for orphan children, a home for aged devotees who were in want or unable to care for themselves, and a hospital for those who were ill. The hospital was to be both indoors and outdoors, so that patients might have a full chance of recovery in the pleasant surroundings, beautiful scenery and climate.

With Swami the purpose to do a thing was synonymous with the act and the means to do it with were never lacking. Most truly of him was the proverb written :

"On him who saves even the fraction of a cowrie shell, yet, when occasion requires it, spends large sums royally like a king, on him the Goddess of Fortune pours her blessings."

Always economical in small matters, Swami never hesitated in the expenditure of large sums, once his judgment was made, and always the money came as the crisis approached. While he was pondering over the raising of funds for the addition of the third story to the Temple in San Francisco, in anticipation of the coming of Swami Brahmananda, the front door bell rang and an old member, bent and crippled with age, but full of devotion to the cause and love for Swami, appeared, assisted by a friend, bearing a handsatchel with \$8,000 in gold to be applied to the building of the addition.

At another time, his funds exhausted, a bill for \$1,000 was coming due the next day and there was no money on hand to meet it. That very evening a member came with nearly the

full amount as a gift and the remainder Swami was able to secure the next morning, enabling him to pay the bill in full.

It was the same at the Concord Colony—money always came as it was needed. Wells were sunk, orchards and crops were planted and gradually the tract assumed all the appearance of a thriving colony. Because he had no thought of using them for himself, Lakshmi literally showered Swami with her gifts. Was it not the Divine Mother's work that was being done?—therefore the Goddess gave gladly.

In addition to his duties at the Temple, Swami went to the colony once every week to supervise the various business matters arising and to visit the different members to see how their affairs were prospering.

Improvements continued and all the earlier plans seemed destined to fulfilment when, in January, 1915, there came the shock of Swami's untimely end. Without the inspiration of Swami's presence, interest lagged and during the next two years, one by one the colonists began to leave; a number sold their places and finally the Society trustees saw that it was best to dispose of the Society property, as there was no one in the Society with the time or means to take Swami's place in carrying on the work.

So the colony at Concord came to an end, but not without results, for all who participated in the activities there received great blessings, and look back on those years as among the happiest and most blessed in their lives.

THE HINDU AND HIS PHILOSOPHY

By S. T.

(Continued from the last issue)

The Westerner looks skeptical, and wants to know how it is done. How is this superlative state of bliss and knowledge to be realized? By the purification of the mind and heart of the sense of egoism and the will to separate life. You cannot hold on to the small separate existence, and expect to know the joys of the Infinite, at one and the same time. Hence the great word of the Hindu religion—Renunciation: non-attachment, non-desire for the people and things of the relative world. The exact opposite of the Mental Scientist's "attracting to himself" a succession of experiences and things he craves—is the Hindu idea of turning from, giving up individual experi-

ence altogether. Burn out all egoistic desire, "fry the seeds," so that there shall be no fine causes left to create new bodies and perpetuate fresh Karma. Free the soul from the bondages of phenomenal existence, to the realization of its own true nature. The process by which this salvation of the Hindus is effected, is called Yoga.

Most Western people think that Yoga means breathing exercises, which lead to miraculous psychic powers. Yoga literally means "*union*"—the union between the individual spirit and the Supreme Spirit, and the purification of the mind of the sense of egoism, in order that this union may take place. Breathing exercises, postures, meditations, are some of the means by which that purification is accomplished, and all the life-currents set flowing rhythmically in one direction.

A great deal of cheap sensationalism is current in this country with regard to Yoga, thanks to pseudoyogis and charlatans seeking to capitalize their "occult" powers. One very easy way to recognize a genuine yogi is by the fact that he would never advertise or give lessons for money; he would accept a *gift* of money, food or clothing—for teacher as well as disciple must live, and surely he is giving something worth his support. But it would be a modest gift, and never would he ask or advertise.

There is nothing spooky or mysterious about Yoga. It is a straightforward science with certain specific rules. An atheist, if he follows the rules, will reach the goal as surely as the most ardent devotee. There are various Yogas, or paths to the Supreme, suited to different temperaments. In the *Jnana-Yoga* of Knowledge and Discrimination, the man of philosophical temperament tries to expand his subjective consciousness to include the whole of the objective world; and thus eliminate the vision of the dual, or relative, life. In the *Bhakti-Yoga* of Devotion, the man who worships the Personal God seeks to merge his individual being in the being of his Lord. In the *Karma-Yoga* of Selfless Action, the practical man in the thick of worldly affairs, seeks to rid himself of egoism by dedicating all the fruits of his labors to the Supreme Being, and by seeing all people and things as so many modes of that same Being. By this practice, gradually his vision is cleared, light flashes, and he comes into the bliss and illumination of the super-conscious state, like the other yogis.

But the Yoga usually referred to in speaking of the spiritual science of the Hindus, is the *Raja* (Royal) *Yoga* of Concentration. This marvelous system of psychological analysis and

training—of which modern systems seem crude echoes, and to which most of them have paid admiring tribute—was founded by a Hindu sage named Patanjali, in 1400 B.C. Its aim is to lead the aspirant to the super-conscious or God state, through concentration of the mind and control over all natural powers. At present we are slaves to Nature. To manifest our divinity, we must have absolute control over Nature, both external and internal.

At present we do not control the body. We must get control of it. Every action now an automatic or reflex action, was once a conscious action. Instinct is repeated habit—experience becomes subconscious. Nobody is manufacturing the body but ourselves: but our action has become automatic and degenerate. We must get control of these reflex acts, arrange and alter the molecules of our bodies to suit ourselves. A Yogi need not be sick, or leave his body for the experience of another world, unless and until he pleases. Men are now living, the Hindus declare, whose age according to our calendar runs into hundreds of years.

We must have absolute control of the body. We must have absolute control of the mind. The mind is always in some sort of disturbance. Anything that comes along—any outside object, any slightest word that is said to us, any memory floating up from the past—can throw the mind into agitation, even positive passion; and in a moment all our high aims and intents are put to rout. How can the Soul, the Highest, be perceived, when all these blurring mind-waves are continually obstructing our true vision?

To control these waves, we must control their fine causes—the fine memories and impressions buried deep down in their subterranean labyrinths. Patanjali, thirty-five hundred years ago, worked out a system of analysis and control of the subconscious, beside which modern psychoanalysis looks like a child's primer. Its strength is in its linking of the spiritual, mental and emotional natures. Modern psychoanalysis gives mental training without high spiritual aspiration. It cleanses, but does not inspire. It gives no driving motive, other than the well-being of the social group. Most religions, on the other hand, furnish plenty of inspiration and emotional drive, but have no psychological technique for wisely guiding or using the emotional force they rouse. They have one or two blanket formulas which they urge indiscriminately on individuals.

“Be good” say all the religions. “Be social” says modern psychology. But why? What I want, is to be happy. And

how?—when there are all these instincts stronger than I am, clamoring for satisfaction. Yoga links man's strongest desire (for greatest possible happiness) with his highest religious aspiration (for God, the supreme state of consciousness), and then furnishes him with a practical system of mental and spiritual training, by which to achieve the two in one.

Through Patanjali's system a man gets control of the body, control of the mind, control of the outside universe. When we have knowledge of a thing, *full* knowledge of it, we have control over it. By concentration, prolonged meditation on any object, we can get knowledge of and control over that object. When all the rays of the mind are focused, we see that object in full light.

Thus we are told that by concentration on the strength of the elephant, the yogi gets the strength of the elephant. By meditation on the elements, he gets knowledge of the elements. Meditation on the sun, gives knowledge of the world ; meditation on the moon, knowledge of the cluster of the stars ; on the pole star, knowledge of the motion of the stars ; on the navel circle, knowledge of the constitution of the body ; on the well of the throat, cessation from hunger.

“By conquering the nerve current that governs the lungs, he becomes light—does not sink in water, can walk on thorns, sword blades, stand in fire.” Thus are explained many of the miraculous feats seen by travelers in the East, and also some of the Bible miracles of one whom the Hindus consider a very great yogi—Jesus Christ.

Extraordinary powers do come with the pursuit of this science of Yoga—knowledge of past lives, knowledge of another's mind, long-distance hearing, ability to vanish from sight, and so on. But the object is not to attain these powers, but the God-consciousness that rejects all personal power ; and one test along the way of attainment is the ability both to acquire, and to give up, these intermediary psychic faculties. They do not free, but rather bind the individual further ; for they intensify both happiness and suffering, and feed the egoism he is trying to get rid of. They are lesser gifts, to be renounced for the pearl of great price.

This is not to be obtained by a few weeks or months of “intensive training,” or a course of lessons for twenty-five dollars. Long and patient years are necessary—years of complete isolation, of absolute consecration as well as concentration ; years of silence, simplicity, singleness of heart ; and a teacher in whom the disciple has absolute trust, and whom he

is ready to follow unquestioningly. For in the Hindu religion, it will not suffice for the teacher to *talk* about truth. He has to be it. He must himself have attained and know to its last and subtlest detail, every step of the path he engages to unfold to the disciple. "Wonderful must be the teacher, and wonderful the taught," says the Hindu Scripture.

When this is the case, when the pupil is devoted and faithful, and the teacher wise with a great wisdom, finally—after many weary struggles, failures, victories and unremitting discipline—the goal is reached. Egoism burned away, the mind now made pure as the Soul itself, reflects Reality; the great illumination comes, and the pure in heart "sees God." The Hindu is not content to discuss God, or hear sermons about God, or to pray to God when he is frightened, or some loved one is ill. If there is a God, the Hindu is going to reach Him, and see Him, and know Him; and this he can only do by entering into and becoming God himself. "Becoming perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect."

It can be done. The Yogi does it. Not by following some dogma or doctrine, not by sitting passive under the preaching of some other man; but by his own unremitting practice on his own mental and physical and spiritual imperfections—till he transforms a cloudy, obstructive, impure and unruly instrument into a clear and perfect reflector of the Perfect One he wants to be and to know. No one who has come in contact with such a man can ever forget him.

But if these men have experienced the highest state of consciousness and have this extraordinary power and wisdom, why have they not applied it more effectively to the problems of their country? If this religion and philosophy is so remarkable, why is it not practically apparent? With such enlightened seers as guides and spiritual directors, how can there be such things as child marriage, such treatment of women and outcasts, such a generally backward, and it seems to us in many ways even degraded social system?

This is the question constantly asked, and reasonably and rightly asked, by Western people. And it remains to be answered. It is a question the more significant in that India is the one country in the world where society has been deliberately organized in accordance with the religious ideal; and has proceeded in accordance with that ideal—of spiritual realization rather than material acquisition—for more than forty centuries. Why then does it not present a more inspiring picture?

Indians blame many of their humiliating conditions on their overlords, and the fact that at present they are a conquered people. They say that in ancient times—when caste was mobile, and simply intended to define the duties and privileges of the four natural divisions of mankind—they had a high type of society ; but that it degenerated through the assumption of too much power by the Brahman or priest caste and through the invasion of enemies when they were not united to defend themselves. It was also due to these invaders that they were obliged to sequester their women. Against the evils of child marriage, they set the Western evil of prostitution—which the Indian early marriage was designed to avoid. Against their aristocratic ideal that the best, and not the lower class shall dominate, they set our present “democratic” domination by immigrant labor and unscrupulous politicians.

They point to our slums, our hold-ups, our murders and general crime records, our drug and bootlegging scandals, our lynchings and our exploitation of dark races—in our *Christian* civilization—“And you wax indignant,” they dryly ask, “about our social abuses ”

They say we do not understand their society and their ideals, especially their ideal about women, and therefore misjudge and misinterpret them. They are equally shocked by many of our ideas and social institutions.

Allowing for all this—and certainly Indians have had to endure from outside a great deal that to a proud and ancient race must be almost unendurable—I still believe that their real problem, as with all of us, is in themselves ; and that their social apathy results from the very ideals that have constituted their spiritual greatness.

If you believe that there is no happiness or possible good in finite life, you do not work with any great enthusiasm to bring about such good and happiness. If you believe that salvation is a matter of each individual’s getting rid of his own delusion by his own self, you do not concern yourself overmuch with the salvation of your brother. If you believe that four thousand years ago your inspired countrymen established the most perfect possible social system, you will not work to obtain a better system—rather you will resist the idea that any improvement can be found. Fixity—finality—satisfaction with the old and already established—a supreme and immovable conservatism : this is the real answer to the Hindu social problem.

Social conservatism, spiritual individualism, and the ideal of renunciation of the relative life. This life in the world,

this "Maya," is delusion and misery. Do not waste energy trying to improve it. Get rid of your individual dream concerning it, and be free.

Here is the great division between Eastern and Western thought. The idea of progress—the idea of the Eternal Flux. Individual existence is inevitably a burden—individual existence is potentially ideal, is to be made ideal. Improvement of relative life—abandonment of relative life.

What does, the Hindus ask, all your finite fussing and striving amount to? Does the millennium for which you are ingenuously toiling ever come any nearer? After thousands of years spent in elaborating your "civilized" machinery—with your complex political, social and economic systems of to-day—are you any nearer happiness than was the savage you evolved from? Your "progress" has been simply the multiplication of wants, and the increasing strain to satisfy them. Your "emancipation" of women has emancipated them only from the burdens of the home to the far greater burdens of commercial competition—which is destroying in them the only beauty and tenderness left in the world, ruining children and breaking up the family. Your democracy and freeing of *your* lower classes has brought you under the domination of a mass-mind culture, so that in your government, your art, and throughout your society, the voice of the least wise prevails by sheer weight of numbers. You have not moved on or up, you have simply kept moving. This is all that "progress" ever is, or does.

Is this true? Are we, all of us in the Western world, laboring under a gigantic illusion? Is there no possible advance or betterment in this life of ours? Are we fools to try? Has nothing happened throughout all these painful centuries but the continual piling up and tearing down of a child's house of blocks?

The answer is, would we go back—to the state of the savage, or of the feudal lord, or the pilgrim fathers, or to any state that is past? I have never met a person who would. When people talk of going back to the "good old days," they think of going back to the *advantages* of that former state; but they always go, in imagination, with the mental equipment and at least some of the advantages of their present condition.

For there are advantages. Through all the changing and experiencing and elaborating, something has happened. And that something that makes everything worth while to us, that

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

It is this progressive expansion that has made all the suffering and striving worth while—and that is the meaning of life, for race and individuals. *Progressive expansion*: this is reality for us, as truly as expansion into the Absolute is reality for the Hindu. A gradual advance toward an ultimate perfection—or at any rate an ultimately satisfactory state. We believe in this, we are united as a social body to accomplish it; our interest, our faith, all our effort and our hope is centered and staked on it. Is this great urge and instinct of so large a portion of mankind simply a delusion—a trick of nature? Is it never to be realized? Are we merely squirrels running round and round our caged wheel? I do not believe it.

The Hindu says, your only happiness is in union with God. But in this practical life, our good has come through union with each other—a union that began with the first rude compact of the primitive clan, and has advanced to the amazingly complex union of modern international association. Notwithstanding all the wars and fighting and trickery that still “hang over” from the animal world into our human life of mixed and contradictory activities, there yet has been a steady forward move toward this sort of Oneness—a movement that is to-day gaining tremendously in strength and determination. And the time must come, according to the Hindus’ own theory, when in the cycle of our spiritual and social evolution, the tendency to oneness overbalances and outstrips the tendency to separate fighting. Even now, our *natural* relation with one another is affection and union. No one knows how relative life would appear if these two were allowed to predominate.

I believe that East and West are approaching the same goal by different avenues. The East seeks to realize perfection by withdrawal from the distractions of the group, and imme-

diate individual liberation into the desired state of consciousness. The West seeks the gradual raising of consciousness for the whole race, and individuals are content to be held back until the whole group can come up into realization. Oneness together in working for perfection for all—"thy kingdom come *on earth*"—is the aspiration of the modern Westerner.

In the intelligent accomplishment of this great aim, we can be vastly helped by the psychological and spiritual science of the Hindus. They are the natural spiritual teachers of the universe; and, I believe, have developed and cherished this subtle science of theirs through the ages—at the expense of other sides of life—to give it to us all now, in the day of the world's great spiritual crisis. Their penetrating insight, their clear and brilliant minds—minds trained in the philosophy of Bradley and Bergson as thoroughly as in their own, and at home in every religion—their superb logic, their uncompromising love of truth unobscured by passion for organization or dogma, their tolerance and sympathy with every form of belief, their sensitive searching for the right path for each individual, above all their understanding of the furthest deeps of the human spirit: these things naturally fit them to be spiritual guides and teachers.

But to help effectively, they need to place a different emphasis in their religion. Not Renunciation, but Expansion of life is the ideal that will appeal to the modern. The Hindu, and all religions, put the emphasis renouncing this world on self-denial, self-sacrifice, renunciation. That is why religion has not captured the modern man. It goes against, rather than with, his profound instinct for self-expansion, and for joy in this life rather than scorn and condemnation of it.

The modern wants a *positive* religious ideal. He wants goodness not crucified, but triumphant. He wants to see goodness capture and conquer and sweep men off their feet, by its sheer radiant power and attraction. He wants not a Man of Sorrows weighed down with the sufferings of the world, nor a man of meditation who turns his back on them; but a man of inspiration who will point a practical and possible, an irresistible way out of those sufferings, and who will catch us up in the fire of his enthusiasm and bear us along with him to accomplishment.

Thousands of years ago—many, many years before Christ or Buddha or Mohammed—in the stillness of those forests where science and spirituality had their twin birth, a sentence was uttered that strikes straight to the heart of the man of

to-day. It was not "renounce"; it was not "deny thyself, forsake the world, take up thy cross and follow me." No. It was this simple statement: "*Happiness is in things that are great.*"

Great things to live and work for!—and the "little self" will be dropped off naturally, inevitably; like the body, when conditions are normal, simply not thought about at all. Not a forced and conscious renunciation, but a natural and spontaneous letting go, as something more interesting claims the attention.

There are powers in man awaiting unfoldment as incredible to most people of to-day as the power to fly or to talk over the air was incredible to their grandparents. There are spheres of life awaiting our investigation, so exciting that the excitements of the little things at which we work so hard for a happiness that ever eludes—fade away like nursery soap-bubbles. Not the denunciation of those lesser things, but the opening up of the big ones and the making of them attractive, is the method to be followed with the spiritually young. And all ages and races can write under the banner of that long ago sage:

"Happiness is in things that are great."

(Concluded.)

REVIEW

OUTLINE OF ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY AND CIVILISATION.
—By Dr. R. C. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D. To be had of Chuckervetty, Chatterjee & Co., 15, College Square, Calcutta. 628 pp. Price Rs. 7/8/-, foreign 12s. 6d.

The book presents, within a small compass, a connected and comprehensive view of Indian life in its various aspects, e.g. political, social, religious, literary, aesthetic and economic, from the earliest times to the Muhammadan conquest. Side-light has as well been thrown on such phases of it as domestic and civic conditions, judicial system, maritime activities and foreign relations. The account, given mainly from the Arthashastra of Kautilya and Sukraniti, of the municipal administration of Maurya capital, the democratic constitution of the Licchavis, the organisation of trade and commerce resulting in balanced distribution of wealth, and of the general character and systematic working of government, is interesting and illuminating.

The whole fabric, which is woven out of materials carefully sifted from previous writings and the results of latest discoveries, has been embellished with the author's own views characterised by the modera-

tion and the acumen of a critic. Some of the hitherto accepted hypotheses have been discussed and supported or refuted on fuller evidences and cogent arguments. In this respect the present work is a distinct advance on its predecessors. The author's remarks on Alexander's invasion, the democratic character of old monarchy, the gradual development of Indian art and the slow progress of Arab domination are forceful and, in certain cases, bold. Some of his reflections, however, as for instance, those on the presumptuous supremacy of the Brahmans, though apt in many respects, and on the Aryan missionaries paving the way for military conquest, may be said to be only plausible. One fine feature of the book is constant reference to old inscriptions, coins, literary works account of foreigners and modern researches from which the materials have been largely drawn. On the whole, it is an accurate and coherent picture of the good old days of India with such play of light and shade as make us justly proud of the glorious achievements of our forefathers and profitably aware of their foibles and failures.

The entire panorama has been surveyed under three distinct epochs of cultural development :

- (1) Vedic culture—from the earliest times to c. 600 B.C.
- (2) Buddhism and Jainism—from c. 600 B.C. to c. 300 A.D.
- (3) Neo-Brahmanism—from c. 300 A.D. to 1200 A.D.

The epics which form the subject-matter of the second period have been relegated to a much later date than is generally assigned to them. The author's notice of the philosophical systems of the Hindus is deplorably too short compared with his treatment of other literary products.

The book is written in a lucid style. The author has appended to it, not without much labour, sufficient bibliographical and critical notes as a help for advanced studies on different branches of the subject. The work is suited not only to the requirements of general readers, but the I.A. and B.A. students of our universities will also find it of considerable use and value. It would have been very nice if some historical maps were added by way of illustration. The printing and get-up is good.

FOURTEEN EXPERIMENTS IN RURAL EDUCATION.—By *Various Writers.* Association Press (Y. M. C. A.), 5, Russell Street, Calcutta. XV+127 pp. Price Re. 1-4.

A short notice can scarcely do justice to the interesting materials contained in the booklet. Christian Missionaries, like many other agencies in India, in response to the growing need of a reorientation of the educational methods and policies in India and in order to make education more real and vocational, have started various educational ventures in different parts of India. The results of those experiments have been nicely described in the book under review, often with pictorial illustrations.

There cannot be the least doubt that the extreme unemployment which has brought the economic life of India on the verge of collapse,

cannot be properly fought unless rural education with a predominance of vocational training is widely spread all over India. Thinking minds everywhere are seriously dwelling on the problem. The present booklet is calculated to be of great help to them as well as to the general reading public.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Swami Sharvananda in Mysore

After a period of incessant activity at Delhi, Swami Sharvananda spent the last summer in the Mysore State. At Bangalore the Swami delivered lectures on "Man and the Universe," "The Soul of Hindu Culture" and "Ancient Religion and Modern Science." At Nandi Hills he spoke on "Science and Religion." From there the Swami went to the Mysore city where he gave as many as eighteen discourses on the Gita and delivered a lecture on "The Making of New India." On Sunday, the 8th July, the Swami was invited by Mr. Shustry, Professor of Persian and Arabic in the Maharaja's College, to give an address in Urdu at the Shia Mosque. The Swami's subject was "Islam and Vedanta." Many pious Mussalmans attended and also many Hindus. The Professor introduced the Swami with kind words of appreciation of the work of the R. K. Order. The Swami in course of his speech said that the misunderstanding between the two great religions in India, Hinduism and Islam, was due to a lack of understanding of each other's scriptures and culture. In fact both Islam and Hinduism spoke of the unity of Godhead and resignation to the will of God. He illustrated his points with quotations from the Koran and the Vedas. He explained and commented on the spiritual experiences of the Sufi saints and Vedic seers. Next he gave a true explanation of image-worship which is said to be the main difference between Hinduism and Islam and said that the Hindu does not worship actually the idol but the ideal which the image symbolises. Prof. Shustry thanked the Swami and appreciated his interpretations very much. He fully agreed with the Swami in his interpretation of image-worship. He then garlanded the Swami amidst loud applause of the Muslim and Hindu audience. When the audience dispersed, many venerable Mussalmans approached the Swami and personally thanked him for his words of good-will and peace and repeatedly requested him to come often to their mosque and give them opportunities to understand their Hindu brothers.

The Swami's presence at Mysore was taken advantage of by the local Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama to organise an influential committee to collect funds for building the Ashrama on the site granted by the City Improvement Trust Board in Vani Vilas Mahalla.

R. K. Ashrama, Cawnpore

The latest report of Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Cawnpore, (for the years 1926 and 1927) is a record of many useful activities. The following

are some of them : (1) daily distribution of medicines free to the poor, with a daily average attendance of 150; (2) outdoor help to men and women of poor respectable families; (3) relief work in time of famine, flood, etc.; (4) free elementary education to the depressed classes in three schools; (5) a students' home where 8 students live free, 4 of them being college students; (6) a public gymnasium with 60 members; (7) daily and weekly religious classes; and (8) library and reading room.

All these works require to be developed considerably, which is however not possible unless the public come forward with generous financial help. The Cawnpore Ashrama has been doing splendid work; and we earnestly appeal to our readers to do it all help they can. Contributions may be sent to *Secretary, Sri R. K. Ashrama, Cawnpore, U. P.*

Centre of the R. K. Mission at Singapore

A Branch Centre of the Mission has been opened at Singapore in July last. In 1913 and 1919 Swami Sharvananda, then President of the Mission Centre at Madras was invited by the local Hindus. The Swami's visits were so inspiring and impressive that during his second visit in 1919 the Members of Arya Sangham—a local society working on similar lines as the Mission—resolved to hand over to the Mission all its properties, so that a centre of the Mission could be opened. The authorities of the Mission accepted the gift and expressed that a branch centre shall be gradually opened at Singapore. Since Swami Sharvananda's visit in 1919, Swamis Abhedananda, Paramananda and others of the Mission passed through this beautiful metropolis of the Eastern Seas and lectured on the Ideas and Ideals of the Mission. In May last, Swami Adyananda was instructed by the Governing Body of the Mission to open the branch centre and take charge of it. Accordingly Swami Adyananda came down to Singapore from Kuala Lumpur and opened the centre. Several lectures have been delivered by Swami Adyananda on the Ideas and Ideals of the Mission.

The Subjects of Swamiji's Lecture were :—

- (1) Sri Ramkrishna and His Mission
- (2) Heart of Hinduism
- (3) The Plan and Purpose of Human Evolution
- (4) The Philosophy of Good and Evil
- (5) The Message of the Bhagavat Gita
- (6) What is Vedanta

The Swami is at present conducting an Evening Service on every Sunday at the Mission House when the following programme is followed :

- (1) Invocation and Chanting
- (2) Music
- (3) Preaching through Lectures and Discourses, or Study Class on the Bhagavat Gita or Upanishads.

The attendance at all these lectures and classes has been large. About 120 members have upto now joined the Mission and it is hoped, membership will soon be increased. An Advisory Committee to assist

the Swami has also been formed. The leading Hindus have agreed to serve there. The Mission has already obtained a plot of land from the late Arya Sangham and appeals will soon be made to collect funds to put up the Mission House. The other lines of activities will also be opened gradually.

Balurghat and Bankura Famine Relief.

The Secretary R. K. Mission writes :—

We have received detailed news of acute distress in Balurghat. The chief product of the place is paddy which grows only once a year. Owing to the repeated paucity of rain during the last three years, paddy did not grow well as it was expected. Particularly last year, the harvest was very bad. The people had to maintain themselves by mortgaging or selling almost all they had in their possession. As the paddy failed there was scarcity of straw without which it was next to impossible to thatch their roofs and maintain their cattle. So the sufferers sold their cattle some of which died of starvation. Houses without straw became unfit for habitation. During the sowing season they did not know how they would carry on their cultivation without money. At that time somehow they were able to sow seeds with the help of Government Agricultural Loans. They have, at present, to live on insufficient foods and even to go without any meal for days together. Some of the sufferers deserted their villages lest they should witness the death of their starving children. So long our work was going on from only one centre. But as there is an urgent demand for further work, we are thinking of extending our activities. The public fully know that we are greatly handicapped in our present work for want of funds. So our earnest appeal goes to all to help us with their kind contributions for continuing our activities.

It is now five months since we started relief work in Bankura. At present, we are distributing rice and clothes from four centres. About 2,000 recipients are getting weekly doles of rice amounting to nearly 93 maunds in 126 villages. The total amount of rice distributed upto now in Bankura and Balurghat is about 1,401 maunds. And nearly 1300 pieces of new cloths besides old ones have also been distributed among the needy persons.

All contributions, however small, in cash or kind, may be 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, Baghbazar, Calcutta.
 3. Manager, Advaita Ashram, 182A, Muktaram Babu St., Calcutta.
-