

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य ब्रह्मनिबोधत ।

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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RAJA YOGA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

FOURTH LESSON

Before we can control the mind we must know it.

We have to seize this unstable mind and restrain it from its wanderings and fix it on one idea. This must be done over and over again. By the power of will we must get hold of the mind and make it stop and reflect upon the glory of God.

The easiest way to get hold of the mind is to sit quiet and let it drift where it will for a while. Hold fast to the idea, "I am the witness, watching my mind drifting. The mind is not I." Then watch it thinking, as if it were a thing entirely apart from yourself. Identify yourself with God, never with matter or with the mind.

Picture the mind as a calm lake stretched before you and the thoughts that come and go as bubbles rising and breaking on its surface. Make no effort to control the thoughts, but watch them and follow them in imagination as they float away. This will gradually lessen the "circles". The mind ranges over wide circles of thought and those circles widen and outline ever increasing circles, as in a pond when we throw a

stone into it. We want to reverse the process. Starting with a huge circle we want to make it narrower until at last we can fix the mind on one point and make it stay there. Hold to the idea, "I am not the mind, I see that my mind is thinking and I am watching my mind act." Thus you will gradually feel less and less identified with the mind until at last you can entirely separate yourself from the mind and actually know it to be apart from yourself.

When this is done, the mind is your servant to be controlled as you will. The first stage of being a Yogi is to go beyond the senses. When the mind is conquered, you have reached the highest stage.

Live alone as much as possible. The seat should be of comfortable height ; put first a grass mat, then a skin (fur), next a silken cover. It is better the seat has no back and it must stand firm.

We have to exclude all thought from the mind and make it a blank ; as fast as a thought comes we have to banish it ; to be able to accomplish this, we must transcend matter and go beyond our body. The whole life of man is really an effort to do this.

Thought being a picture, we do not create it. Each sound has its own meaning. They are interrelated in our nature.

The highest ideal of man is God. Meditate on him. We cannot know the Knower, but we are he.

To see evil is to create it. What we are we see outside, for the world is our mirror. This little body is a little mirror we have created, but the whole universe is our body. We must think this all the time, then we shall know that we cannot die or hurt another because he is our own self. We are birthless and deathless and we ought only to love.

"This whole universe is my body ; all health, all happiness is mine, because all is in the universe." Say, "I am the universe." We finally learn that all action is from us to the mirror.

Although we appear as little waves, the whole sea is at our back and we are one with it. No wave can exist of itself.

Imagination properly employed is our greatest friend ; it goes beyond reason and is the only light that takes us everywhere.

Inspiration is from within and we have to inspire ourselves by our own higher faculties.

THE SYNTHETIC VISION

BY THE EDITOR

It must be admitted that the Indian leaders of thought and action present an aggregate of interesting outlooks. The problems they are seeking to solve include all conceivable forms, from the purely domestic to the extremely metaphysical ; and the solutions they propose are also equally variegated in form. Some profess frankly materialistic views. Some look at the world (and also perhaps God) from the economic point of view. Some are trying to resolve the difficulties of mankind by an interchange of ideas. Others find the panacea in art. Others again in religion. Just as their problems are various,—domestic, social, industrial, political, literary, æsthetic, national, international, philosophical, spiritual, etc., so their solutions are also equally various,—materialistic, intellectual, æsthetical, philosophical, spiritual, etc. This divergence of interests and views is not at all to be regretted. It is, on the other hand, a happy sign of mental vigour and insight. There is also a peculiarity. It will be noted that India's solicitude for the unification of the East and the West is unparalleled by any other country in the world. This union of the East and the West is no mere academical question with India. For one thing, India has to bear the brunt of the impact of Western civilisation. For another thing, India is temperamentally metaphysical. To us all problems have a metaphysical import. We cannot understand or solve them except through their relations with our inner being and philosophy of life. Now this divergence of view-points would not matter, if we recognise a gradation of values among them. For there is a gradation of values in the objective world which it would be futile to deny. Should we not recognise the same scale of values in the understanding and solution of our problems also? Is not the religious, then, the ultimate view-point?

India thus has a peculiar (that is to say, apparently so, and to others) way of solving her problems. It is, as is generally said, through religion. What is exactly meant by that? Religion is the attuning of the entire man to the entire universe of reality. When we speak of religion as solving a problem, we mean that we must take the problem in its most fundamental sense. For good or for evil,—but we think, for

good, infinite good—the long course of her history has taught India at least this lesson that the ultimate and the only true value of man is spiritual. Man's true and eternal satisfaction lies in realising himself as pure spirit. It is futile to undo the effect of this lesson on the Indian mind. For it is not a pose, learnt through long repetition. It is spontaneous in its origin and confirmed by the experiences of millenniums.

This spiritual view-point does not necessarily condemn other view-points. But the materialism, intellectualism, æstheticism, etc., of all peoples are not alike. Great difference is made by the basis *samskâras* of a people. What is claimed is that the revival of material and intellectual prosperity in India has always been an effect of a deeper spiritual revival, and that the present age should not forget this essential relation in its struggle after secular achievements. It is sad to remark, however, that many Indian thinkers and workers are reluctant to recognise this allegiance to the spiritual ideal; and this reluctance is undoubtedly having a mischievous effect on the national mind.

There cannot be a more urgent task in India at the present time than the production of a large number of men and women who will represent the highest synthesis in their outlook and experience of life and reality. And at the very outset, we must recognise that the motive power of those lives can only be a spiritual realisation which is, subjectively, the revealer of the Highest Spiritual Truth, and objectively, in its national and international bearing, the type and essence of the widest and most comprehensive synthesis of life and thought. Spiritual realisation is essentially subjective. Every one has to work one's way up by oneself. It is a transformation of one's inner being. From this it follows that if we are to solve a national and international problem through spirituality, *what is primarily required is the discovery of an attitude towards life and the world, which will also be a new way to the realisation of the Divine.* To solve collective problems through spirituality means nothing else than that.—We have to discover a new means of God-realisation, which will be, subjectively, a spiritual *sadhana*, and objectively, a world-outlook such as is required to synthesise the evolving age. If the world is to be united mentally and spiritually, we have to conceive an outlook to which such unity is real. That outlook must be at the same time a sure means of God-realisation. All unity is a state of consciousness.

This peculiarity of the Indian way of solving collective

problems should be carefully noted. A man is apt to conceive two views of life for himself, individual and collective. As a result, there is often a conflict between the two. The duties that we owe to our country often antagonise and seem superfluous to the duties that we owe to our inner being,—to moral and spiritual ideals. Of course, we can silence the still small voice within, but not without spiritual suicide ; and that is possible only when we are completely shut off from the higher life. India is always conscious of this probable conflict of duties and inclinations, which in her case is bound to be acute, wedded as she is to the highest spiritual ideal. The conflict may arise partly from the imperfections and moral defects of the collective ideal, and partly from want of a necessary readjustment of the methods of individual spiritual self-realisation. Therefore there is a need of harmony between individual and collective outlooks. This necessarily cannot be a quick process. It is a slow, almost unconscious development and takes time to fully manifest itself. To those who do not understand the spiritual implications of the conflict of individual and collective ideals, such a process of solving national problems appears lethargic and meaningless. The method of India's evolution is often misunderstood by them. The truth, however, is that India always tries to find such solutions for her collective problems as are in harmony with the individual spiritual ideals, so that the aforesaid conflict may be avoided. She has always proposed such solutions of her collective problems as are also new spiritual outlooks and sadhanas for individuals. Each age has thus a new spiritual outlook and a new spiritual sadhana.

In the present age also, therefore, what is ultimately and essentially required is the discovery of a new spiritual outlook and sadhana. Have they been discovered already, or are they yet to be found? We unhesitatingly reply that they have been already placed before India by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda through their lives and teachings. The new spiritual ideal which is to fulfil, individually, the highest conception of spirituality and life, and collectively, the widest synthesis of realities and aspirations, is the Transcendent-Immanent Spirit, which, transcendental in its ultimate nature, is yet manifest in all the realities of the universe, which is conceived and realised in various different forms and aspects by men according to their will and temperament, which has not only many supernatural manifestations, but is also manifested as men and the world. This synthetic view of reality offers a new outlook to the human mind. According to it,

everything concerning man, material, intellectual or spiritual, is the unfolding of Divinity itself. Nothing is secular any more. All is spiritual. This is what Sri Ramakrishna taught by the doctrine of *Dharma-samanvaya*—the harmony of religions. He realised Reality in all its varied aspects and thus arrived at the highest synthetic ideal in which the entire universe, natural and supernatural, was comprehended. When man glimpses this synthetic ideal, his attitude towards all things becomes sacred and worshipful. His life becomes a consuming fire of love and service. Ever established in this high spiritual consciousness, his body, mind and soul are for ever dedicated to the service of man who is God. His whole life becomes a *lilâ*, a supernal play with the Divine.

It must be clearly pointed out here that the realisation of this grand harmony is not a question of intellectual assent only. Mere intellectual apprehension is little better than talk. It is a hollow, unsubstantial attitude towards life. Better far to be sectarian and fanatical, if we *practise* the sectarian ideal. Nowadays such talkative liberals are found everywhere. They talk high philosophy and seem to appreciate the highest synthetic ideal; and they think that by giving up sectarian practices, they are doing better than their fathers through mere profession of liberal ideals. Nothing can be more pernicious than this. No doubt intellectual liberalism has its value. It no doubt eliminates schisms from the collective life and helps the growth of sane thinking. But what is dangerous in this intellectualism is that it is apt to reduce humanity to the low level of empty talk. A spiritual ideal,—and all ultimate ideals are spiritual,—unless it is *practised* and *realised* carefully, is nothing. Liberalism, true liberalism, is a state of consciousness which can be realised only after hard spiritual sadhana. It is ridiculous to talk of universal outlook without tremendous sadhana at the background. These fine talkers are apt to reduce noble ideals to mere poses and drive practical spirituality away from life. The ideals therefore should be practised and realised. *That is to say we must realise that state of consciousness in which the desired synthesis is a reality.*

There is a striking difference between what an Indian's general outlook was in the past and what it is at the present time. There is in every age a general level along which the mass mind moves. Any one aspiring higher has to start from there. In the past the common man's outlook was essentially domestic and social. His world consisted of the concerns of his family and society. His vision scarcely penetrated beyond

these limitations. Such a man, therefore, when he wanted to transpose himself to a higher level of vision, had to spiritualise his domestic and social relations ; that is to say, he had to conceive his domestic and social life from a spiritual view-point. Of course he had his economic life also. That also was extremely limited, within the bounds of his village or district markets. It was not nation-wide. (We do not forget here the foreign trade or the cultural and spiritual missions of India. People connected with these were certainly much more than parochial in outlook. But here we are speaking of the majority, of the general outlook.) This domestic or parochial outlook, if we may call it so, has, in the present age, completely given way to a world-sense. The political and industrial changes that the contact of the nations of the world has brought about in Indian life, are revolutionary. First of all, the old idea of the king looking after the state and the people going about their private duties, no longer holds good. Now every man and woman has to think not only of himself and herself, but also of the good of the state, and has to share its responsibilities. Secondly, there is the change in the economic life of the country. Now even the most obscure village is an integral part of a world-wide economic system. No man therefore can shut his vision within the boundaries of his village market. He must march abreast of other nations, with fully developed world-sense, or lose himself. Thirdly, both these have rendered social changes inevitable. Our conception of society has to change. The old values have to be thoroughly revised. This is further necessitated by the cultural contacts that have resulted from the coming together of the world's nations. Various cultures have come forward with their various views of life and reality ; and having once known them we can no longer remain limited within our own ;—we must also assimilate these cultures. There is thus a sense of world-unity growing in the mass mind and constantly agitating and impelling it forward.

It is this synthetic consciousness which is increasingly characterising the rising generations. And we have to lead the growing minds from a low conception of world-unity to the spiritual conception of it. Fortunately, this is no difficult task for India. There is of course the danger of vulgarising the new ideal. We have already remarked on the modern tendency of indulging in hollow intellectualism in the name of world-outlook. We may also be tempted to conceive it from a mere economic or political view-point. We may reduce it to a superficial cosmopolitanism. Or we may seek to base it on an

æsthetic understanding. We admit these have their value and contribute to a certain extent to the grand synthesis we are aiming at. But we repeat that without a spiritual basis, they will be lifeless and weak and will easily crumble down. The deviation from the spiritual conception of world-unity is bound to be self-destructive. The young generations have to be specially careful. The picture of Western nations realising so-called world-unity on secular basis is being alluringly held before them. This is pathetic self-delusion. One must not forget that the Western nations, by having secularised their national and international outlook, have also limited the range of human aspirations. To them man is primarily a physical and intellectual being. But is man really that? Are body and mind really the essential parts of man? Where is the place of him as pure spirit in the secular conception of world-unity? It is no credit to Western nations that they have placidly ignored the spiritual values in their conception of life's synthesis.

It cannot be forgotten that even when the Western nations have sought to approximate to a high synthetic ideal in their civilisation, they have succeeded in adapting themselves more or less to a conventional pattern, the inner life being practically starved to death. Their world-synthesis is only a skeleton, not a living organism. Often the Western pattern of humanism and world-citizenship has been presented to us as a fulfilment of our 'defective' civilisation. But even if it be so, the secret of making it real and living does not lie with the West. It is with us, and it is spiritual self-realisation. Without spiritual vision, humanism or world-citizenship is a dangerous thing. It sprawls over the world, destroying everything in its overweening confidence. It does not soothe and nourish.

Let us not talk of science, art, social service, etc. as being spirituality. These are all right and have their legitimate place in the life of man. But spirituality, true spirituality, is a thing apart. All these may be made the means of reaching the higher level of spirituality, but they are not themselves spirituality. India is never weary of warning us against this confusion. No, true religion is concerned with God alone. Religion is the realisation of the Infinite, Undifferentiated Consciousness, where there is neither men nor the world. Anything short of that is not real religion. No God percolating through layers of mind and matter, however subtle and refined they may be, can satisfy the spiritual hunger of man. The true goal of spiritual efforts should never be lost sight of. Does the West give any real place to this conception of life? This highest value of life must

have an honourable place in any sound scheme of world-unity. It is by going beyond the world and its concerns, into the heart of the Transcendental, that we derive the power of perceiving true world-unity, and not by entangling ourselves in the meshes of phenomena, however bright and vari-coloured they may be. It is India's special concern to conceive and realise real world-unity. For India has the vision and necessary impetus in her soul, and God willing, she will yet fulfil the world's greatest dream.

We have often spoken of spiritualisation as the fundamental motive of Indian culture and civilisation. Coming to details we find that in every age spiritualisation has at least four aspects and lines of process. First, there is spiritual upheaval, of which the declared and pre-eminent end is the spiritual emancipation of individuals. It calls upon men and women to sever the bondage of the flesh and the world and realise the Divine and thus reach the summum bonum of life. In almost every age this call comes through a few highly illumined spiritual persons in whom the highest spiritual ideals of the age appear embodied and whose message has a tremendous rousing effect on the people. Whoever has any spiritual tendencies, then respond to the call and give themselves to spiritual realisation. The first aspect and line of the process of spiritualisation is thus the production of a large number of really spiritual individuals.

The second aspect is the mental. As a result of the spiritual revival, the minds of men and women are filled with a new energy and vision, and this reacts on their thoughts. Old, inherited ideas come in for a strict examination ; many of them are rejected to make room for new ones ; many of them again reveal new contents. In this way, art and literature flourish and grant an unwonted freedom and rich freshness to the intellectual and æsthetic life of the people ; and it is found that in their broad outlines, the intellectual and æsthetic revival reflect the essence of the spiritual ideal itself.

Every age, again, inherits a set of social and domestic customs and traditions, codes of social morality, and religious myths and rituals. Domestic and social morality and customs as well as rituals are as it were the kindergarten of the spiritual children which most men and women are. Through these the majority of mankind mould and refine their mind to prepare themselves for the higher and truly spiritual life. When, therefore, a spiritual upheaval ushers a new age into India, it reacts on the moral codes, customs and rituals of the people,

bringing about tremendous changes in them. The social body so readjusts itself as to be a fit vehicle of the new spirit, and the rituals of religion also undergo necessary modifications in order to be a fit instrument for the realisation of the new spiritual ideals. This is the third aspect and line of progress.

The fourth is the readjustment of India's foreign relations. No nation can live by and for itself alone. Every nation has to deal with other nations. When a new age sets in, there is also a change in India's foreign relations. There is interchange of ideals between India and other peoples. India assimilates new races and cultures and goes out among other nations and deluges them with her spiritual ideals. These international relations have their effect also on the internal conditions of India and her ways and customs.

In the beginning, all these various aspects do not become apparent to most people. Most men are conscious and appreciative of only the first aspect,—the call to the purely spiritual. The other lines of action are only gradually appreciated. There are at least two reasons for this lack of all-round appreciation. The one is the lack of understanding: not all people can understand the social or international implications of the new message. To many these conclusions seem unwarranted and a distortion of the original teaching. Even among the disciples of the Master who generally heralds the new age, there are some who stubbornly resist the secular application of the teaching, and this spirit of resistance is inherited by their followers. The other reason is that there are temperamental differences as well as differences of spiritual development. It cannot be denied that to most of those who have highly developed spiritual faculties, the secular implications of spirituality seem sometimes distasteful. Their mind longs to abide in pure spirituality; they naturally ignore the other aspects. But this limitation is not true of all spiritual natures. There are some who, however highly developed they may be spiritually, yet devote themselves to secular service—the other aspects of the message—out of compassion for the suffering mankind and under the lure of the synthetic vision as typified by the life and teaching of the Master. They feel that unless men are redeemed socially, nationally and internationally, unless there is a requisite improvement in their practical, everyday life, they will fail to rise to the height of spiritual glory which is their goal and salvation.

If there is thus at one end an ultra-religious school denying the secular aspects of the renaissance, there are also, at the

other end, other groups of thinkers and workers who, interested in the intellectual, aesthetic, social, political, economical, or industrial aspects, ignore the fundamental, spiritual, aspect of the new revival. Both these are onesided and, if left to themselves, may frustrate the very purpose of the renaissance. Safety lies in the growth of an intermediate group who, besides being intensely spiritual, will also devote themselves to the work of national and international readjustment in all its aspects. They are the hope of India and the living representations of the new synthetic ideal.

So the present mental tendencies of our youths have to be gradually transmuted into a spiritual yearning for the realisation of God as Transcendent-Immanent, as the One in Many. The way to such a realisation, as prescribed by Swami Vivekananda, is through service of God in man, through what has now come to be recognised and symbolised as the "worship of *Daridra-Nârâyaṇa*." This fundamental spirit should permeate all our thoughts and actions. All our studies and search for knowledge should be linked to the infinitude of God. Whatever concern men and things have undoubtedly an aspect in which they blend into the Infinite and manifest the glory thereof. Into politics, industry, social service, into everything let this spirit be infused. How our intellectual pursuits can be transformed into a search and perception of God is beautifully indicated by the spirit in which Sister Nivedita used to study history. Here is a revealing poem by her :

We hear them, O Mother!
 Thy footfalls,
 Soft, soft, through the ages
 Touching earth here and there,
 And the lotuses left on Thy footprints
 Are cities historic,
 Ancient scriptures and poems and temples,
 Noble strivings, stern struggles for Right.

Where lead they, O Mother!
 Thy footfalls?
 O grant us to drink of their meaning!
 Grant us the vision that blindeth,
 The thought that for man is too high.
 Where lead they, O Mother!
 Thy footfalls?

Approach Thou, O Mother, Deliverer!
 Thy children, Thy nurslings are we!
 On our hearts be the place for Thy stepping,
 Thy children, Thy nurslings are we!
 Where lead they, O Mother!
 Thy footfalls?

Similarly, science may be made into a passionate search for the Invisible Divinity behind the visible.

It must be seen that this attitude implies as a necessary condition complete self-abnegation and renunciation of personal desires. When the radiance of the new vision reflects on the soul, such renunciation, of course, becomes quite easy and natural and almost unconscious. Yet one cannot be too careful. We therefore find that Sri Ramakrishna, the great prophet of world-harmony, repeatedly emphasises these three things in his teaching: renunciation of gold, renunciation of lust, and faith in the Divinity of man. When the mind is purified of carnal desires, the vision of Divinity interpenetrating the world of phenomena becomes natural. When this state has been reached, we feel intensely the glory of the ultimate Universal Vision. To such a realisation, men and the world are not what they seem to the common man. They appear suffused with the radiant presence of God. And then man perceives God in and out of himself and becomes the very personification of the grand ideal after which the present age is aspiring.

One great obstacle in the way of young minds devoting themselves to the realisation of this spiritual world-synthesis is the superstition that religion is a life of passivity, and devoid of the glow of life that characterises more concrete struggles. Young minds want the taste of power. They seek those fields of action where they can wield great energies, and this often attracts them to lesser ideals. Let us assure them that the life of spiritual struggle, of the struggle to realise the Universal Vision such as we have discussed above, requires the greatest amount of strength. There is an amount of adventure in it as is not to be met with anywhere else and may daunt even the stoutest heart. Spiritual realisation is the manliest of games and the most daring of adventures. India and the world are eagerly waiting for those brave souls who will build up the glorious future of humanity through their titanic life-struggles. Where are they? They alone can lead humanity to the land of promise.

THE WORK OF SWAMI TRIGUNATITA IN THE WEST

[PERSONAL REMINISCENCES]

BY HIS WESTERN DISCIPLES

THE DHUNI NIGHT

Every year thereafter, Swami took a class to the Ashrama for Yoga practices. In the year 1906 the students had the unusual privilege of having two Swamis with them, for now Swami Prakashananda had arrived as the assistant Swami at the Temple. The latter's knowledge of Sanskrit chants was very extensive and his inspiring chanting was often heard at meal times. He also relieved Swami Trigunatita of some of the classes.

In the second week of this class was the first night of the new moon, and this was appointed by Swami Trigunatita as the first Dhuni night for that year. On a previous occasion Swami made a special pilgrimage to the Ashrama, among the objects of which was to select one of the hills on the property as a suitable site on which to hold the Dhuni ceremony, and having selected the one most fitted for the purpose, he alone, with his own hands and a small hatchet, blazed a trail to the top. Then when he came with the class mentioned above, a man student was instructed to widen and level the trail, and a spot at the summit large enough for the fire and for seating room for the students, was cleared off. In the centre of this space was a large raised triangle of earth, pointing to the north, on which the Dhuni fire was to burn all night, with a circular trench about it to keep the fire in bounds.

The walk from the cabins to the top of the hill was about half a mile and as the hour of eight drew near, the students, each of whom carried a lantern, started out in single file with Swami at the head. The long row of lanterns made a beautiful spectacle as the little column climbed the winding path through the bushes to the top of the hill or, as it was now named, "Dhuni Giri".

Prior to the evening hour the men had carried up a large supply of wood to last through the night and after the students were seated the fire was lit and the ceremony began. The two Swamis were seated at the south side of the fire, the men

were at the north while the women were seated along the other sides. Swami Trigunatita, having chanted, spoke on the significance of the Dhuni. For the next three hours, chanting, speaking and reading of Scriptures filled the time. After this came the fire ceremony. First, the two Swamis circled the students seven times around the edge of the open space, chanting "Haribol" as they went; then the students stood about the fire and, as Swami Trigunatita chanted the mantrams they repeated the words after him during the purification ceremony. Every student had been instructed to bring a little oil or water and some wild flowers or leaves and, as they repeated each line after Swami, they poured some of the oil or threw a few of the flowers on the fire as an offering for purification, from every phase of selfishness and ignorance that stood in the way to true knowledge.

During the all-night service, Swami Prakashananda enchanted the students with his melodious rendering of beautiful Sanscrit songs, new to Western ears, but the burden of devotion they carried was unmistakable and sounded a sympathetic chord in the hearts and souls of the listeners.

After the ceremony the students entered into a long meditation under Swami Trigunatita and at its close Swami read stories of Indian life and told a number of anecdotes from the life of the Master and his own experiences as a disciple, with intermissions of silence until the hour before dawn, when all arose to their feet to watch for the first rays announcing the coming of the Lord of light. Below them the valley lay bathed in the ghostly radiance of the faint light of the new moon, indescribably beautiful, adding its charm to the spiritual impressions of the night. The long-drawn-out notes of wandering coyotes (a species of wild dog) came up to their ears from the valley and once, in the distance, they heard the scream of a mountain lion (puma) disturbed by the fire. At last the first flush of dawn appeared in the eastern sky, followed by the gorgeous heralds of his arrival in cloud and sky, until the great luminary himself flashed his golden rays over the horizon, rising above the mountains in regal glory. After suitable chants in salutation, the little band took their downward way to breakfast and the morning duties. The balance of the day was declared a rest day.

This Dhuni, with slight variations, was typical of many to follow in future years, except that not always was a second Swami present.

BUDDHISM AND WHAT IT DID FOR INDIA*

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

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The initial force of Aryan civilisation was spent by the time it reached the western frontier of Bengal ; or, it would be more correct to say that the new elements that had entered into Aryan society caused a great transformation of its original character. In Mithila or North Bihar the Brahman ascendancy in thought was lost and the Kshatriyas began to think and act for themselves and resist the Brahmanic supremacy. Some scholars† have called it the Kshatriya revolt against the Brahmans, but it should rather be styled an inevitable new stage in the evolution of India.

A high philosophy, quite distinct from the Vedic religion, was developed first in the hermitages and then at the courts of Kshatriya kings like Janaka, and it led, in the course of time, to the rise of a great Kshatriya preacher. It was Gautama Buddha, the lion of the Sakya clan, who rose in open protest against the power and ritual of the Brahmans and thus introduced a new force into Indian life and thought.

Let us consider the gifts of Buddhism to India. They were six in number :—

(i) First, Buddhism gave us a popular religion, without any complex and unintelligible ritual that could be performed only by a priestly class. It deliberately set itself to appeal to the masses, and wonderfully succeeded in winning their hearts by its simplicity, its emotional element, its easy ethical code, its use of the vernacular language in its scriptures, its popular method of teaching by means of parables, its worship in congregation. It introduced a personal element into religion, in the form of a known human Saviour, in the place of the impersonal forces of Nature to whom the Vedic Aryans used to pray and the passionless abstract deity adored in the Upanishads.

(ii) Image-worship was most probably introduced into India by the Buddhists. We can conjecture that the earliest statues

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

† Muir's Sanskrit Texts, Vol. I, (3rd edition), 296-479. The contest originated much earlier, before the caste system had become rigid.

of Buddha were set up as purely commemorative of a great master and preacher, but they soon came to be worshipped as representations of the godhead. For sheltering these sacred images houses had to be built, and thus temples arose, while the Vedic Aryans had been contented with offering sacrifices on altars in the open air, as was the case with the Aryans of ancient Persia.

(iii) The monastic system, or the organization of religious devotees in disciplined communities or orders, was another innovation due to Buddhism. It is true that solitary recluses and old men retiring to forests in order to end their days in lonely contemplation, had been known before but not the banding together of religious devotees into a fraternity of monks, obeying a common head and living together under a common code of disciplinary rules.

(iv) Buddhism created a vast and varied literature in the spoken tongue, which was meant for the common people and not reserved for a learned priesthood.

(v) The most charming contribution of Buddhism to Indian life was in the domain of sculpture and architecture. Here was a new element which the Vedic Aryans had not thought of, and which, though introduced by the Buddhists, continued with growing volume in the later Hindu period. The Buddhists set the example of dedicating cave temples, which the Hindus and Jainas followed in after ages.

(vi) Buddhism established an intimate contact between India and foreign countries. This religion was India's greatest gift to the outer world. It was a universal movement, a force irrespective of country and caste, which the whole ancient East was free to accept. Indian monks and scholars carried Buddhism to foreign countries from the third century before Christ onwards, and thereafter the converts of these countries looked up to India as a holy land, the cradle of their faith, a pilgrimage to which was the crowning act of a pious householder's life.

TWO STREAMS OF HUMAN MOVEMENT

Thus, there were two streams of human movement, one of native Buddhist teachers going out of India and another of foreign Buddhist pilgrims and students flocking to India, which broke our isolation in that age. The Hindus followed the example thus set, and from the third century after Christ we

have records of Hindu missionaries and colonists settling in Further India and several of the Pacific Islands.

The result was that, in what is called the Buddhistic age, the fusion of foreign non-Aryan immigrant tribes and families with the Indian population became an easy occurrence of every day. History records many examples of it. In the first century of the Christian era, some families that bear Persian names are found settled in Western India and patronising Brahmans and Buddhist monks alike. The Karle and Nasik cave inscriptions tell us that Harapharna (i.e., Holophernes), son of Setaphatna, a Sova-Saka, gave away a cave-hall surrounded by nine cells to the Mahasanghika branch of Buddhist monks; and that Ushavadata (i.e., Rishava-datta) a Saka, the son-in-law of the Kshatrapa Nahapana, gave away three lakhs of cows and sixteen villages to the Brahmans, paid for the marriage of eight Brahman maidens, fed a lakh of Brahmans for one year, dedicated a cave-monastery for the use of the Buddhist begging friars, and made a gift of the village of Karanjika for the support of the ascetics living in the caves at Valuraka, without distinction of sect. ("Epigr. Indica," VII, 58, 72; VIII 78, 86). In later times, when Buddhism decayed, these foreign settlers were quietly and completely absorbed in the mass of the *Hindu* population, their foreign origin having been forgotten during their long previous stay in India.

Thus Buddhism, without at first intending it, contributed very largely to the synthesis which has produced the modern Hindu faith and society.

In this expansion of India outside and consolidation within Asoka had made the first beginnings in the third century before Christ; but the movement became vast and sweeping only in the first century after Christ, under the Scythians and the Bactrian Greeks and Indo-Parthians whom the Scythians absorbed and replaced in political domination.

Mahayana Buddhism advanced conquering the minds of men to the west, north-west and north out of India, while the Kushan emperors penetrated with their arms from Central Asia south-eastwards into the Gangetic Valley. Thus, these two forces, physical and spiritual, had the same effect of bringing foreign settlers into India, putting the Indian stamp on them, and finally converting their descendants into unmistakable Hindus a few centuries afterwards. The Sulaiman range ceased to exist as a barrier on our west, and the Punjab and Afghanistan, Khurasan and Seistan became as one country.

The ports of our west coast,—Sopara, Cambay, Broach and Chaul,—facilitated the same immigration by sea, and Konkan and Gujrat and even Malwa became the homes of foreign tribes that accepted the culture and religion of the land of their adoption. Witness the satraps of Ujjain. Chashtana, the founder of this line, was the son of Psamotika, a name which we find in the dynastic lists of ancient Egypt and Babylonia alike. But his descendants soon became Hindus and patrons of the Hindu religion.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND MANNERS OF NEWCOMERS

The newcomers into India retained their un-Hindu foreign names and customs for some time, because Buddhism did not insist on uniformity in these points, but embraced all within its tolerant bosom. After a few generations, however, when the Hindu revival began, the descendants of these foreigners were hammered or coaxed into uniformity with the Hindus around them in name, social practices and manners; and a homogeneous population and culture in India was the result. Thus, the Andhra king, Sri Pulumayi, the son of Vashisti, is praised for having brought society back to the rigid purity of Hindu law by “stopping mesalliances between the four castes” through the extermination of the casteless Kshaharata dynasty of satraps. (“Epigr. Indica,” VIII, 60). And yet this king gave a village to the Saramanas or Buddhist priests of the Bhatayaniya fraternity, living in the Queen’s cave (Ibid. p. 67).

So, too, the earlier rulers of the Kushan empire in India bear purely Turki names like Kujula Kadphisa, Vajeski, Kaniski, and Huviski; but immediately after Huviski we have the clear Hindu name of Vasudeva.

The Mongolian Ahom dynasty that conquered Assam in the thirteenth century, at first used non-Indian names like Sudangpa (1397), Supimpha (1493), Suhangmung (1497), Sukhampha (1552), and then from the beginning of the seventeenth century their descendants became Hindu Rajahs with names like Pratap Sinha (1603), Jayadhwaj (1648), Udayaditya (1669), Rudra Sinha (1696), etc.

At first the Scythians (Sakas) in India used to keep up their connection with their far-off homeland west of the Bolan Pass. Thus, the Mathura lion-capital of the first century A.D. bears an inscription in honour of all the inhabitants of the Saka-land: “Sarvasa sakarastanasa puyae” (“Epigr. Indica,” IX, 146).

Now, this "Saka-sthan" in Sanskrit, became "sekestene" in Greek, "sejistan" in mediæval Persian and "seistan" in modern Persian. It is the south-eastern corner of Persia.

But a few generations later we find the Sakas completely naturalised in India and absorbed into the Hindu population. So, too, the Hun invaders of the fifth century A.D., after many fights with the Gupta empire, lost the chance of political domination in India, and settled down as peaceful common people, contributing tribes to various Hindu castes and professions. Thus, one recognised Rajput clan bears the name of Hun. Their nomadic brethren, the Gujars, after many wanderings since migration to India, have settled in the Delhi district and the country west of it, and given their name to the province of Gujrat or "Gurjara-rashtra," to the district of Gujranwala, and to the Rajput clan of Bar-Gujars.

REORGANISATION OF HINDU SOCIETY

After the upheaval caused by the mass incursions of the Scythians and other nomadic races from the first to the sixth century of the Christian era, Hindu society was reorganised and graded anew. The caste-grouping then adopted became stereotyped in every province. History has preserved no record of how this happened, nor the names of the mighty social leaders and Brahman scholars who imposed their will on such a huge population throughout such an immense extent of country, and poured the fluid elements of society into a mould where they have acquired rigidity for all time to come. But we get a few glimpses from the identical tradition preserved in places as far apart as Gujrat, Assam, Lower Bengal, and Orissa.* In each of these provinces there is a universally accepted belief that an ancient king wanted to perform a Vedic sacrifice, but found the local Brahmans ignorant and impure in their lives (like the English clergy of the earlier years of King Alfred) that he had to induce five pure Brahmans to come from Kanauj and settle in his kingdom, and to these five immigrants the best local Brahman families of later times trace their descent.

At that forgotten reorganisation of society, the passion everywhere was to revert to the pristine purity of blood,—at least of social practice and religious rites,—that had existed before the Hun flood submerged North India, and the seat of

*Imp. Gazetteer of India, 3rd edn. ii. Bengali tradition about King Adisur; Bombay Gazetteer, 1st edn.

this pure type was Kanauj in Madhyadesh or the Ganga-Jamuna doab.

This huge reconstruction of Hindu society stretches, with its ebb and flow, from the sixth to the tenth century after Christ. During this period the Scythian and other foreign settlers were completely Hinduised, the Rajputs rose to kingship as the ruling caste, with their numberless principalities covering the whole country from Attock and Und on the Indus to Palama in South Bihar. They made themselves the ardent champions of the new Hinduism. It was on this Rajput wall that the Muslim invaders from the north-west impinged at the close of the tenth century.

This moral transformation of savage foreigners is the greatest glory of India, and a proof of the death-defying vitality of Hinduism, considered not as a dogmatic creed (which it never was), but as a social force and civilising agency. The spirit of India has triumphed over time and change and kept the composite Indian people's mind as active and keen as in the best days of pure Aryan ascendancy. The blending of races here has not led to that intellectual and moral deterioration which is found among the present-day mixed population of what was once Spanish America.

As a distinguished Orientalist has truly observed, "The most important fact in Hindu history is overlooked (by our orthodox writers). I mean the attractive power of Hindu civilisation, which has enabled it to assimilate and absorb into itself every foreign invader except the Moslem and the European. Those Indians have a poor idea of their country's greatness, who do not realise how it has tamed and civilised the nomads of Central Asia, so that wild Turkman tribes have been transformed into some of the most famous of the Rajput royal races." (A. M. T. Jackson in "Indian Antiquary," 1910, p. 77).

THE DECAY OF BUDDHISM

The history of Buddhism in India is a story of strange transformations running through twenty centuries. The astonishing result of it is that this religion, which has converted nearly a quarter of the human race, has totally disappeared from the land of its birth. But all the stages of this growth, transformation, decay and death can be historically traced.

In the origin, Buddhism was not avowedly a new creed, but an appeal for holier living in the bosom of the existing Hindu religion and society. Buddha was not a prophet, but a

saint, who urged his hearers to give up their vices and follies and to practise that purity of conduct and sincerity of belief which is the essence of every true religion. He himself, so far as we can judge from the scanty volume of what is accepted as his true sayings, taught neither new dogmas, nor new rituals, nor even a new philosophy.†

The basic doctrine of Buddhism, as all scholars now admit, sprang from the pre-existing Hindu philosophy of the Sankhya and the later Upanishads,—the belief, namely, that human life is a misery and the cessation of rebirth is the means of extinguishing that misery. Such cessation comes from moral self-control and the repression of all desires. The eightfold path enjoined by Buddha for this purpose is only a code of general ethics, and not the special creed of a revealed and distinctive faith.

As Kern points out, "It does not necessarily follow that the Buddha was supposed to have invented the whole of morality. On the contrary, the Master himself repeatedly extols the morals and virtues of the ancient Rishis. . . . Buddhism has wisely adopted many articles of morality and pious customs flowing from the source of the Brahmanist code. . . . The sect originally had no moral code at all, except the prohibitions and duties prescribed to the members of the Order." ["Manual of Indian Buddhism," 68-69.]

Thus, so far as the original philosophy of Buddhism goes, there is hardly any break of continuity between Buddha and the Hindu sages who had preceded him. In the "Jatakas" Buddha says again and again that true piety consists not in the performance of rites or the repetition of set prayers, but in holy living and holy dying.

In the proclamations of the great royal preacher Asoka; we see the same insistence on general morality as the real aim of the Buddhistic "Dharma". In the second Pillar Edict Asoka says, "Dharma is good ; but what is Dharma? It consists in doing good to the many, kindness, charity, truthfulness, purity."

The definition of Dharma is even more explicit in the fourteenth Rock Edict:—

"Dharma has great fruits. It consists in much kindness to slaves and servants, reverence to elders, control of the passions,

† Kern's "Manual," p. 47—"We only surmise that both systems (viz., the Buddhist and the Sankhya) derive from a common remote source." Also p. 50 middle.

almsgiving to Sramanas and Brahmanas, and to others similar benefit of Dharma.”

So much for the creed of the new Preacher. Nor did Buddha lay down a special ritual for his followers. That was of later growth. The only new thing he introduced was the institution of the orders of monks and nuns. But even the rules of monastic discipline left by him seem to have been few, simple and undefined. They had to be codified and stiffened after his death. This is clearly proved by the traditions relating to the first Council held immediately after his death and especially of the second Council, that of Vaisali, the calling together of which would not have been necessary if the rules of monastic life had been fully elaborated and laid down in writing, so as to obviate all doubt and controversy about their nature. [Kern, 103, Rockhill's "Life of Buddha," 171-180.]

With the disappearance of the towering personality of its founder, began the long line of changes in Buddhism. First, an attempt—a very natural attempt—was made to set up a scripture and a code of recorded rules in the place of the living teacher who had disappeared and his sayings which had till then been orally preserved. Immediately after the Nirvana of Buddha, five hundred monks assembled at Rajgir, under the presidency of the aged Maha-Kasyapa, for this purpose.

“Kasyapa the Great, whom the Master had designated as his successor, made the proposal that the brethren should assemble to rehearse the Lord's precepts. The proposal was adopted.” [Kern, 102, 103 ; Rockhill 157-160 ; Beal, ii. 162.]

But it was hopeless to reach uniformity by means of a council of bishops, without an ever-present infallible Pope or dictator of the faith. A hundred years after the first Council, difference of opinion as to the orthodox doctrines and practices made the summoning of a second Council necessary. The scandalous lives and doctrines of the monks of Vaisali roused the indignation of the reformer Yasas, and he was supported by the venerable priests Sarvaka and Revata. But it was to no effect. The Vaisali Council, instead of restoring uniformity to the Church, broke up in disorder ; two different councils seem to have been held here by the two parties, neither recognising the authority of the other, and the Church was rent by an open schism. [Kern, 103-109 ; Rockhill, 171-172 ; Watters, ii. 73-77.]

A LETTER FROM ROMAIN ROLLAND

[Translated from the original French]

[We received the following letter from M. Rolland lately, mainly in connection with an article by Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy, which appeared in our February issue (*Romain Rolland on Ramakrishna and Vivekananda*, p. 49 ff). We sent relevant extracts of the letter to Mr. Roy whose reply we are glad to publish along with M. Rolland's letter. *Swami Ashokananda, Editor, P.B.*]

4th March, 1928.

Dear Swami Ashokananda,

Thank you for your friendly letter. I have been very much moved at receiving from the venerable Swami Shivananda a long letter full of valuable remembrances and explanations. I hope to show my gratitude by writing to him and excuse myself for not having done so up to the present. The works I have in hand, which have taken longer than I thought, have not allowed me the necessary concentration for other thoughts. I have only just finished to-day the first volume of the new work which I am devoting to Beethoven ; and at last I can give myself to that on Ramakrishna.

I hope the (involuntary) bringing together of these two names does not astonish you ! In studying very closely for a year the musical genius and the creative personality of Beethoven, I have been able better to verify what I think I indicated to you in a letter : the relationship of our master-musicians of Europe, (truly inspired like Beethoven), with your great seers of India. They are in direct communion with the Divine and a Beethoven is by nature in a constant state of "Yoga". The only profound difference with India is that with us there does not exist a secular tradition, well-informed and rational, of this spiritual intercourse with God ; so that each of our inspired ones is a solitary person who undergoes anew the divine experience entirely without a guide, with its risks and perils, often very great. And so I have arrived at the discovery that the deafness, which was his tragic lot and which "walled" him up even whilst he was alive, was the result of his ecstatic states of music and "Yoga", producing mental disturbances closely bordering on apoplexy. He used to live in transports of audible revelation,

in which the rest of the world no longer existed for him ; and his powerful will was entirely given up to the effort of apprehending the God which was consuming him. It is a matter for regret that India has only had knowledge of Europe through Anglo-Saxon races who are of all European races the most destitute of musical and mystical genius, the hardest and most practical of people, only great, with some few exceptions, on the field of action and in the worlds of scientific and practical experience. If India had known better the depths of soul of old Germany and the inner life hidden away in old mediæval France (which is extant always under the noisy waves of what I call in *John Christopher* "the market on the square"), she would have felt our common brotherhood.

I have read in the February *Prabuddha Bharata* the interview which Dilip Kumar Roy has published about me. I am much dissatisfied with it. He attributes to me remarks entirely different from those which I made. I will mention a few of them, by way of example.

First, one of the motives which he attributes to me for writing a book on Ramakrishna is to defend Mukherji's book against "jealousy and heart-burning" which has gathered round it. I said nothing like that. I said that his "Face of Silence" had been the first book which had revealed to me the personality of Ramakrishna and that I was grateful to him for it. But I was not going to write myself a book on the great thought of India for the purpose of defending Mukherji! It is not a question about Mukherji, it is about Ramakrishna. I am not going to mix myself up in Indian controversies. I have to put before the Western world my own revelation of the "Man-God" of India.

Secondly, Roy attributes these words to me : "Our people are getting more and more prone to belittle wholesale the great men of Asia, and they are little by little losing all interest in things Asiatic." This is just the contrary to the reality. The European public has never been more interested than to-day in things Asiatic, and never more attracted than to-day by the fascinating light of the great men of Asia. And it is this fact which disturbs the nationalists of the West and makes them write books like "Defence of the West" by the ultra-nationalistic and reactionary Frenchman, Henry Massis. A person only "defends" himself when he thinks himself to be threatened. The very attitude of the "Occidentalists" of to-day who denounce the supposed danger of the East proves that the East is already taking her place.

Thirdly, Roy attributes to me some unkind words with regard to the Schopenhauer Society. This is altering my own thoughts in a manner which pains me. I have a very lively sympathy for the Schopenhauer Society which, of all the great philosophical societies of Europe, is really the one which is most interested in India. It devoted to India its last international congress of the last year, and its new "Jahrbuch" which has just appeared contains the full report of it. I have asked the director of the Society, Professor Hans Zint, Senator of the free town of Danzig, to have a copy sent to you. You will read in it of some remarkable conferences on Europe and India. (I have modestly collaborated in it with some pages devoted to Vivekananda and Paul Deussen). A Society which has preserved the pious worship of its great master, Schopenhauer (the first thinker of Europe, in whose veins was transfused the blood of Indian thought), a Society which (in opposition to those which make use of the name of Kant and the other great metaphysicians of Germany) always defends the spirit of the intellectual communion between all the peoples of Europe, Asia and the world, such a Society deserves our respect and our sympathy. I expressed my astonishment before Roy that Paul Deussen should have doubted the exceptional importance of Vivekananda when he came to visit him, and that the Schopenhauer Society founded by Paul Deussen should have lost the recollection of this visit. But there was in it no desire to hurt the feelings of men whom I respect and admire. On the contrary I remarked on the enthusiastic feeling with which the President of the Society, Professor Hans Zint, read the quotation from Vivekananda which I had made in my article.

Fourthly, with reference to "social service" and to the "uplifting work for the masses," Roy has attributed to me a quite untrue remark about Gandhi. He makes me say, "Why do not your great leaders, like Gandhi, for instance, take more seriously to this urgent work that lies before you all?" This is absurd. I could have reproached Gandhi for a lack of the great metaphysical spirit, of broad intellectualism, of deep comprehension of art and thought. But the last thing that one could have reproached him for would be his lack of interest in "social service," to which he has devoted his life up to the extreme limit of his strength. If there is in Gandhi an incontestable holiness, a complete denial of himself, a divine sacrifice of his entire being, it is in his service of the community. For this sublime example I bow myself before him and take the dust of his feet. Roy

then has attributed to me here the very opposite of my real thought. I could mention other smaller errors. This is enough to show the inexactitude of this interview and I do not speak at all of everything he has forgotten to note.

I do not question the sincerity of D. K. Roy ; it does not allow of discussion. And further I am sorry to have to contradict his account. It is disagreeable to me to complain against D. Roy who is a charming person, an excellent musician, with brilliant gifts, well-intentioned and who has always shown me a sympathy for which I am most thankful to him. He has written it in good faith.

Kindly accept, dear Swami Ashokananda, my brotherly greetings.

ROMAIN ROLLAND.

[*Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy's reply* : I am grateful to the Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata* for having sent me the letter of Monsieur Rolland early. I may say a word or two to obviate the misunderstanding of all and particularly of Monsieur Rolland whom I admire and love so much.

First of all, I plead guilty to his charge of having at places incorrectly reported him. I should have sent the report to him first for correction. The reason why I did not do so was that a few years back I had published a similar interview in *Current Thought* and Monsieur Rolland had thanked me kindly for the same. I received a similar letter of thanks from Bertrand Russell on my sending to him the report of my interview with him, published in *The Modern Review*, December, 1927. All this had emboldened me—a little unjustifiably perhaps—and I published the interview with Monsieur Rolland a little hastily. I trust Monsieur Rolland will read this reply of mine with the kind forbearance for which he has always been renowned and forgive me for my having given him pain as he points out in his letter. None would be more sorry for this than I who not only love him but have derived no small inspiration from his life and personal contact. Let me assure him that I will never forget the debt I owe him, and it is this consciousness which makes me feel all the more guilty in having reported him incorrectly.

A word or two as to the explanation of my error however :

When I heard from Monsieur Rolland about his desire to write a book about Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, I grew so enthusiastic that I did not pay much attention to all that he said about the origin of his desire, about the Schopenhauer Society and the rest. I wrote the interview not to belittle the philosopher who did not know anything about Vivekananda but to let my countrymen know about the disinterestedness of Monsieur Rolland who, in the midst of his great stress of multifarious activities, should have the time and the energy to write such a book about two great Indians. It is worthy of him and his wonderful

vision indeed, and it is this vision of his, which helped him so much in gaining the marvellous insight into the life and movements of Gandhi. To me this was the motive power of reporting the interview. Mahatma Gandhi I admire from the bottom of my heart and he knows it. I had not the slightest desire of insinuating that he lacked in ardour as to social service. I do not know myself, however, why I had the impression that Monsieur Rolland had asked me as to why he (Gandhi) did not go in for social work heart and soul. It is curious that I had and I ask the forgiveness of both in all humility and sincerity.

Only one thing I must say however in self-justification—though not for the purpose of contradicting Monsieur Rolland—when he says that Europe is not growing more and more self-centred vis-a-vis the world at large and the great men of Asia.

I must of course say at the outset that I accept Monsieur Rolland's statement to the effect that *he* had not made the above remark. Only I will try a little to explain why I had the impression that he had.

Russell had made exactly the observation which I have erroneously attributed to Monsieur Rolland, when I saw him at Cornwall in June, 1927. I had sent the report to him before publication and he had made some very minor corrections leaving this observation intact. I cite this as an objective proof that he did make the observation. (I have published Russel's letter of approval in *The Modern Review*.) Then, I had myself the impression this time that Europe was passing through a phase of jingoism and narrow nationalism just now. Men like Massis, Valery, Norman Angel and others corroborated my impression, though some of them regret it. Consequently when Monsieur Rolland wanted to deprecate the recrudescence of such chauvinism, I thought that he meant it more generally than he had intended. I trust Monsieur Rolland will understand this.

Nevertheless, I am very sorry for having wrongly reported him. Only I trust he will believe me when I say that the reason which impelled me to write the interview was that I wanted our countrymen to appreciate his greatness in undertaking such a disinterested task. Besides, my enthusiasm knew no bounds when he told me he was going to write a book about Ramakrishna-Vivekananda—the two men whom I have revered since the dawn of my religious consciousness. That is why I looked upon the other items as comparatively unimportant. For my errors, therefore, it is my enthusiasm which was to blame and not any deliberate desire to misrepresent.]

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE EDUCATIONAL WORK OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION—II

BY SWAMI NIRVEDANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

TYPE NO. 3.—DAY SCHOOLS

For our boys till they attain the age of puberty, much more useful service can be rendered through a day-school run on proper lines, than through a hostel. Just like the growth of their tender limbs, the growth of their intellectual and emotional faculties requires very careful and intelligent nursing. Each stage, infancy, childhood and adolescence, has its peculiar characteristics and the business of the teacher is to adjust the surroundings and activities of the individual in such a way that it may be gently led through all these stages and allowed to unfold, by a gradual and natural process, its various faculties like so many flower-blossoms. A child has to be just helped to grow and not sawed, planed and chiselled like a plank of wood. The teacher's task is more like that of the cultivator than that of the carpenter or mason. Formerly education in Western countries was supposed to resemble the work of a mason. Teachers presumed that they were to build in the pupils' mind an edifice of knowledge by piling up information on various subjects. Thus they used to thrust their own knowledge on the pupil without doubting for a moment whether the pupil's mind was fit for receiving it. But since the contributions of Restalozzi and Froebel, meant specially for the education of infants, the entire educational system for children and even youths in the West has undergone a revolution. Pedagogy has developed into a complete science and hundreds of experiments are being actually carried on there to make new researches regarding methods of teaching, school-discipline, etc. Pestalozzi and Froebel for the first time detected the fallacy of ignoring the pupil's mind as a subjective factor of education. Psychology of infancy, childhood, adolescence and youth has commenced to play a very important role in education and has become an interesting field for useful pedagogic research. The very function of education has been discovered to be mainly psychological in so far as it has been found to consist in simply helping the development of the

inborn faculties and not in stuffing the brain with information. *Repeated exercise of each of the faculties proceeding from inner impulse is all that is required for its healthy development. To arouse self-activity of the pupil for exercising its various faculties has therefore been ascertained to be the primary business of the teacher.* This has made the teacher's task immensely complicated ; for to rouse self-activity, the teacher is required to have an expert knowledge of the pupil's taste and capacity, which vary enormously with heredity, age and environment. Syllabus, routine, lessons, school-discipline have all to be based fundamentally on the psychological requirements of different groups of pupils classified at least according to age into three broad divisions, namely, infancy, childhood and adolescence ; otherwise the very object of developing the faculties has every chance of being frustrated. Every effort is made there to make each particular lesson easy and interesting ; succeeding lessons are graduated according to the growing power of the pupil's mind ; lessons on different subjects are co-ordinated as far as possible to save specially little ones from unnecessary mental strain ; pupils are led very gently from the known to the unknown, from the familiar to the unfamiliar, from the concrete to the abstract ; training of the senses, specially of sight and sound, is provided and first-hand observation is made to be the very basis of all knowledge ; training of the hand is imparted through manual work and this is made interesting by co-ordinating it with lessons on different subjects ; pictures, charts, models, maps, articles for object-lessons, articles for interesting games, together with hundreds of devices, are requisitioned for converting education of children into a kind of highly amusing play which can easily stir up the self-activity of the pupils for the natural unfoldment of their inborn faculties. What we have said in this connection does not suffice to give even a distant hint of the devoted attention, patient and systematic investigations and epoch-making achievements of the huge army of educators in the Western countries. Hundreds of books containing original contributions to various topics connected with school-education have already been published and strict measures are being adopted to put into practice at least the fundamental psychological principles. In some of the countries coercion of pupils has been penalised by legislation ; teaching has been made a subject for study, in which one has to specialise and obtain the necessary certificate just like a lawyer or the medical practitioner, before he is allowed to take up the profession of teaching.

In our country the state of things is quite different ; although the authorities here are trying very slowly to improve school-education in the light of the accepted methods of the advanced countries, we need not enter into any detailed comment to point out that in most of our schools pupils are still subjected to ideals and methods of education, which have long become obsolete in the West. Ideals and methods, which have absolutely no relation with the needs and capacities of the evolving mind of the pupil, may be called in this age of pedagogic enlightenment, simply barbarous. By inflicting this barbarous method upon the school-going population, we are perpetrating a horrible act of cruelty to the young ones of this country ; in the name of education we are unconsciously trampling upon their budding faculties, impeding their healthy growth and development of manhood. Our ignorance of modern methods cannot be excused and permitted to exonerate this positively criminal offence in view of the vast array of pedagogic publications before us.

Our young ones are as it were in a house on fire and they demand immediate relief. Unless they are relieved from the deadening pressure of this obnoxious system of school-education, most of them will have absolutely no chance for normal development. This is why we believe, vigorous efforts need be made for improving school-education and we shall serve the cause better if we can set up a few model day-schools thoroughly up-to-date in all respects and yet strictly loyal to all that is decidedly good and healthy in our old indigenous system.

TYPE NO. 3 (A).—DAY-SCHOOL FOR INFANTS

Such a school, even if it be meant solely for little children, requires, as a matter of absolute necessity, plenty of equipments and a good deal of expert knowledge. These are as much indispensable even for a modern infant-school as the school-premises or the school teacher. We shall indeed render a valuable service to the country if we can build up at least one such model institution for our infants, and find out by patient and systematic experiment how we may, with the strictest possible economy of men and money, adapt the perfectly rational and universal principles of pedagogic science to Indian conditions and requirements. Let us concentrate on rearing up at least one such school and try seriously to contribute as a result of our experiments something substantial to the important subject of rearing infant-education in India.

TYPE NO. 3 (B).—DAY-SCHOOL FOR BIGGER CHILDREN

For bigger children we shall do well to set up model day-schools separately for boys and girls. These also will require experts and equipments costing much more than infant-schools. We should estimate our strength before we launch any programme of a day-school of any variety. We should always remember that our strength and resources are limited and should always be conscious of the fact that we have to utilise them very carefully so that we may produce the greatest possible effect, which can be done by a thrifty use of our men and money after setting up a number of model types of institutions. We should never think that we shall serve the cause of education by simply establishing any number of stereotyped schools in the country.

TYPE NO. 3 (C).—FULL-FLEDGED DAY-SCHOOL

If after doing all that is needed for establishing and conducting one of the two model types for infants and bigger children, any of our centres can spare surplus men and energy, it may then and only then be permitted to extend the scope of the school by trying to evolve the remaining type. We should always remember that just as psychological requirements distinguish boys from girls, so do they distinguish little children of either sex from the bigger ones ; and this is precisely the reason why absolutely separate arrangements are to be made for each group if we at all intend to have an eye upon the quality of our work.

TYPE NO. 3 (D).—FULL-FLEDGED DAY-SCHOOL WITH BOARDING HOUSE

After finishing what is necessary for running day-schools both for infants and bigger children, if any of our centres can still spare energy and money, it may proceed to establish a hostel only for the bigger ones according to type 2 A. This will complete a full-fledged model school. In the process of evolution the hostel may precede or follow the establishment of the school. What we intend to emphasise is that we should clearly comprehend the requisites of each of the types separately and measure our strength carefully before attempting to give shape to any one of them.

Each of these types represents an institution either purely for boys or for girls.

TYPE NO. 4.—RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

A complete residential school after the ancient Gurukula system will undoubtedly have the greatest educational value. Boys below eight or nine should better live with parents or in nurseries conducted by female experts, because at this tender age they positively require much more loving care and attention than what they may possibly get from male teachers. In our ancient system also the age of admission was at or about nine when the *Upanayana* ceremony was usually performed. So by residential school we mean a school run on the lines of a Brahmacharya Ashrama, where boys from the age of eight or nine right up to the age of matriculation will reside and get their academic school education together with all that is necessary for a healthy and all-round growth of their body and mind.

A residential school therefore should be located in a healthy place and it must have environmental conditions conducive to physical and mental growth, and this is the first requisite of such an institution.

The second thing necessary is adoption of improved methods. We have already observed that so far as our school boys are concerned, no amount of arrangements for supplementary training for developing physique, efficiency and character will be of any avail until and unless the boys are relieved to a considerable extent from the deadening pressure of the unscientific and unnatural methods of teaching, which are commonly practised in our ordinary schools. Modern educationists are unanimous in believing *that the child's brain is a highly delicate organ and therefore requires very careful handling ; that the teacher's business consists solely in helping the natural unfoldment of its latent faculties ; that the teacher can help this process only by rousing self-activity of the boys, which is the most potent and indispensable factor for a healthy development of their faculties ; that this self-activity can be awakened only by loving and sympathetic attention to their actual need, taste and capacity ; that syllabus, routine methods of imparting lessons, school-discipline, all must conform primarily to these important psychological requirements of the boys.* If we consider in the light of this pedagogic knowledge what an ordinary school of our country is doing, we are simply shocked to find that *it is only a tyrants' house where wagon-loads of information on various subjects are thrust upon young minds by a Terroristic discipline and nobody cares to understand with*

sympathy even the obvious biological demands of the tender ones. We have already noted that unless we can mend this barbarous method and save our boys from the abnormal strain that is put upon them we cannot help them materially in any way. *This is the reason why in a residential school adoption of improved methods is a matter of absolute necessity.* Otherwise it can never be an ideal institution for the development of boys.

Then, of course, all that is needed for physical development and efficiency as well as character-building have certainly to be provided for. The requirements for these have been already noted in the first article. Arrangements for vocational training as mentioned in connection with high schools on the topic of vocational training in the previous article should also be made.

The very object of a residential school is to afford all possible facilities to each individual pupil so that it may have a healthy growth of body and mind, and this makes the task of conducting a residential school extremely difficult and complicated, requiring a good deal of expert attention and plenty of resources for necessary equipments. While building up a residential school we should remember that our immediate aim is to furnish the country with a model of a full-fledged institution for our boys, and this is precisely the reason why we should be particularly conscious of our responsibilities involved in the task and take special care always to measure our strength, and proceed very cautiously. *If we cannot procure the requisites for such an institution, we should see if we can develop any of the varieties of Type 3 ; if we cannot do even that, we should try to rear up either of the varieties of Type 2 ; failing that we should of course strive to do whatever we possibly can for Type 1.* If this be observed as a working principle by our centres, fixing their attention always on the strength they can command and the quality of work they may possibly produce with that, undoubtedly every one of them will contribute substantially towards the cause of education and hence towards the uplift of this country.

TYPE NO. 5.—INSTITUTIONS FOR POOR MIDDLE-CLASS BOYS AND YOUTHS

On principle, boys from poor middle-class families should be equipped primarily for improving the economic condition of their families and that with the minimum expenditure of time and energy on their part after education. So in any institution meant solely for them, vocational training should

be more prominent than academic education. Exceptions, of course, should be made for the specially brilliant ones. *An elementary training of the senses and reason, an elementary knowledge of the three R's, a general enlightenment through conversations and discourses together with a sound practical knowledge of one or two vocations* will be found sufficient for the education of most of the mediocre boys.

All the boys, therefore, in an orphanage irrespective of their parts should not be allowed to follow the High School course ; for this will mean indiscreet waste of time, energy and public money. A type of education covering all that have been said to be just sufficient for most of them has to be evolved by experiment at one of our institutions meant solely for poor boys.

Then regarding the vocational training which is to be the principal factor of their education, we should make it a point to consider that our middle-class boys are not usually strong and hardy enough to ply the trade of a carpenter or blacksmith or even that of a weaver. So carpentry, weaving and smithy may be arranged for only those who are physically fit ; but we should note that provision for vocations requiring much less muscular exertion is what is more urgent for the occupational training of average middle-class boys. The trade of a dentist or of an engraver may, for instance, suit many ; specialisation in repair works of various kinds may afford a number of suitable vocations.

Then in these institutions there should be nothing that may possibly depress the poor boys. 'Orphanage,' and such other names should better not be used. Such treatment should be accorded to them that they may never have the occasion to feel that they are charity boys. Charity boys should not on principle be made to collect alms ; this should be as a rule the function of the workers or volunteers from the public. If a number of paying students may be admitted, the educational value of the institution will be found to increase to a degree, for segregation of poor boys in a charitable institution is itself a pressure on the development of manhood.

Poor middle-class youths, who have passed the matriculation examination may reside in institutions of Type 2, which can arrange suitable vocational training for the dull and mediocre ones and higher university education for the brighter ones.

These are some of the types of institutions that have already begun to grow under our Mission for a healthy education of

boys and youths belonging to middle-class and aristocratic families. It has been already stated that in order to economise our strength we should concentrate on improving the quality of each, so that it may become a model of its kind and also turn out some 'real men.' This will beyond doubt help the cause of mass education.

MASS EDUCATION

Besides doing what is necessary for equipping middle-class youths, through the different types of institutions mentioned above, so that they may feel and work for the uplift of the masses according to their power, we should, especially through our village centres, make some direct effort for mass education. Our village centres should as a rule strive to dole out some sort of general education among the masses of the neighbourhood along with food and medicine which they usually distribute. Each of these centres may according to its capacity organise directly or through interested local people measures for utilising at least some of the following agencies for the spread of mass education.

1. Free Primary School—not a simple stereotyped *Pathshala*, but principally an elementary agricultural and industrial school as suggested in the previous article on the topic of vocational training in village schools.
2. Night School—for bare literacy as well as general enlightenment through pictures, charts, conversations and discourses,—mainly intended for those who have to work during the day.
3. Lantern Lectures—on important topics, such as *Religions*—instructive narratives from Puranas and lives of saints and seers, real import of religion, its relation with our principal social customs.
Science—hygiene and sanitation, improved agriculture and agricultural industries including dairy farming, home industries, co-operative organisation, trade and commerce in ancient and modern India, etc.
4. Exhibitions—organised during Utsabs or during Melas in the neighbourhood for giving an impetus to improvement of agriculture as well as handicrafts by awarding prizes. Lantern lectures on these occasions will prove highly beneficial.

5. Free Library.
6. Small Museum—for agricultural, industrial and commercial products, implements, pictorial charts, etc.
7. Demonstration Farms—for demonstrating and explaining improved methods of agriculture and allied industries.

In connection with the two types of schools mentioned above special arrangements for teaching Sanskrit language will surely be found to be highly useful for giving a cultural lift to the masses. Concerning lantern lectures, it may be noted that a new kind of "Kathakata" on the topics mentioned above, illustrated by lantern slides and accompanied by songs as usual, will prove to be an excellent device for general enlightenment of the masses.

The list of different types of institutions is far from being complete. The list contains only those types which have begun to develop under the auspices of our Mission. In view of the unemployment problem it would be highly useful to the country if it could develop, for instance,

- (i) a full-fledged Industrial School (for different varieties of profitable handicrafts) ;
- (ii) a full-fledged Agricultural School (after the Agricultural Institute at Allahabad run by American Christian Missionaries) ;
- (iii) a School of Arts and Crafts (run on the lines of the Lucknow Government School of Arts and Crafts).

These types are immensely useful no doubt, but we have to leave them till enormous funds required for each of them are forthcoming. But it may be observed that the earliest opportunity should be seized to develop a full-fledged Agricultural Institute where the students may get systematic lessons, theoretical as well as practical, on Farm Chemistry, Farm Physics, Botany, Elementary Zoology, Farm Crops and Elementary Economics, Horticulture and Climatology, Animal Husbandry, Elementary Irrigation and Drainage, Farm Machinery and Elementary Surveying.

Although we have suggested incorporation of agricultural and industrial courses in the curricula of our schools, orphanages and hostels, we cannot expect that any one of them will be able to provide for such a comprehensive training in agriculture or to provide for a systematic training in a large number of profitable industries and handicrafts. In most cases these

institutions will do well at present to place their pupils under expert craftsmen in their respective workshops, laboratories or places of trade or to send some of them to existing occupational schools, till we can rear up full-fledged agricultural or industrial schools.

Our survey of the general situation will be incomplete if we do not recognise the gradually awakening self-consciousness of our people in various fields of educational activity, showing unmistakably the signs of an Indian Renaissance. The defects of the present system of education have become obvious to most of our thinkers, and serious attempts for mending them are being made by many. Associations for physical culture and cultural education, schools and colleges for economic efficiency, Brahmacharya Vidyalayas and Gurukulas, organisations for mass education are coming into existence in different parts of our country.

When our people are beginning to feel keenly for sound education, the problem of financing our institutions, of course if they are conducted properly, will every day become easier. What a vast sum of money has been spent by the various Christian Missionary organisations after education in India through hundreds of primary schools, high schools, hostels, colleges and associations! And this has been provided mostly by enlightened charity from the West. We should remember the observation of Swami Vivekananda that our people are no less charitably disposed than Westerners,—only the channels of their munificence require to be diverted towards all that may contribute to a complete rejuvenation of our country. The rising self-consciousness of our people indicates that before long money will not be wanting to work any worthy scheme for the spread of man-making, character-building and life-giving education in India. Meanwhile we should work patiently remembering the motto uttered by our illustrious leader,—“Money does not make man, man makes money.”

(Concluded)

THE ROAD TO THE OCCULT

BY E. BARRINGTON (L. ADAMS BECK)

It follows as a natural result of the articles I have been writing on the subject of the occult that I am asked to describe the practical means of acquiring what are known in India as "the powers"—that is to say, the means of using natural force in a manner which, to those unacquainted with this peculiar system of psychology, will seem supernatural.

It is my own opinion that the West, now searching even passionately for a clue to the mysteries of psychology, will do well to listen to the voice of India on the subject.

The great authority, or rather the authority who collected knowledge and opinions on the occult in the second century B.C., is an Indian known by the name of Patanjali, whose "Yoga Aphorisms" survive to this day as the foundation-stone of the science of psychology, which in India is named "*Raja Yoga*," or the Royal *Yoga*, the word *Yoga* signifying union or concentration since it is only by union and concentration with or on the forces of nature that results can be achieved.

It must not be thought that Patanjali was the originator of this system. He only collected the experience, already very ancient, of many experimenters.

To begin with, India wholly denies that so-called "miracles," "answers to prayer" and the strange powers of faith are due to any supernatural intervention. She says: "Yes, they happen. They are often imitated, faked, but they happen, and abundantly, only they are never supernatural, for nothing exists in the universe which is not obedient to the law of nature."

India states that belief in the possibility of supernatural interferences with the law inculcates fear, superstition, and therefore cruelty. It belongs to the dark places of the earth and must be cast out by the clear daylight of knowledge.

To understand the mind and its powers, the search-light of the mind itself must be turned *inward* and steadily focused; and, if you come to think of it, that is the one thing which in the West we are never trained to do. Our whole system of education turns our minds to external things—the common branches of learning, observation of the world about us and so

forth. But to concentrate mental observation on the mind itself, to force it to self-analysis, is a thing rarely or never done in the West, where there is not one man in millions who can focus his mind on its own powers and, understanding, use them.

So the goal of this ancient science is concentration on the mind and its powers, and it demands no faith or belief. It demands only the hard discipline and training which would be needed for passing some high and difficult examination where the body, mind and spirit participated in the competition.

Raja Yoga, like Buddhism, is divided into eight steps. As a first step the student is trained and tested by the commands that there must be no slaughter for food and that truthfulness, honesty, continence and the avoidance of luxury must be made the basis of life. Life must be extremely simple, sane and wholesome.

The next step is the practise of extreme cleanliness of mind and body, contentment, renunciation of such practises as stand in the way of concentration, study, and self-surrender to discipline. To a student it must be impossible to injure any human being or animal by word, thought or deed.

It will be noted that these two foundations of the science of psychology are moral, and India declares that without them no man can really attain control. She does not deny that a man may in certain conditions have sporadic visions and flashes of power, but he will not have control, and sooner or later such knowledge as he has acquired without control will turn and rend him and possibly others. Therefore it is a very dangerous thing to adventure in this path without the moral foundation of perfect self-control.

It can be seen, I think, how universally this truth has been recognized by the various religions—which are more or less schools of psychology—in the disciplines they have laid down for their pupils.

Supposing the moral foundations well and truly laid, the next step is posture. Much discipline has to be worked through and a position easy and natural for the body must be found. A man must choose that position in which he can most easily forget his body. For it will be subjected to great changes during this discipline. Nerve currents will find new channels. New vibrations will be felt.

As the main part of these will be along the spinal column, that must be held free by sitting erect and holding the chest,

throat and head in a straight line supported by the ribs. A man sitting slouched, with the chest caved in, cannot concentrate. It requires a certain alertness and awareness.

After posture comes breathing-control. Stopping the right nostril with the thumb, inhale air through the left according to capacity, then without pause expel the air through the right, closing the left. Reverse the process, beginning with stopping the left nostril with the thumb. Practise this with three or five inhalations at four points of the day; before dawn, during midday, in the evening, and at midnight.

This is called the purifying of the nerves. The body must be kept in sound health, for when it is not it obtrudes itself and whines for attention. The thoughts must be as far as possible calmed and concentrated on the aim in view.

It is declared that after the first few months of steady effort one begins to find that the thoughts of people near one appear to one at first in dim and afterwards in clear picture forms. Or by concentrating all the energies upon something at a distance, a clear thought form of it will appear in the mind. Or by concentrating the thoughts (say) on the sense of smell one may perceive a beautiful perfume.

Flashes of such perception will tend to strengthen courage, but it must be remembered they are only marks of progress, and the end is the "freeing of the soul," as it is technically called. We are to remember that body and mind belong to us, but are not ourselves.

It may be said here that the early morning and the evening are the two best times for concentration. They are the hours of calm in nature—a calm reflected in the mind of man unless artificially obstructed. And one should not eat shortly before practising the lessons.

It is most important that all practise should invariably begin with thoughts of peace and good will sent out to all the world—but most especially to those against whom one may feel one has any grudge. There is a strong physical as well as spiritual reason for this, because when the body is disturbed with any ripple of fear or anger it is poisoned. It cannot function in peace. We know that fear can kill, that the angry nursing mother can poison her infant, that no function is normal under such influences and control is never complete.

It was not for mere piety's sake that the Christ exhorted His followers to pray for those "who spitefully use you," but

because He knew that unless this is done the spiritual attitude is hopelessly out of joint for attainment. It really matters very little about prayer, or deliberate thoughts akin to it, for those we love, because every current of our being, every vibration, is unconsciously and incessantly sweeping all good towards them. But the other is really important—in fact no control is possible without it—and with it comes peace.

For oneself, one's thoughts and desires should be always for nothing but knowledge and light. When that frame of mind is attained the goal is in sight.

Now comes a very interesting and compelling stage.

India believes in a something which may be summed up as the Omnipresent and All-penetrating, recognizing it as the quiescent energy which can be and is transmuted into form and force, and she believes also in a power which transforms or manifests this quiescent energy into the forms of the universe we know.

This force manifests itself as what we call thought-force, the nerve-currents of the body, and so down through all gradations to the lowest physical force. Scientifically it is known that the different forms of energy in the universe are interchangeable and indestructible, and their sum total of force is called in India *Prana*. The object of this discipline is to give control of this sum total of force.

Let us suppose—for there are, of course, many gradations in this knowledge—that a man partially understands the means of controlling this universal force. It must be realized that controlling this means controlling everything in the universe according to the degree of attainment. Knowing and understanding it, we know all, in so far as we can receive knowledge.

To acquire this control it has seemed to great Indian minds that any sacrifice was worth while, and this is the goal at which the true *yoga* discipline steadily aims. But I cannot too often insist that in certain conditions and vibrations a quite untrained mind may have a flash of it and its power, and that this is as dangerous as for an ignorant man to play about with uninsulated electric wires.

But in this system we may drill and discipline our own bodies and minds and, acquiring control of the little ripple of universal force which is ourselves, launch outward into the great ocean. Consider at this point how in all countries people are attempting to control this force without understanding its A B C's—healers, hypnotists and many more. Is it not wiser to learn the way?

The simple steps I have already given sound ridiculously inadequate to the aim, but what they give first is control of the muscles, and that is very important in a world where everything is related with everything else.

I used when a child to say that I could not imagine why health had not been made infectious instead of disease. I have learned that, rightly understood, it has. The vibrations of bodies can be transferred to one another for strengthening and healing. And as to personal control, it is told of a modern Indian teacher skilled in this science that when in pain he was able to transfer his consciousness from the seat of pain and suffer no more.

In true faith-healing it is not by rousing faith that the cure is accomplished ; it is by raising the vibrations of the patient into accord with your own highest vibrations. That vibration will be a higher or lower one according to your stage of attainment.

Take some very eloquent educated speaker on religion and he fills his church or hall and there it ends. Take a certain camel-driver in Arabia, Mohammed, and the consuming force in him became a sword that armed millions and may yet drench the world in blood and tears. Take Nelson with such a whirling force in his frail little body that when he looked a man in the face "The spirit of Nelson was on him and each was Nelson that day," and his name is immortally one with Victory. Or take Napoleon, the shabby Corsican with eyes whose fire none could face unmoved.

We call this genius, and wonder at its mysteries, but need not. It is *Prana*, the universal force, sometimes possessing, sometimes controlled by a man, sometimes consciously, wisely and helpfully, sometimes unconsciously and perilously, but always force irresistible.

But through discipline and meditation lies the only way of attainment. Is it realized how little any of us use our minds and think at all? We watch a series of outside pictures imperfectly presented to our minds and there our mental life begins and ends. With such a passive attitude nothing can be achieved.

Now comes a state which can only be believed through experiment. For the description may be symbolic or a parable, but the result is there.

It is taught in India that along the spinal column is a nerve-current on either side and a canal running through the spinal cord. At the base of this canal is a storage of nerve-power which must be roused into action by the above discipline and which, when roused, like a mounting tide attempts to ascend the canal

running through the spinal cord. As the tide of nerve-power rises, layer after layer of mental power is opened up until, when it reaches the brain, the inner, the true self becomes detached from the bonds of the mind and the body and acquires control of both.

It is taught that only those who are skilled in the discipline can open this canal in the spinal column, but that the nerve currents on either side act in all, though uncontrolled. The opening of this canal for the transmission of power is perhaps the most important stage in the discipline. The way to it is by regulated breathing, steadily practised.

The power of perfect rhythm is being very gradually realized in the West. In Asia the very workman turns his blow or stroke or pull into pure rhythm, using generally some sacred word as the beat. So in the practise of *yoga* it is usual to time and make rhythmic the breathing—as taught above—by using some sacred word as the beat. The one generally used is “AUM,” the ancient word which represents the Trinity, and this word flows in and out harmoniously with the breath until both become automatic.

This applies especially to the second lesson in breathing, where measured breaths are taken, using the nostrils alternately, filling the lungs through each nostril in turn and exhaling the air through the other. It is claimed that the use of this exercise over a considerable time will result in such calming and rhythmic influences throughout the body that harsh lines disappear from the face and the tone of the voice assumes new beauty.

And after this comes another stage. As you fill the left nostril with air, stopping the right nostril with the thumb, concentrate the mind on the nerve-current it produces. Then close both nostrils with the thumb and forefinger and believe that you are sending the nerve-current down the spinal column and striking on the store of force at its base. Hold it there awhile. Believe then that you are slowly drawing out that nerve current with the breath, and taking the thumb off the right nostril, expel the breath. Do the same, beginning with inhalation through the left nostril.

Unused as we are to full breathing in the West, this should only be begun with four seconds' inhalation, or less, retaining the air for sixteen seconds and expelling it in eight. Think always of the force at the base of the spinal column while you do this breathing. Four times in the morning and four times in the evening are enough for the beginner, and the exercise must be very slowly increased.

It is taught that with this discipline all the sexual forces can be transmuted into purest energy and that this is why in all the faiths chastity has been proposed as a most exalted virtue—a circumstance otherwise difficult of explanation in some respects. This accounts for the fact that every faith—or psychological school—has instituted a monastic discipline, sometimes without clearly explaining or itself understanding the reasons for its actions. It is simply that under a recognized rule of men or women vowed to celibacy, there may very likely appear—as has often happened—the great psychological expert, from the fact that the sexual force is directed to the subconscious* rather than in the usual channel.

Then comes the next stage. The mind must be freed from being controlled by the representations of the senses. Nothing can be achieved without this. The mind leaps about from thought to thought like a monkey in the boughs of a tree. It cannot fix or concentrate. It spills over on everything. You cannot hold it to one thought, for, slippery as an eel, it escapes you and is gone.

You must unharness it from the hastily running pictures of the senses and by practise quiet it and reduce the waves to ripples and the ripples to a mirroring calm. At this stage becomes possible the deep calm of concentrated meditation which in Asia is called “the one-pointed state of mind,” when the mind, conscious of its grip that nothing can relax, clenches itself on to some chosen object, turns it inside out, sees it through and through and absorbs it into perfect union.

And in this attainment the next step is to reharness the mind to far other things than the sense impressions. Fix your mind, for practise, on some point in the body and imagine the body and mind as filled with light. It is good to focus on light, for that supports the imagination in several obvious ways.

At this stage sounds will be heard like music, seeds of light may be seen floating in the air. And so, by this focusing and concentrating, every part of the body can be gradually brought under control. Men skilled in the discipline can bring the very heart-beat under perfect control. And when all these things are attained, and the body is an obedient slave and no longer master, comes the attainment of the higher consciousness which is called *samadhi*.

India teaches that beyond reason, beyond all mental powers

* Not *subconscious*, but *superconscious*.—Ed.

is a state of consciousness in which the highest wisdom and power are attainable.

As I have said before, a man may stumble sometimes into this state. He will then believe that what he has learned is an inspiration from outside himself or a divine intervention, and will probably surround his knowledge with hallucinations, explaining it by such knowledge as he has hitherto possessed.

Take the case of Mohammed. He rose into this higher consciousness, untrained, undisciplined. He reports that the Angel Gabriel set him on the heavenly horse Borak and he visited the heavens. Yet that man beheld wonders of truth and in the Quran truth and superstition are distractingly blended. So with many other famous instances.

But in *Yoga* all the different stages, physical, mental, spiritual, meditative and so forth, lead scientifically and in gradual development to this state of higher consciousness in which the force and knowledge of the universe are open to a man as a treasury from which he may help himself according to his capacity.

It is impossible that in a brief article like this I should do more than sketch the hasty outlines of a vast subject. I should say much more on meditation, its subjects and objects, on the patience necessary, the strict rule, and much else. For some the way is much easier and simpler than for others. I suppose that is conditioned by the state of evolution already reached. For all round us are souls in different degrees of evolution and the battle there, as always, is to the strong.

I will give a short Indian parable which expresses the instant union that may befall some, for it has a general application.

A great *Yogi* passed through a forest and by a man who had been sitting there long absorbed in discipline and meditation, and this devotee asked, "When shall I attain full knowledge?" The *Yogi* replied, "In four more births," and the man wept in despair. "So long yet! So little done!"

He passed another who asked the same question. He answered: "As many leaves as you see on this tree, so many births await you before you receive full knowledge." A flood of joy transfigured the questioner's face. "So soon? And I who have done so little!" And even as those words passed his lips he received full knowledge and enlightenment, for he had perceived the truth that time is nothing in the attainment of wisdom.

I feel I have said little and there is so much which should be said. This austere Indian wisdom sounds very strange in the clash and hurry of modern life. And when I give the following description of the true disciple of psychological science it is like a lost music, exquisite but out of reach.

Abiding alone in a secret place, without craving or without possessions, he shall take his seat on a firm seat, and, with the working of the mind and senses held in check, so let him meditate and thereby reach the Peace. He who knows the boundless joy that lies beyond the senses and is grasped by intuition, he who swerves not from the truth, is as a lamp in a windless place that does not flicker.

Yet it is attainable, and to those who have attained even a step, which of earth's prizes can seem worth a moment's consideration?

As men do children at their games behold,
And smile to see them, though unmoved and cold,
Smile at the recollected joys, and then
Depart and mix in the affairs of men—
so are those who have attained a little knowledge of the psychological prizes awaiting the seeker.

Yes, these are truly the affairs of men. The world and its societies have been formed from chaos by men who have seen these things, have entered into realization of them, and so swayed the minds of the peoples into some faint responsive harmony with their vision. What right have persons to speak on the subject of true psychology who have not studied along the lines of those who have attained and have wielded the powers which have transmuted the world?

It is a great and possible power to heal the sick, to walk on the water, to penetrate the thoughts of others, to transport oneself through space, and all these and many more are there for the taking if one will but learn; but these are little things beside the power of transmuting the thoughts of other men into an energy that shall possess the world with the realization of the universe as it truly is and of their place in it. And it is only along the path so poorly indicated in these pages that this has been done, for this path has been trodden consciously or unconsciously by all the great seers.

And what interest can compare with it? Here is a source of energy almost untapped which connects with every form of force, physical, mental and spiritual, which exists. I wish

I had more space to explain more clearly and more fully what I know, for these are the things at which the West is blindly aiming through spiritualism, hypnotism and what not.

Let it be steadily remembered that the physical control, though long and arduous, is only the gateway leading to mental control, which in turn leads to the spiritual control, subconscious or otherwise, of oneself and that which is also oneself—the world or universal force.*

NEWS AND REPORTS

Bankura Famine Relief—An Appeal

A terrible famine has broken out in Bankura, Bengal. Scarcity of drinking water and the scorching heat of the summer have aggravated the misery of the people. The inhabitants of Bankura are proverbially poor. Their sufferings are hardly known to the wealthy citizens of big towns.

The Ramakrishna Mission has opened relief centres there. But our work has been greatly handicapped for want of suitable funds. The cry of distress is everywhere. But our area of activity cannot be extended with the limited funds at our disposal. Therefore our appeal goes, in the name of our suffering countrymen to the generous public to help us in the relief measures taken to save the famine-stricken people from discord, starvation and a painful lingering death.

All contributions may be sent to any of the following addresses which, however small, will be gratefully accepted and duly acknowledged.

The President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, (Howrah);
 Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar or Manager,
 Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Muktaram Babu Street, Calcutta.

Vedanta Society, Portland

We have received a report of the Society's activities during the last year, from which we extract the following. The reporter writes:—
 Society writes:—

While our membership has not fallen off, it has shifted somewhat. In September the location of the Center was changed. The new chapel is nearer the heart of the downtown section of the city. Since entering the new location the attendance of all the public lectures has shown a marked increase. The Sunday evening lectures specially being nearly always given to comfortably filled house.

During the year under review besides giving lectures on Vedanta on various subjects, Swami Prabhavananda has given series of lectures

* From *Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan*, New York.

on the following : 1. Buddhism ; 2. The Philosophy of the Upanishads ; 3. World Teachers ; and 4. Yoga and Mysticism.

The series of lectures on Buddhism was given early in the year to small but interested audiences. It covered the life of Buddha, his teachings and the influence of his philosophy. In many ways the group of discourses dealing with the philosophy of the Upanishads was one of the greatest studies ever given in this city. The full course was open to the public, affording perhaps the greatest opportunity ever offered in this part of the west, to come in touch with the highest philosophy. The group of lectures upon the World Teachers was perhaps, the most popular course Swami has offered. This series too was open to the public, and covered the lives and teachings of Krishna, LaoTze, Zoroaster, Buddha, Christ and Ramakrishna. With the series dealing with Yoga and Mysticism, the Swami closed the year's work. It was so arranged that the lectures covered the regular Sunday services and the two week day classes, for the latter part of the month of February. It was an intensely interesting course of lessons and lectures. The Society made a special effort to advertise the series. Much interest and enthusiasm was aroused and a number of applications for membership were made.

In the regular class work, the study of the Gita was finished. The lessons in Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms and lessons from the Bible are being continued. The first Friday night of each month is question night, with the public invited. Much interest has been aroused in these meetings by the Swami's interesting method of conducting them. Instead of writing out the questions as formerly, each person states verbally his enquiry. Sometimes the Swami will answer directly, then again he will call upon the students in turn to state their views. Thus opinions are expressed and viewpoints clarified; while at the close of each discussion, Swami never fails to give a satisfactory summary.

During the month of October Swami Prabhavananda, at the urgent request of friends living in St. Louis, Missouri, spent two weeks in that city lecturing with great success to large and enthusiastic audiences. A permanent interest was created through these lectures and a center established. Swami Akhilananda is expected to take charge of the center in a short time. During Swami Prabhavananda's absence in the east the activities of the Portland Center were continued in charge of the students.

Since Christmas day fell upon a Sunday this year, it was fittingly observed with special devotional services at the regular Sunday morning service hour. In the evening the Swami gave a masterly discourse on "Jesus, a World Teacher." To many of the students and friends this was one of the best lectures Swami Prabhavananda has delivered in Portland.

The Society also celebrated the birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.
