

Prabuddha Bharata

OR AWAKENED INDIA

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SEPTEMBER, 1929

“Love shall win the victory. Do you love your fellowmen? Where should you go to seek for God—are not all the poor, the miserable, the weak, Gods? Why not worship them first? Why go to dig a well on the shores of the Ganges? Believe in the omnipotent power of Love. Have you love? You are omnipotent. Are you perfectly unselfish? If so you are irresistible. It is character that pays everywhere. Your country requires heroes; be heroes. Love never fails, my son; to-day, to-morrow or ages after, truth will conquer. Love shall win the victory. Do you love your fellowmen?”—Swami Vivekananda.

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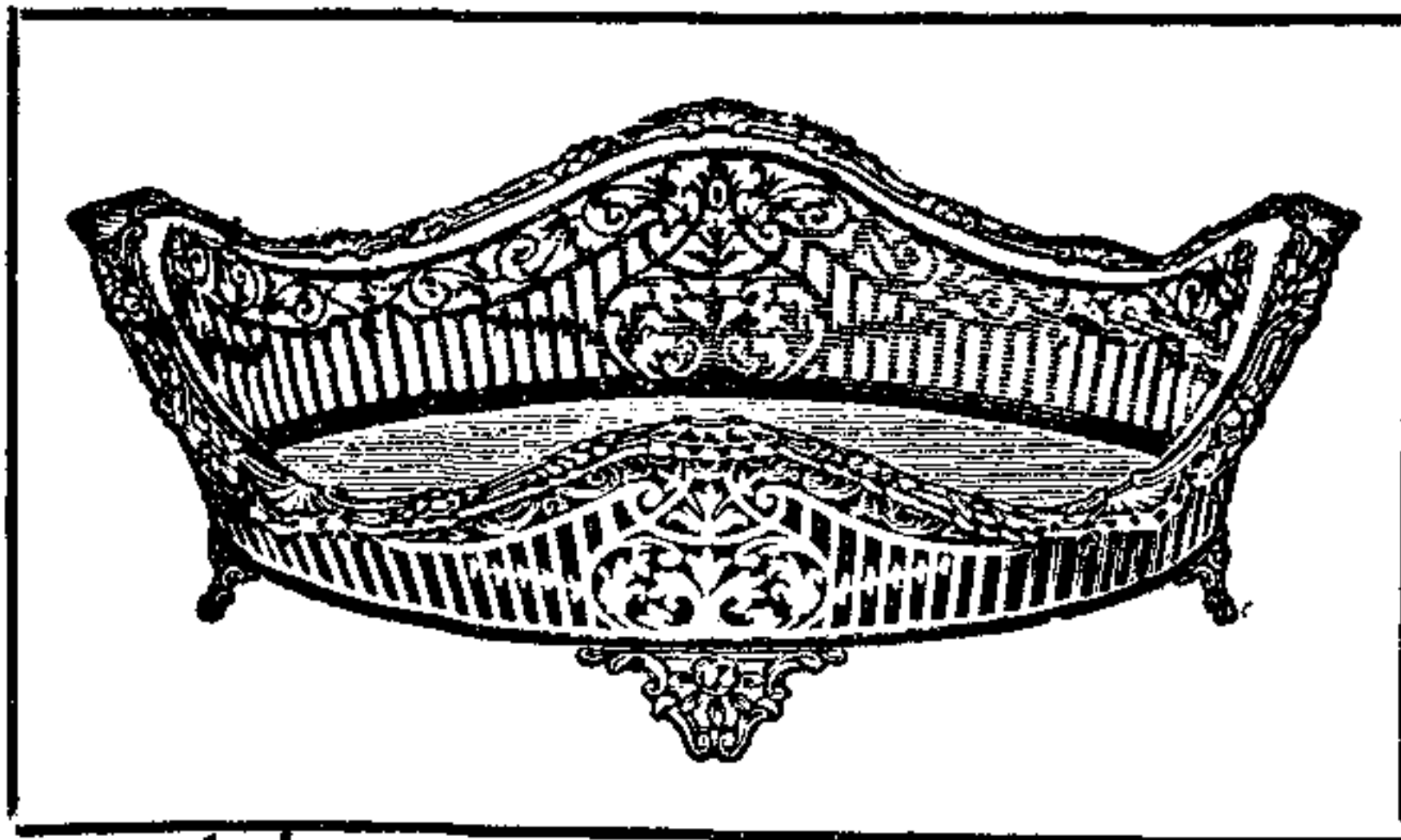
PRABUDDHA BHARATA

SEPTEMBER, 1929

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Prabuddha Bharata

SEPTEMBER, :1929

Volume XXXIV



Number 9

“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA XVI

(To an American Friend)

ALMORA,
9th July, 1897

* * * * *

“He who is in you and outside of you,
Who works through all hands,
Who walks on all feet,
Whose body are all ye,
Him worship, and break all other idols !

“He who is at once the high and the low,
The sinner and the saint,
Both God and worm,
Him worship—visible, knowable, real, omnipresent,
Break all other idols !

“In whom is neither past life
Nor future birth nor death,
In whom we always have been
And always shall be one,
Him worship. Break all other idols !

“Ye fools ! who neglect the living God,
And His infinite reflections with which the world is full,
While ye run after imaginary shadows,
That lead alone to fights and quarrels,
Him worship, the only visible !
Break all other idols !”

* * * * *

XVII

(To an American Friend)

SAN FRANCISCO,
7th April, 1900.

But I am more calm and quiet now than I ever was. I am on my own feet, working hard and with pleasure. To work I have the right. Mother knows the rest.

You see, I shall have to stay here longer than I intended, and work. But don't be disturbed. I shall work out all my problems. I am on my own feet now, and I begin to see the light. Success would have led me astray, and I would have lost sight of the truth that I am a Sannyâsin. That is why Mother is giving me this experience.

My boat is nearing the calm harbour from which it is never more to be driven out. Glory, glory unto Mother! I have no wish, no ambition now. Blessed be Mother! I am the servant of Ramakrishna. I am merely a machine. I know nothing else. Nor do I want to know. Glory, glory unto Sri Guru!

SO SIMPLE YET SO COMPLEX

BY THE EDITOR

I

It is a sign of the times, and a good sign, that enlightened minds (that is to say, those of them who believe in religion) everywhere in the world are talking of the universal religion, of the harmony or synthesis of religions. Of course, this desire for the universal religion is not always genuine. There are fake articles also. In many cases, this is only another form of that claim which used to consider one's own religion as the best and those of others as inferior or false. This is true specially of many Christian missionaries. When they speak of universal religion, they only mean, we have noted, what they have always meant, namely, that Christianity is the only saving religion. Only nowadays they condescend that other religions also have some good points in them, which however can be perfected only in and through Jesus Christ.

But there is no denying that professions of the universal religion or

harmony of religions are also often genuine. This phenomenon is nothing to be wondered at. The peoples of the world have come in close contact with one another; and just as there has been interchange of commodities, there has also been interchange of thoughts. And how can a comparison between the different systems of thought be helped? And then, in spite of everything, the humanity of mankind cannot be gainsaid. All are men. Necessarily there must be communion between them and consequent fusion. The process is going on and is bound to be more and more rapid with the passing of days. As a result a basic thought is gradually evolving, systematising the various thought-currents and aspirations of the world, and interlinking them. The thought of men has to become as it were an organism. The consciousness of this impelling need is growing clearer every day. Thinking minds everywhere are feeling its impact. They feel that religion has to be seen in a new light and that there must be

a revision of their attitude towards the different religions.

But if wish were everything, the earth would have become a heaven by this time. A mere wish or a mere intellectual understanding is nothing. There must be *Sādhanā* behind,—hard struggle till the idea has become a reality. Those who have studied the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna closely, know how difficult it is to truly realise the spirit of universal religion or harmony of religions. What hard austerities did he not undergo in order to realise it! He cleared his mind of the least prejudice and thus realised the pure unmixed truth. But we content ourselves with a little intellectualising and then air our views on universal religion or harmony of religions. We hope we shall be pardoned if we say that we often find much confusion of ideas in those professed views. There is comparatively little understanding of the universal religion as it really is.

One fruitful cause of confusion is that very few of us *practise* religion seriously. If we practise, we can know the inner significance of religion and its nature and ways correctly and minutely. As it is, we have only some *ideas* about religion, and not the reality of it. We judge it intellectually and miss the substance. This was apparent in an opinion expressed in a Christian paper some time back. The writer considered universal religion as something which has outgrown all errors and imperfections and has thus become worthy of the reverence of all men. This conception is naive but not real. One reason why he conceived such an idea of the universal religion is that his view of religion is mainly intellectual. Had he practised religion seriously, he would have found that the needs of the intellect are not the same as the needs of the heart and life. Religion to be worth the name must engulf and remould our whole personality. And one's personality is a queer thing.

What intellectually is very nice often does not satisfy our inner being.

II

The fact is, religion has to be conceived from two different standpoints, subjective and objective. Most of us consider it from the objective viewpoint. And hence most misunderstanding. When we speak or think of religion, we often confuse the two viewpoints and the whole truth is seldom reached or expressed. What is the difference between them?

By religion we often mean a creed. We study a people ;—we find that they have certain beliefs regarding supernatural entities and their nature and their relations to their worshippers. They observe certain rites and customs. They have a mythology. And all these they uphold on the basis of a philosophy, ill conceived or well. We study all these different elements and form an opinion about the religion of the people. What is our standard of judgment? As mankind is progressing, it is enquiring into the nature of reality and soul, and is trying to find out the nature of the ultimate good. It has thus accumulated a fund of knowledge by which it can judge which is higher and which is lower among the different religious outlooks. Suppose philosophic enquiry has convinced us that the reality in itself is an indeterminate Divine Substance, infinite and eternal and that the individual soul is really identical with that Divine Substance. Let us suppose that we have also been convinced that the ultimate good consists in knowing one's real self. If this is the highest conception of religion, then it becomes easy to judge which religions are the highest and which lower. Such knowledge and such judgments, however, are only objectively true. This is essentially an intellectual estimate of religion. This way we do not get a full knowledge of religion. We have also to know it subjectively.

Religion is not a matter of opinion or intellectual conviction merely. We may have come to know intellectually that the highest religion is the realisation of oneself as the Divinity Itself. But when it comes to actual realisation, we shall find that we are not fit to realise even the very low dualistic ideals. Our philosophical knowledge will be of little avail. We may think that God is formless and infinite. But when we want to perceive Him, we shall find that our mind is so gross and obtuse that it cannot conceive even a subtle idea, what to speak of perceiving the spirit. This lamentable disparity between intellectual comprehension and capacity to realise is the fate of almost all men in the world. We have progressed too far in ideas. But we lag far far behind in perception. The result is that our intellectual convictions always conflict with our spiritual practices.

But that is not all. There is also the question of inclinations. An intellectual estimate of religion is apt to forget that our likes and dislikes create preferences. Intellectually, a religious ideal may appear superior. But we may not like it. We may feel drawn to an ideal which may be, objectively considered, inferior. Yet our life's fulfilment would be possible through the lower ideal and not the so-called higher one. Our experience, not of this life only, but of all past lives, stands behind our choice of religious ideals. One's experience invariably differs from another's. There will necessarily be differences of choice.

Then again there are history and environments. A people's past history and present social, political, economical, racial and cultural circumstances have a deep determining influence on the development of its religious ideas. For they all concern and affect life.

Now these and many other factors make our intellectual judgment of religion of little value in practical life. We are compelled to take an inside view of religion. We require to see it

as it is actually practised and as it succours and fulfils life. And when we do so, we find that an intellectual determination of value is after all a secondary consideration. An ounce of practice is much better than tons of theories. If that is so, what does it matter which is the highest religion from the objective view-point, when we know that few, very few are fit and inclined to practise it? This factor of inclination is a very important one. Judged from its standpoint, there cannot be higher or lower among the religious ideals. Suppose one likes the *Bhakti* ideal more than the ideal of *Jnâna*. *Jnâna* may, intellectually speaking, represent a superior ideal. But what does it matter when it comes to the question of choice? We choose according to our aptitude. And for one, *Bhakti* may prove the most attractive and thus the best. Of course there are gradations in each religious ideal, and thus higher and lower. But no higher or lower among the different religious ideals so far as individual choice is concerned. Let every man have what he really can or is inclined to practise. Every man's *Dharma* is the best for him. Only let him practise it with sincerity and earnestness. This is the subjective view. It considers above all the practicability of religion and not merely its theoretical excellence. Those who do not seriously practise religion forget this essential consideration. Hinduism is very particular about it. This it terms as *Adhikâri-bheda*,—every man will have a religion according to his spiritual fitness.

Now, if there is to be a universal religion, can it be a religion? Non-Hindu preachers of universal religion say, Yes, and by this they at once show their ignorance of the inwardness of religion and of the characteristics of the universal religion. For when we want to exalt a particular credal religion to the position of universal religion, what we intend to do is to impose that creed on all, without considering whether people are fit or inclined to practise it.

Take the attitude of those Christian missionaries who profess that Christianity is the universal religion. Whether Christianity is the highest religion we shall see later on. But supposing that it is so, is every man fit to practise it? There are many psychological considerations which are easily overlooked in thrusting it on all alike. It cannot be really practised by all. Christ represents a type of religion which requires a highly developed spirit of renunciation. One must have a surfeit of the enjoyment of the world before one can realise the Christ-spirit to any appreciable degree. Without this pre-requisite, the religion of the Christ can but be poorly practised and realised. And since the West has scarcely fulfilled this condition, Christianity has failed there as a deep spiritual force. It would be manifestly wrong to say that Christianity has no influence there. But we are not here speaking of religion as a social force, but as a means of spiritual experience. In this sense Christ has no very large place in the heart of the West. What is wanted is not a verbal allegiance to a religious ideal, but the transcendence of the limits of matter and accession to the realm of spirit. We must realise the superconscious. We must *experience* it. And that religion is best for one, which advances one *most easily and quickly* towards that experience. In order to achieve quick results we have to choose a religion which is suitable to our generally gross and worldly nature. But the missionaries have no consideration for this need. They must thrust their Christ on every one.

The universal religion is, therefore, one which has within it many different gradations of spiritual ideals and practices, which can best respond to every one's spiritual needs according to his *Samskâras*, aspirations, experiences and inclinations, and his social and other circumstances. It cannot be one particular creed, however exalted. For no single creed can ever satisfy the infinitely various minds of mankind.

It must, therefore, be an aggregate of infinitely various and sometimes even contrary creeds. It must subsume the lowest as well as the highest religious views,—*it must provide for all*.

It will be at once said that the universal religion has then always been existing. For all the creeds of the world taken together do actually form the universal religion, and nothing new is to be evolved. In a sense, this is true. The universal religion may be said to have been existing since the discovery of *Advaitism* (for we cannot progress further when the Unity has been reached). But in another sense, this is not true. For a thing may be existing, but unless and until we become conscious of it and apply it to the details of our life, such existence means little to us. What is required is that we must become conscious of the universal religion. And the necessary adjustment will follow. And what a readjustment! Till now we have been shut up within our own views of life and reality and we have opposed those of others, nay, we have sometimes even extirpated them for these differences of views. Now we have to give up this exclusive and inimical attitude and make peace with others; and we have to examine our own views in the light of the other views and reform them whenever and wherever necessary.

III

But is the universal religion a mere aggregate of the different creeds and a mere recognition of their existence? Does it not imply any organic relations among these different creeds? Is it not to be accepted as an organic whole, capable of development? We answer, Yes. No, it is not a mere loose aggregate. It is an organic entity and has to be conceived and perceived as such. In this, the objective view of religion is somewhat necessary and useful. For the intellect also must be satisfied. We have to take into account the different spiritual ideals of the differ-

ent creeds and their respective experiences, and have to systematise them according to their metaphysical values. In so doing we have to evaluate spiritual experiences both from the ontological and the psychological standpoint. That is to say, we must divest them of their theological garbs. We shall not discuss it here, but we shall assume that monism represents the highest view of reality: only *Brahman* is, which is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, the world is only an appearance, false, and the individual soul is really *Brahman* Itself. If this is the conclusion of the highest metaphysics, then psychologically speaking, all dualistic and semi-dualistic practices and experiences are but steps to that monistic realisation. We can thus roughly classify religions according to these three main gradations,—dualistic, qualified monistic and monistic. So far about the credal goals. As regards their methods also, a general systematisation is possible according to the main faculties of the human mind, knowing, feeling and willing. If we study the various methods employed by the votaries of the different creeds of the world, we shall find that they are characterised by either *Jnâna* (Knowledge), *Bhakti* (Love) or *Karma* (Action). The methods may be purely *Jnâna Yoga*, *Bhakti Yoga* or *Karma Yoga*, or their mixtures. There is also another method. It is found that spiritual progress through any of those paths is achieved by a transformation of being, characterised by certain signs and states, physiological and mental. The books on *Yoga* have characterised them to be eightfold. Why not, then, bring about those changes directly? This is called *Râja Yoga*, the path of psychical transformation. All creeds advocate one, more or all of these four processes, in either pure or mixed forms. Thus systematisation of religions is possible both as to goals and methods, *i.e.*, philosophies and practices. The systematisation of the mythologies may be difficult, but they

are not after all so essential, and their evaluation and consequent systematisation through their psychological values are not impossible. It is all objective, however, it must be remembered. And this objective organisation of the world's creeds has already been made in essential forms by the *Vedânta* philosophy. The *Vedânta* philosophy correlates the different grades of religion and is thus the intellectual basis of the universal religion.

But that is only the outer aspect, most negligible; and though it is beneficial to some extent, it may also breed misunderstanding unless it is based on a subjective systematisation, on an actual experience of religions as interlinked realities. How is that to be done? The means that may immediately suggest itself is to take the specialities of each religion or creed, practise them and make a sort of combination of them. This is the way that was resorted to by Keshab Ch. Sen. But it is not real. It lacks organic relationship. We may pluck beautiful flowers from a garden and make them into a bouquet which, if arranged cleverly, may look beautiful. But we know, the flowers are not organically related thereby and the bouquet will fade and drop down very soon. And even if it lasts, it will form only another new creed. The real secret lies deep down in the human nature. A religion in its higher stages of development, absorbs the entire being of man. The goal when it is reached, is not apprehended by only a part of the mind or being. It is really the transformation of our entire being. As such, if the ideal of a particular religion is to be realised, we must above all mould our being after its pattern. Those who are content with realising only one credal ideal in life, has an easy task. But if we want to realise the universal religion which, as we have seen, contains all the different ideals of all the religions, we have to mould our personality after the patterns of all those ideals. Apparently an

impossible task. For there are innumerable psychological divergences between those credal ideals. One instance will suffice. We may establish different relationships with the Divinity. We may look upon Him as our Father or Mother, or as our Brother or Lover. How can we look upon Him as Mother and Lover at the same time? And yet, if the universal religion is to be realised, we have evidently to accomplish even the impossible. But how?

We see the secret in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. We do not mean the method he followed in realising the different religions, which was to practise each religion separately. We refer to the psychological condition that lay behind that practice and also throughout his latter life. He had a mind which was in itself absolutely transparent. It had no special leaning to any particular creed. It had no bias. It was extremely mobile and formless. It was not set into any fixed form. Those who follow any particular creed, have their mind moulded into a fixed shape. It cannot be harmonised with the moulds of other creeds. It is rigid. But the mind and being of Sri Ramakrishna was colourless, transparent, transcendent and formless. It, therefore, could be transformed into any required shape under inspiration, and then, so long as that particular inspiration lasted, he was entirely, to the very bottom of his being, of that creed. Time and often he illustrated this in his life. Suppose some one sang a song to him about Sri Krishna as the lover of the cowherd maidens of Brindavan. The moment he heard this, he was filled with the inspiration, the *Bhâva*, of that spiritual outlook, and he was completely transformed into a cowherd maiden of Brindavan, adoring and yearning for Sri Krishna. And then if any one spoke or sang of other *Bhâvas* or spiritual moods and outlooks, they jarred on him and caused him excruciating pain. At another time he would be filled with

the *Bhâva* of the Divine Mother. And then the *Bhâva* of the *Gopis* would jar on him. He would then be the little child of the Divine Mother, and nothing else.

The realisation of the universal religion, then, is nothing else than creating that psychological condition which was adaptable to all moods, and making one's personality absolutely pure and spiritual, transparent and mobile. So long as there is the least desire for earthly enjoyment, gross or subtle, so long we cannot make our being completely pure. For desires make the mind cling to the phenomenal world and thus encrust it with the fixity of shape. One must be like the air filling every space but untrammelled by none. One must be like water, itself without shape, but adaptable to any shape. One must not have a special inclination for any particular credal ideal. One must be, in short, more and more like God Himself, who is everything, but is not fixed or bound by anything. We do not dissect the different creeds and take the beautiful parts of each to combine them into a fantastical form. We take each creed in its entirety and realise its ideal fully. We do not make any change in the creeds themselves. The change is in our mind and being. Thus we may become Christian, Muhammadan, Buddhist, *Vaishnava*, *Shâkta*, or *Shaiva* at will and fully and completely. This is the subjective systematisation of the creeds of the world. This is the realisation of the universal religion.

How to bring about the necessary psychological condition? We shall not discuss that here. We dwelt on it in our last March article. Is it possible for us ordinary men to realise the universal religion? As the conditions are at present, it must be confessed its realisation will not be plentiful. But it is also true that circumstances are changing rapidly, and the world-conditions are impelling the human mind to outgrow credal limits and become more and more universal in

outlook. There is the fear of our growing universal at the expense of the wealth of the particulars. That sort of universality will neither enrich our own self nor last and harmonise with the world-conditions permanently. There is the other, the real, universality which comprehends the particulars, and this is what the world seeks to-day. We believe the times are propitious and even this most difficult ideal is easier to realise in the present age. Though we may not realise it in full, we can surely do so to some extent. Most of us can be at least intellectually convinced. Practice and realisation will follow by and by. But this much is sure that those who will practise universal religion will be more in accord with the Time-spirit than those who merely accord it intellectual assent. The present age wants universal men and they cannot be without the practice and realisation of the universal religion.

IV

Hinduism claims that it is the universal religion. This claim seems apparently to be repudiated by the very fact of its being called by a name: how can one single religion become the universal religion? But really Hinduism has no name. It is the foreigners, always credal, who attached this name to our religion. Our religion is only Religion, *Dharma*, the Eternal Religion. It is no one single creed, but a combination of many creeds with many grades of development, and it has the tendency and capacity to evolve and assimilate any number of new creeds. It recognises three main stages of spiritual evolution,—dualism, qualified monism and monism, and accepts all correct methods of God-realisation as true and justified. It is not based on the authority of any person, however exalted, yet has place in it for any number of prophets and Incarnations. This is an important point. Any religion which claims to be founded on the authority of and is

attached to any person, can only be a creed and not the universal religion. For no person can be impersonal, and the universal religion accepts *all* persons and is also impersonal. The claim of Christianity to be the universal religion thus falls to the ground at once. In fact when Christians put forward this claim, they show only a lamentable ignorance of the true meaning of the universal religion and the intricate facts of human psychology.

Another claim of some Christian missionaries is that Christ is the greatest manifestation of love. We confess that our perusal of the Gospels has not convinced us of that. What is love? Let our human experience answer. Let us face facts boldly. Which do Christians consider to be the greatest expression of love in human life? Is it the pity for a suffering man? Or is it the affection of a servant for his master, of a friend for his friend, of a child for its mother or mother for her child, or of a lover for a lover? Which is the deepest and most ecstatic? No reasonable man can deny that pity is far from that in depth and rapture, which is experienced by, say, lovers. Christians say that Christ sacrificed himself for the redemption of mankind, and therefore that was the greatest manifestation of love. Hindus say that God came in the human form and loved human beings as a lover loves his beloved. Is that not far more intimate and deep? In Christ's love for men there was the consciousness of human weakness and sin, but in Sri Krishna's love, there was not the slightest thought of those outer aspects of human personality—for weakness and sin are really external aspects of man. God became man and men became God. Such a manifestation of love the world has not witnessed.

The universal religion has to recognise that all the different strands of human heart have to be spiritualised and perfected in God. The love that men and women, mother and child, friend and friend, or servant and

master feel between them are not exclusively for men. Their streams are not to be lost in the desert sands of worldly life, but are to grow in power and volume and flow to the infinite heart of God Himself. "The universe is the wreckage of the Infinite on the shores of the finite." The love that expresses itself variously in human relations is a dim reflection of the Divine love itself. Redeemed of the human imperfections, these very love-relations become consecrated to God. These emotional relationships have been evolved through human experiences, but they flow originally from God Himself. Nothing is to be left aside as earthly, everything is to be experienced as the being of God. This is another deeper aspect of the universal religion. Hinduism paid due attention to this. It found that there are generally five emotional relationships between men and men: *Shânta* (calm, peaceful love, that which we feel generally for humanity, for our neighbours, for the suffering humanity, towards Nature, etc.), *Dâsya* (the attitude of a servant towards his master, of a son to his father, of a subject towards his king, etc.), *Sakhya* (friendship), *Vâtsalya* (affection of a mother for her child), and *Madhura* (the love of a man and woman, especially an illicit love which is obviously more impetuous). This is only a general classification. There are other complex relationships also, and it may be that with the passing of ages, new modes of emotional relationship may be evolved. But that Hinduism is ready to recognise all relationships as pathways to God is evidenced by the fact that even enmity has been considered to be a very effective relationship between man and God. For enmity compels one to think absorbingly of one's enemies, and the more one thinks of God, in whatever way, the nearer one approaches Him.

Does Christianity admit the validity of all these relationships? The Christian creed offers little scope for

the free play of these various human emotions. According to Hindu classification, the love that was manifested through Christ is the *Shânta* and *Dâsya* love, the lowest two of the five *Bhâvas*. This defect of Christianity also makes it unfit to be the religion for all mankind. We must not exclude God from the intimacies of our daily experience. Like our Sunday clothes, we must not make God the concern of only a small fraction of our superficial life. Let Him suffuse all our emotions and aspirations. Let Him come deep into our everyday realities and flood them with His divine effulgence, and the earth will bloom like heaven.

V

The fact is, the universal religion is directly based on *Advaitism*. "All this is verily *Brahman*." This truth is the root and the fibres of all universality. We find this pre-eminently manifested in the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna, the preacher and exemplar of the universal religion. A Christian writer sometime ago thus characterised Sri Ramakrishna and his teaching: "The way in which he would express his attitude is, I think, to claim that all religions lead to God. To understand how he reached this conclusion we need to know what his view of the universe was. We obtain a clue to this in a statement he is reported to have made towards the close of his life. 'I have now come to a stage of realization,' he says, 'in which I see that God is walking in every human form and manifesting Himself alike through the saint and the sinner, the virtuous and the vicious. Therefore when I meet different people I say to myself: "God in the form of the saint, God in the form of the sinner, God in the form of the righteous."' He who has attained to such realization goes beyond good and evil, above virtue and vice, and realizes that the Divine is working everywhere. It is obvious that to him who has attained

such realization there is no scale of values by which religions or religious teachers can be classified as good or bad, higher or lower. God is equally to be reached in them all: He is—as the pantheistic poet puts it—‘as full as perfect in a hair as in heart.’ Tolerance is axiomatic on such premises as these.”

Pantheism is a bugbear to Westerners, especially to the Christian missionaries. We do not know what they mean by pantheism. This is not an Indian word; and we for ourselves have never been sure in which sense or senses they use this word. But what we mean when we say “All this is *Brahman*” is as follows: The ordinary man undoubtedly perceives this universe as a composite of good and evil; it is to him full of miseries and imperfections; it is not at all ideal. Though he dreams of a perfection, very vaguely, very imperfectly,—most men are not capable of even such a vague dream—yet the reality which he actually experiences, is very sordid. Unless one is very dull, one would not consider Hindus as looking upon these sordid realities as Divine. Are Hindus devoid of all sense? It is not in this sense, then, that Hindus say “All this is *Brahman*.” Hindus ask: “Why do we perceive the reality as so sordid? Is this the true nature of reality?” The Hindu metaphysics says that the reality is in itself nothing but *Brahman*, *Satchidānanda*, Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. It is not really what it is appearing now. The numerous experiences of Hindu saints and sages confirm this view. Knowing that the reality is really *Brahman*, the Hindus ask again: “Why do we not perceive it as *Brahman*? What obstructs the entrancing vision?” The answer is: Ignorance, impurity of the mind, desire, attraction for worldly things. The next question is: “How to get rid of ignorance and desire? How to purify the mind?” By concentration on the spiritual self, by withdrawing the mind from the world, by looking

upon all things as Divine and behaving with them as such. A twofold process has to be applied: Deify the world and purify the mind. Thus it will be seen that when the Hindus say “All this is *Brahman*,” what they do is to remind themselves of the *true* nature of the world. They seek to change their outlook. There is a perpetual struggle within them,—every moment the sordid view of the world and the consequent behaviour towards it want to assert themselves; and they struggle to conquer and replace them by the higher spiritual outlook. Can there be a greater morality than this and a greater destiny for mankind? To feel everything as God and to behave with it as such means a tremendous thing. Can we serve the world better than by this attitude? What can be a better motive of service? Suppose there is God and an imperfect man before you. To which would your service be greater and deeper? For which would your love be greater and deeper? For God or for man? Certainly for God, if you are really spiritual. What, then, is the point of the above-mentioned Christian writer when he asks: “Can we be content with a religion that leaves us indifferent in a world of illusion?” Really ignorance cannot go further. The writer seems to imply that “pantheism” tends to neutralise all struggle to realise better conditions either socially or individually. The argument is that if we consider good and evil as same, we no longer try to conquer evil and realise good. But “pantheism” does not mean this. It does not ask us to consider everything as *same*, but as *God*. That makes a tremendous difference. What can be a greater incentive to good than the struggle to realise God in everything? We find that at present we are not perceiving the reality as Divine and we know that it is due to our mental imperfections and impurities. And thus in trying to realise everything as Divine, we are constantly trying to purify our mind. And as the Divine

vision is growing clearer, and in order that it may do so, we offer every being our worshipful service, for do we not know that even though we may not perceive it now, the Divine is for ever enshrined in the heart of everything? So there is no neutralisation of struggle and no indifference to the realities. The writer remarks: "It is not easy to see how we can distinguish good and evil if we have not had some glimpse of eternal Goodness, or how we can pursue truth with the ardour of self-sacrifice if we have not some hope of touching the feet of Him who is the absolutely True." Does the writer mean that Hindus have no sense of good and evil and no ardour for truth? It is a preposterous statement to make. The writer must remember that India is still the most moral nation on earth and that here of all countries, people still give up their *all* in pursuit of spiritual truth. We do not want to dwell on the morality and love of truth of those countries where the religion of Christ has been preached for ever so many centuries. But does the writer seriously suggest that morality and truth is greater there than in India?

But what is morality of which they talk so much? Does the so-called pantheistic outlook of the Hindus make them incapable of distinguishing good and evil? So far as we know, philosophers have not yet been able to determine finally the source and origin of moral consciousness. But all agree that there is moral consciousness in every man. The religion of the Christians is not required to make men moral. Men are moral by nature. Hindus are not exceptions. Hindus also have moral consciousness. But Hindus do not give the same value and scope to morality as the above-mentioned writer appears to do. He seems to imply that the distinction of good and evil is as eternal as God Himself and that it must last through the whole course of man's spiritual evolution. But this only shows that the writer has not taken cognisance of the higher states of

spiritual consciousness. The moral consciousness of the ordinary man is thickly overlaid with social conventions. That is a poor sort of morality. But evidently the above-mentioned writer has this kind of morality mostly in mind. But as we grow in spirituality, and begin to perceive the being of God, we find that that alone is evil which impedes the Divine vision and that good which clarifies it;—that is evil in which God is dimly manifest and that good in which He is more manifest. Morality, then, is no longer conventional. But to this vision, the distinction of good and evil becomes less real. For what is good and what is evil? Is not evil another name for less good and good another name for less evil? Is there any such thing which is purely evil or purely good? Even in the heart of the greatest evil there abides some good, and even the greatest good breeds some evil. The distinction is in fact unreal. And it is scarcely logical to call God as the Good. The idea may be good as a normative ideal for the masses. But it is not truly philosophical. God is above good and evil in His transcendental aspect and both evil and good in His immanental aspect. To whom does evil belong if not to God? Whatever is, good or evil, is of God. This is the truth. And Hindus do not shirk it as the Christians do. Those who are conversant with the nature of superconscious realisations, know that though the ordinary code of morality may not exist there, there is yet a kind of morality, which leads always to the elevation of men and never to their degradation. The morality of spiritual men uplifts, though not in the manner of our so-called moral men—the two moralities are not at all alike. That morality is a kind of spiritually exalting power, and that alone counts. It is this higher morality which is professed and practised by the "pantheists," much higher and different from the ordinary view of morality. It obliterates the distinction between

so-called good and evil ; but it makes man Divine, and if God is all right, and then this "patheism" is also all right.

And even that is not all. Paradoxical as it may seem, the sense of evil and sin becomes a thousand times keener as one grows in the perception of the Divine. We have seen this exemplified again and again in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. He could not bear the least contact of impurity. Even the slightest impurity was cognisable by his extremely pure mind which would recoil from it instinctively. Just as a bright light makes darkness keener by contrast, so the consciousness of God makes the perception of evil and impurity infinitely more acute. "It is only through realising the Divinity inherent in man that we can truly grasp the depths of his misery ; for not till then will his condition of spiritual servitude and his lack of perfection and divine happiness appeal to our conscience as almost tangible evidence. It is the sad feeling of contrast between the Divinity in man and his present ignorant state with the suffering it entails, that pricks the heart to serve mankind. Without the realisation of the Divine Spirit in himself and in others, true sympathy, true love, true service are impossible." (Swami Shivananda). The inherent Divinity in a man and his present imperfections are simultaneously perceived by the man of spiritual vision. The fact is, the same power of Divine consciousness moves in two different directions at once. In one movement, it makes the distinction of good and evil, purity and impurity extremely keen and poignant. In another, it obliterates all such distinctions. Apparently contradictory, both these are expressions of the same realisation, "All this is verily *Brahman*."

Even ordinary morality the Hindus do not make light of. The daily life of the Hindus bears eloquent witness to it. And if the foreign critics will have a little patience to study the books on

Yoga, they will find that all religious life has been asked to grow on strong moral foundations. The moral virtues have to be practised assiduously and sincerely and not merely conventionally. Let them read the classical book of Patanjali. They will find that the very first two of the eight steps of *Yoga* relate to moral discipline, a morality which even the most puritanical cannot cavil at. But Hindus do not make much of it. For they know that morality is not really even the beginning of spirituality. Spirituality begins only after a full development of morality. They also know that morality by itself is of little help in solving the riddle of life and attaining the Eternal Beatitude. They know that the long journey is still undone, and that is the real task.

We would not have dilated upon these points, had it not been that the unnecessary fear of "pantheism" with its supposed indifference to morality and the realities of life, has become a real hindrance to the growth of the spirit of universal religion. Non-Hindus are mightily afraid of it. And yet without it, there cannot be any universal religion. We are sorry to do so, but we must clearly point out that it is useless for non-Hindus to talk of universal religion unless they are prepared to accept its full implication. It is not good to confuse the issue. We do not see any hope of a personal and credal religion, for example, Christianity, ever becoming the universal religion. Christians must undergo a complete change of heart before they can even comprehend the universal religion, much less practise it. Either they must transform themselves, or they must cease from talking of universal religion. It is better they profess as some of them are doing that "*It is impossible to bring the religions of the world into harmony.*" We for ourselves are not pessimistic. Slowly but surely the idea is gaining ground. It may be resisted for a time, but all resistance must give way before it one

day or another. Powerful allies are at work. Science with its destructive influence is undermining the bulwarks of all narrowness and bigotry. All creeds and religions must readjust themselves to the changing circum-

tances. We shall wait with hope, in readiness for the spiritual service that will surely be asked of us by other religions. And when the call for help comes, may we not tarry behind for want of preparedness.

THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

12TH NOVEMBER, 1912.

On the morning of that day, the Disciple went with a monk to visit the Dakshineswar Kali Temple. A niece of Sri Ramakrishna was then living near the Temple and used to come every morning to take care of the room where Sri Ramakrishna had lived. On meeting her there, the Disciple requested her to tell him the stories of those days when as a young girl she had lived with the Master at the Temple.

She said: "Myself and my aunt (the wife of Sri Ramakrishna) used to live in the *Nahavat*. The Master used to call us *Suka* and *Sâri* (names of birds). Very few of his visitors knew that we lived there. About noon he used to enquire by saying: 'Have the *Suka* and *Sâri* been given their meals?' M. used to sit over there taking down notes of conversations with a pencil. He said once that he thought that the Master was actually tending those birds and talking of their feeding. . . . The Master used to tell me and aunt stories from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, e.g., the story of King Nala; and he would repeatedly question us to know if we had understood the stories. He used to make me repeat them and then remark with satisfaction: "That is why I call you a *Suka* (parrot)!"

"Once I asked him: 'You always speak of *past*, *future* and *present*. What are they?' He said: 'Just now I am telling you stories: this is *present*. You will return to the *Nahavat* and tell your aunt: "He said so and so;" and when I shall die, you will say: "He said" and so on. This is *past*. Similarly

you say: "He will tell me." This is *future*.'

"Formerly, our meals used to be supplied from the Temple. Then it was suggested that aunt would prepare our food. Hriday objected saying that the *Nahavat* was too small a place to accommodate a kitchen. But the Master said: 'You don't know. They are young girls, they must have some occupation.' And he said to me: 'It is customary for women to cook. In the ancient times even queens used to cook for their husbands. So it is given in the stories, and those stories are not false. It is said that one day Sri Krishna was at his meal at Dwaraka with Rukmini sitting by, when suddenly the plaintive prayers of Draupadi being insulted by Duhshasana at Indraprastha reached the ears of the Lord. He at once rose from his meal. Then Rukmini cried out tearfully: "Oh, I must have committed a sin to-day, otherwise why could not the Lord partake of the food prepared by me?" It is said that the queen's palace had golden walls. Could she not engage a cook? But nowadays a man earning Rs. 30 a month takes away his wife from his parents and engages a cook for her, and thinks that they are living in paradise! Your mind will remain pure if you engage yourself in cooking. . . .'

"One night the Master was filled with the spiritual mood of Radha. He identified himself with Her. He thought he would go to the arbour to meet Sri Krishna and accordingly came out of his room and entered the rose-garden. He had no external consciousness. He got entangled in the rose-

bushes and was scratched all over with thorns and there he stood. The night watchmen found him and awoke us. I at once went to the Temple manager and brought him there. Many woke up and crowded there. Aunt also came there and burst out crying.—This was the first time she was seen publicly. When the Master was carried inside, he said: 'I am going to the arbour. Why are you troubling me? Let me go.' We began to sleep in his room, aunt covering herself with a thick cloth from head to foot.

"After two or three days, the Master said: 'Why are you suffering this way? It is so hot now, surely you would like to sleep uncovered. Better you sleep in the *Nahavat*.' We obeyed.

"One night—it was the fullmoon night of the month of *Phālguna*—the ladies of Balaram Babu's family came here to see Sri Ramakrishna without informing the men of their family. They passed all the night in joy with the Master and started walking for Calcutta in the early hours of the morning. Suddenly a storm burst. The Master became restless in anxiety, and expressed the fear that they must have perished on the way. Very early in the morning, he sent Yogin to find out if they were lying dead on the road. Yogin went to their house. On seeing him, the men of the family asked: 'Well, Yogin, why so early?' 'Oh, nothing is the matter,' he replied and went into the inner apartments. The ladies had all returned safe. They also asked him where he came from so early and if the Master was doing well."

25TH APRIL, 1913.

The Disciple was able with some difficulty to meet Swami Brahmananda alone at the Belur Math to put him some personal questions. He said: "Maharaj, I am finding it impossible to calm the mind."

Swami: "Practise a little meditation and *japa* every day. Never stop for a single day. The mind is like a restless child, it wants to run away. You must

bring it back again and again and apply it to the meditation of the Lord. Go on this way for two or three years, and then an inexpressible joy will fill your mind. Meditation and *japa* appear dry in the beginning. But still you must engage the mind in the contemplation of the Deity, like swallowing a bitter medicine. Slowly spiritual joy will grow in you. People work so hard to pass examinations! To realise God is easier even than that. Only let them call on Him with a calm cheerful heart."

Disciple: "Sir, your words fill me with hope. But sometimes I feel very much cast down; and I think that all my spiritual practices must be in vain since they have brought me no higher experience."

Swami: "No, no, there is nothing to despair about. Work must have its effect. If you go on repeating His name, be it wholeheartedly or halfheartedly, it must produce results. Practise assiduously. Practise regularly for some time,—you will have peace and joy. Meditation does not give mental peace merely, but also physical health,—you have less disease. So one must practise meditation even for physical improvement."

Disciple: "Maharaj, is it necessary to receive a *mantram* from a Guru? Cannot one practise wholeheartedly according to one's spiritual mood?"

Swami: "Initiation into a *mantram* helps the concentration of mind. Otherwise your mind will change and fluctuate: to-day you will like the Kali-form, to-morrow the Hari-form and next day perhaps the formless aspect of God. And thus your mind will not be concentrated upon one. . . ."

In the evening the Swami spoke about a lady who had established a girls' school in Calcutta. She was fastidious in certain respects and did not trust anyone and was easily irritable. No servant stayed with her long and the few men who had been assisting her were leaving her one by one. The Swami said: "This is nothing but a

mania. If one wants to do everything oneself, one loses one's entire energy in trifling details, and cannot maintain a cool head in the essentials. *Karma Yoga* is very difficult. One must have a cool brain, and very much of renuncia-

tion and dispassion. Otherwise work drags one down. One becomes truly entitled to work only after God-realisation. It is very difficult to work with women. They somehow want to dominate over you."

BUILDERS OF UNITY*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

KESHAB CHUNDER SEN

This man, short-lived, inconsistent, restless but at the same time inspired—he lived from 1838 to 1884,—was the chief personality to influence the Brahma Samaj during the second-half of the nineteenth century. He enriched and renewed it to such an extent that its very existence was endangered.

He was the representative of a different class and generation much more deeply impregnated with Western influences. Instead of being a great aristocrat like Roy and Devendranath, he belonged to the liberal and distinguished middle class of Bengal, who were in constant intellectual touch with Europe. By profession he was a doctor. His grandfather, a remarkable man, the native Secretary of the Asiatic Society, had controlled the publication of all the editions of books published in Hindustani. He was left an orphan at an early age, and was brought up in an English school. It was this that made him so different from his two predecessors; for he never knew Sanskrit and very soon broke away from the popular form of the Hindu religion.¹ Christ

had touched him, and it was to be his mission in life to introduce him into the Brahma Samaj, and into the heart of a group of the best minds in India. When he died *The Indian Christian Herald* said of him, "The Christian Church mourns the death of its greatest ally. Christians looked upon him as God's messenger, sent to awake India to the spirit of Christ. Thanks to him hatred of Christ died out."

This last statement is not quite correct; for we shall see to what point Keshab himself had to suffer as the champion of Christ. The real significance of his life has been obscured by most of the men who have spoken of him even in the Brahma Samaj; for they were offended by the heresy of their chief and tried to hide it. He himself only revealed it by degrees, so that it is only through documents written as long as twenty years before his death that we learn from his own lips that his life had been influenced from his youth up by three great Christian visitants, John the Baptist, Christ and St. Paul.² Further in a serious confidential letter to his intimate

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¹ It is only natural that in spite of this fact he never lost the religious temperament peculiar to his race. Pratap Chunder Mozoomdar in the course of a conversation in 1884 with Ramakrishna related the mystic childhood of Keshab. (*The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*). He was early "marked by non-attachment to the things of this world" and absorbed in inward concentration and

contemplation. "He was even subject to fits of loss of consciousness due to excess of devotion." He later applied the forms of Hindu religious "devotion" to non-Hindu religious objects. And the "Vaishnavite" form of Christianity he adopted was accompanied by a constant study of Yoga.

² Easter, 1879; Lecture: India Asks, Who is Christ?

" . . . My Christ, my sweet Christ, the brightest jewel of my heart, the necklace of my soul—for twenty years have I cherished Him in this my miserable heart."

disciple, Pratap Chunder Mozoomdar,¹ a letter of primary importance passed over in silence by non-Christian Brahmos, he shows us how he was waiting until the times were ripe to make public avowal of his faith in Christ. The double life Keshab led for so long, materially strengthened by the duality of his own character, seems to be compounded of the diverse and incompatible elements of the East and the West, which were in constant conflict the one with the other. Hence it is very difficult for the historian to make an impartial study; Hindu biographers, in nearly every case hotly partizan, have done nothing to make his task an easier one.

During the early days of admission to the Brahmo Samaj on the introduction of Devendranath Tagore's son, a fellow student at College, young Keshab was surrounded with love. He became the darling of Devendranath

January, 1879, Lecture: Am I an Inspired Prophet?

"Who has marked me as His own from my earliest childhood? Providence even then brought me into contact with three majestic figures, radiant with the divine. . . . They were among my first acquaintances. . . . The first, John the Baptist, walked the Indian deserts, saying, 'Repent ye, for the Kingdom of God is at hand.' . . . I fell at his feet. He passed by and another took his place, One still mightier—the prophet of Nazareth. 'Take no thought for the morrow. . . .' He said. His words found an abiding place in my heart. Hardly had the echo of them died away when there came another prophet, the strong, valiant and heroic apostle Paul. . . . And his words respecting chastity burned within me like a fire at a critical time of my life."

We must add that he had come to know the New Testament at the English College, for a chaplain used to read it to the young people, translating it from the Greek.

¹ In this letter, whereon the exact date does not appear, but which it is safe to assume was written to Mozoomdar directly after his famous lecture in 1866 on "Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia," Keshab explained himself thus:

" . . . I have my own ideas about Christ, but I am not bound to give them out in due form, until altered circumstances of the country gradually develop them out of my

and of the young members of the Brahmo Samaj, who felt themselves drawn more closely to him than to the noble Devendranath, dwelling in Olympian isolation in spite of himself as the result of his breeding and idealism.² Keshab had a social sense and wished to rouse the same feeling throughout India. A hyper-individualist himself by nature and doubtless just because this was the case,³ he early in life recognised that part of the evils of his country arose out of this same hyper-individualism, and that India needed to acquire a new moral conscience. "Let all souls be socialised and realise their unity with the people, the visible

mind. Jesus is identical with self-sacrifice, and as He lived and preached in the fulness of time, so must He be in turn preached in the fulness of time. . . . I am, therefore, patiently waiting that I may grow with the age and the nation and the spirit of Christ's sacrifice may grow therewith." (Cf. Manilal C. Parekh: *op. cit.* pp. 29-31).

² "Devendranath was too preoccupied by his personal relationship to God to feel more than moderately the call of social responsibilities."—From a letter of a friend of the Tagores.

³ His chief disciple, Pratap Chunder Mozoomdar, said that he constantly struggled against the flights of his mystic nature, and that "he always succeeded in containing them" (a fact which is not altogether true); "for the great object of his life was to bring religion within the reach of heads of families," in other words to re-establish it in ordinary everyday life. This was one of the sources of the contradictions in the character, which compromised his work. He attempted to reconcile the irreconcilable—the mystic upspringing natural to him, and the canalisation of the divine stream for the moral and social service of the community—Theocentrism and anthropocentrism, to use the language of Western mysticism as analysed by the Abbot Henri Brémont. Both of them, moreover, in the case of Keshab existed in the highest degree. But his rich nature, too plastic, too perpetually receptive to all spiritual foods offered for the satisfaction of his appetite, greater than his faculty for absorption, made him a living contradiction. It is said that while at college he played the part of Hamlet in a performance of that play of Shakespeare. In point of fact he remained the young Prince of Denmark to the end of his life.

community." This conception, uniting¹ the aristocratic unitarianism of Roy to the Indian masses, put young Keshab into fellowship with the most ardent aspirations of the rising generation. Just as Vivekananda in after days (Vivekananda incidentally owed him a great deal without perhaps realising it ; for ideas are the natural outcome of an age so that the same ideas are born at the same time in different minds), Keshab believed religion to be necessary for the regeneration of the race. In an address at Bombay in 1868 he maintained that he wished to make it "the basis of social reforms." Hence religious reform within the Brahmo Samaj was to bear fruit in action. The active and daring hand of Keshab was therefore to be seen casting a handful of fruitful seeds into the soil of India, which in turn were to throw Vivekananda² upon a country already awakened by the thunder of his words.

But Keshab came before his time. Some of his reforms even came up against the traditional spirit of the Brahmo Samaj. It has been generally considered that the stumbling block between him and Devendranath was the question of intercaste marriages, but I am certain that there were others far more important. Their mutual affection has drawn a veil over the causes of their separation, but from what happened immediately afterwards, they can be

¹ In theory at least. In practice Keshab never succeeded in touching the masses. His thought was too impregnated with elements alien to the thought of India.

² A great many social institutions were eventually founded by Keshab for the service of the people :—Night Schools, Industrial Schools, the Calcutta College, the Normal School for Indian Women, a society for the help of women, the Indian Association of Reform, the Fraternity of Goodwill, numerous Samajas, etc.

³ B. Mozoomdar said, "The Brahmo Samaj of Devendranath was in theory eclectic, but in fact purely Hindu in character." My friend, Prof. Kalidas Nag, who is connected with the Tagores by ties of affection, wrote to me, "Devendranath could not bear radical changes. He rendered full

surmised. However open Devendranath's mind might be to the great ideal of constructing the harmony of humanity through the Brahmo Samaj, he remained deeply attached to Indian tradition and her sacred writings.³ He could not be blind to the Christianity working in the mind of his favourite disciple, and at whatever personal cost, he could no longer remain in association with a coadjutor who based his teachings on the New Testament.

In 1868 the fatal rupture took place, and there was a schism in the Brahmo Samaj. Devendranath kept the direction of the Adi Brahmo Samaj [the first Brahmo Samaj]⁴ and Keshab departed to found the Brahmo Samaj of India. For both men this was a severe trial, but especially for Keshab, whose heresy made him hated. At first he did not foresee this contingency. Strong in his popularity and the ardent support of his faithful friends, three months after the break he made a public declaration in his famous lecture on *Jesus Christ, Europe and Asia*.⁵ There he professed Christ, but an Asiatic Christ little understood by Europe—"all the grandeur of which the Asiatic nature is susceptible." Moreover his Christianity was still in the main a question of ethics. Keshab was attracted by the morality of Christ and his two principles

justice to the West, and highly appreciated Fénelon, Fichte and Victor Cousin. But he could not tolerate aggressive demonstrations of fanatical zeal. Keshab was a zealot, who wished to lead his disciples in a veritable crusade against India's social evils."

⁴ It was not long before Devendranath retired from active life. He went to live in a self-chosen retreat at Bolpur, near Calcutta, to which he gave the name of Shantiniketan, the Abode of Peace. There he spent the rest of his life in an atmosphere of aristocratic sanctity and died in 1905, a patriarch in the midst of many of his royal posterity.

⁵ It is obvious that Devendranath knew of this imminent confession of faith when he separated from Keshab. At that time Keshab was deep in the study of Christianity, and in particular occupied in reading a book which had a great vogue in that day—Seeley's *Ecce Homo*

of pardon and self-sacrifice. Through these principles and through him he maintained that "Europe and Asia may learn to find harmony and unity."

His ardour as a neophyte was such that he made his friends call him Jesudâs, or the servant of Jesus, and he celebrated Christmas by a fast within a small circle of intimate friends.

But the lecture had created a scandal, and Keshab did not improve matters by a second speech upon *Great Men* (1866).¹ Therein, if I may use such an expression, he made Jesus come into line among the messengers of God, each charged with his own special message, and each to be accepted without special attachment to any single one. He threw open his Church to men of all countries and all ages, and introduced for the first time extracts from the Bible, the Koran, the Zend Avesta² into the manual of devotional lessons for the Brahma Samaj. But far from dying down, feeling ran higher.

Keshab was not the man to be insensible to it. His sensitive and defenceless heart suffered more than most from disaffection. Public misunderstanding, the desertion of his companions, heavy material difficulties, and over and above all the torments of his own conscience, perhaps even doubts as to his mission added to "a very lively sense of weakness, of sin and of repentance" peculiarly his own as distinct from most of the other religions spirits

¹ It is perhaps worthy of notice that among the youthful readings of Keshab none impressed him more than the works of Carlyle and Emerson.

² This manual, called the *Slokasangraha*, (1866), though a great deal larger than Devendranath's, never had such a wide circulation in India as the *Brahmo Dharma*. Nevertheless Keshab followed the true tradition of Roy when he said that "the harmony of religions was the real mission of the Brahma Samaj."

³ It is P. C. Mozoomdar who has noticed in him this "sense of sin" so curiously at variance to the spirit of Devendranath as well as Ramakrishna and above all of Vivekananda. We shall see later that Vivekananda denounced it as evidence of a weak disposition, of a real mental malady, for which he

of Hinduism,³ resulted in a devastating crisis of soul, which lasted throughout 1867. He was alone with his grief, without any outside help, alone with God. But God spoke to him, so that the religious experience of that year with the emotions that racked him, as he officiated as divine priest daily by himself in his house, led to a complete transformation not only in his ideas but in their expression. Up till then he had been the chief among religious intellectuals, a moralist, a stranger to sentimental effusions, which had been repellent to him; but now he was flooded by a torrent of emotion—love and tears—and gave himself up to it in rapture.

This was the dawn of a new era for the Brahma Samaj. The mysticism of the great Bhakta, Chitanya, and of the Sankirtans was introduced within its walls. From morning till night there were prayers and hymns accompanied by Vaishnavite musical instruments, and feasts of God;⁴ and Keshab officiated all the time, his face bathed in tears—he, who, it was said, had never wept. The wave of emotion spread. Keshab's sincerity, his spirit of universal comprehension and his care for the public weal brought him the sympathy alike of the best minds of India and England, including the Viceroy. His journey to England in 1870 was a triumphal progress. The enthusiasm he raised was equal to that inspired by Kossuth. During his six months' stay⁵ he

threw the blame on Christianity. The state of mind that Keshab systematically cultivated culminated in a sermon delivered in 1881: *We Apostles of the New Dispensation*, where he likened himself to Judas to the scandal of his hearers.

⁴ It is noticeable that on this occasion there was no question of Christ. The Bhakti of Chaitanya is another aspect of Keshab's religion. "Thus," wrote P. C. Mozoomdar, "Keshab stood at the threshold of his independent career with the shadow of Jesus on the one hand, and the shadow of Chaitanya on the other."

⁵ He came to know Gladstone, Stuart Mill, Max Müller, Francis Newman, Dean Stanley, etc. personally.

addressed seventy meetings of 40,000 persons and fascinated his audiences by the simplicity of his English and by his musical voice. He was compared to Gladstone. He was greeted as the spiritual ally of the West, the Evangelist of Christ in the East. In all good faith both parties laboured under delusions, which were to be dissipated during the following years, not without a naive deception of the English. For Keshab remained deeply Indian at heart and was not to be enrolled in the ranks of European Christianity. On the other hand, he thought he could enrol it. India and the Brahma Samaj profited from the good disposition of the Government.¹ The reformed Brahma Samaj spread in all directions, to Simla, Bombay, Lahore, Lucknow, Monghyr, etc. A mission tour undertaken by Keshab across India in 1873 with the object of bringing about unity among the brothers and sisters of the new faith, a tour which was the forerunner of the great voyage of exploration undertaken twenty years afterwards by Vivekananda in the guise of a wandering Sannyâsin. The tour opened up new horizons and he believed that he had found the key to the popular polytheism, so repugnant to the Brahma Samaj, and that he could make an alliance between it and pure theism. But to this union, realised spontaneously by Ramakrishna at the same time, Keshab brought a spirit of intellectual compromise. He was obliged to convince himself (he failed to convince the polytheists) that their gods were at bottom nothing but the names of different attributes of the one God.

"Their (Hindu) idolatry," he wrote in *The Sunday Mirror*,² "is nothing but the worship of a divine attribute materialised. If the material shape is given up, what remains is a beautiful allegory. . . . We have found out that

every idol worshipped by the Hindu represents an attribute of God, and that each attribute is called by a peculiar name. The believer in the New Dispensation is required to worship God as the possessor of all those attributes, represented by the Hindu as innumerable, or three hundred and thirty millions. To believe in an undivided Deity, without reference to the aspects of His nature is to believe in an abstract God, and it would lead us to practical rationalism and infidelity. If we are to worship Him in all His manifestations, we shall name one attribute Lakshmi, another Saraswati, another Mahadeva, etc., etc."

This meant a great step forward in religious intercourse leading to the inclusion of the greater part of mankind. But it never came to anything because Keshab intended that his theism should have all the real power and accorded to polytheism nothing but outward honour. On the other hand, he avoided Advaitism, absolute Monism, which has always been forbidden to the Brahma. The result was that religious reason sat on the fence separating the two camps of the two extreme faiths. The prevailing situation was not an exact equilibrium of rest and the position in which Keshab insisted on placing himself could not be a permanent one. For he believed that he was called by God to dictate His new revealed law, the New Dispensation, from thence. He began to proclaim it in 1875,³ the year when his relations with Ramakrishna began.

Like so many self-appointed legislators, he found it difficult to establish law and order in his own mind, especially as he wished his legislation to be all-embracing and to include Christ and Brahman, the Gospels and Yoga, religion and reason. Ramakrishna reached the same point with great

¹ Especially for several reforms, among them a legislative one directly affecting the Brahma Samaj—the legal recognition of Brahma marriages.

² August 1, 1880: *The Philosophy of Idol-worship*.

³ In the Lecture: *Behold the Light of Heaven in India*.

simplicity through his heart, and made no attempt to enclose his discovery within a body of doctrine and precept ; he was content to show the way, to set the example, to give the impetus. Keshab adopted the methods of an intellectual European at the head of a school of comparative religion, together with the methods of inspired persons of India and America,—Bhakti in tears, Revivals and public confessions.

He gave to each of his favourite disciples a different form of religion to study¹ and Yoga to practise² showing his skill as a teacher by giving each disciple the one best adapted to his individual character. He himself oscillated between two advisors, both equally dear to him—the living example of Ramakrishna to whom he went for guidance in ecstasy, and the guidance of the Christian faith as practised by an Anglican monk, who later became a Roman Catholic, Luke Rivington. Moreover he could never choose between the life of God and the life of the world, and with disarming sincerity he maintained that the one was not necessarily harmful to the other.³

¹ Each of his four chosen disciples dedicated himself to a lifelong study of one of the four great religions, and in some cases was absorbed into the subject of his study : Upadhyaya Gour Govindo Roy was given Hinduism and produced a monumental work, a Sanskrit commentary on the Gita and a life of Sri Krishna : Sadhu Aghore Nath studied Buddhism, and wrote a life of Buddha in Bengali, following himself in his footsteps until he was cut off in the prime of a saintly life : Bhai Girish Chunder Sen devoted himself to Islam, translated the Koran and wrote a life of Mahomet and several other works in Arabic and Persian. Lastly Pratap Chunder Mozoomdar studied Christianity and published a book called *The Oriental Christ*. He was so impregnated with its spiritual atmosphere that from the school of thought founded by him sprang real Indian Christians such as Manilal C. Parekh.

² After January 1, 1875, when he inaugurated the new method of spiritual development usually called the Dispensation, he varied the paths of the soul (*Yogas*) according to the character of his disciples, recommending Bhakti to some, *Jnâna* to to others, Râja to others. The different

But his opinions wronged him and therefore reacted on the Brahmo Samaj, all the more because he was a man “of the most transparent sincerity,”⁴ who neglected to take the most elementary precautions to conceal the changeableness and heterogeneity of his nature. The result was that in 1878 a new schism took place in the Brahmo Samaj and Keshab found himself the butt of violent attacks from his own people, who accused him of having betrayed his principles.⁵ The majority of his friends deserted him and so he fell fatally into the hands of the few faithful ones—Ramakrishna and Father Luke Rivington. Moreover this new trial reopened the door to a whole flood of professions of the Christian faith, which became more and more explicit and in accordance with the deepest metaphysics of Christianity. Thus in the lecture *Am I an Inspired Prophet?* (January, 1879), he described his childish visions of John the Baptist, Christ and St. Paul ; in *India Asks, Who is Christ?* (Easter, 1879), he announced to India the coming of “the Bridegroom . . . my Christ, my sweet

forms of devotion were linked together by the different names or attributes of God. (Cf. P. C. Mozoomdar) I shall return to this point in my second volume when I study Hindu mysticism and the different kinds of Yoga.

³ His well-wishers, such as Ramakrishna, did not fail to remark with a touch of malice that this saintly man left his affairs in good order and a rich house, etc., when he died. Keshab did not renounce the pleasures of society—he took an active part in amusements and acted in the dramas played in his house. (Cf. *The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, April, 1884). But Ramakrishna never doubted his sincerity. It was unimpeachable. He only regretted that such a religious and gifted man should remain half way to God instead of giving himself entirely to Him.

⁴ Promotho Loll Sen : *op. cit.*

⁵ The occasion was a domestic one, the marriage of his daughter before the age established by the law of the Brahmo Samaj to a Maharaja. But here again, as in the schism with Devendranath, the real cause was hidden. A third Brahmo Samaj was founded, the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, more narrow and definitely anti-Christian.

Christ, born of God and man . . . ;"¹ and in *Does God Manifest Himself Alone?* he showed the Son sitting at the right hand of the Father.

All these pronouncements, however, did not hinder him from dictating at the same time from the heights of the Himalayas his famous Epistle to Indian Brethren (1880) for the jubilee of the Brahma Samaj, announcing in a pontifical tone "Urbi et Orbi,"² the Message entrusted to him by God, the New Dispensation. It is almost possible to believe that the words are the words of the Bible:

"Hearken, Oh Hindnstan, the Lord your God is one." So begins the Epistle to the Indian Brethren.

"Jehovah the great Spirit, whose clouds thunder 'I am,' whom the heavens and the earth declare." (*ibid.*)

"I write this epistle to you, dear and beloved friends, in the spirit and after the manner of St. Paul, however unworthy I am of his honoured Master" (*ibid.*)

But he adds,

"Paul wrote full of faith in Christ. As a theist I write this, my humble epistle at the feet, not of one prophet only, but of all the prophets in heaven and earth, living or dead. . . ."

For he claimed to be the fulfilment of Christ the forerunner.

"The New Dispensation is the prophecy of Christ fulfilled . . . The Omnipotent speaks to-day to our country as formerly he did to other nations. . . ."³

At this moment he even believed that he was formed of the same element as the Spirit of God.

¹ "My Master Jesus. . . . Young men of India. . . . Believe and remember. . . He will come to you as self-surrender, as ascetism, as Yoga. . . The Bridegroom cometh. . . . Let India, beloved India, be dressed in all her jewellery."

Again Keshab commented in his articles in *The Indian Mirror*, "What the Brahma Samaj did to clear the moral character of Christ more than twelve years ago, it does with respect to His divinity at the present day." (April 20, 1879). There were no half measures about this. Christ was God.

"The Spirit of God and my inner self are knit together. If you have seen me, you have seen him. . . ."

What then does the Omnipotent, whose voice he is, have to declare? What "new Love, new Hope, new Joy does He bring?" "How sweet is this new Evangel!"

This is what Jehovah as God of India dictates to the new Moses:

"The infinite Spirit, whom no eye hath seen, and no ear hath heard, is your God, and you should have none other God. There are two false gods, raised by men of India in opposition to the All Highest—the Divinity which ignorant hands have fashioned, and the Divinity which the vain dreams of intellectuals have imagined are alike the enemy of our Lord.⁴ You must abjure them both Do not adore either dead matter, or dead men, or dead abstractions. . . Adore the living Spirit, who sees without eyes. . . . The Communion of the soul with God and with the departed saints shall be your true heaven, and you must have none other. . . . In the spiritual exaltation of the soul find the joy and the holiness of heaven. . . Your heaven is not far away; it is within you. You must honour and love all the ancients of the human family—prophets, saints, martyrs, sages, apostles, missionaries, philanthropists of all ages and all countries without caste prejudice. Let not the

And again, "The Mosaic dispensation only? Perhaps the Hindu dispensation also. In India He will fulfil the Hindu dispensation."

² *Urbi et Orbi*:—that is to say, the City (Rome) and the world (like the Roman Pope).

³ Cf. sermon: "Behold the Light of Heaven in India." (1875).

⁴ The first Divinity condemned is easy to define, the idols of wood, metal and stone. The second is further defined by "the unseen idols of modern scepticism, abstractions, unconscious evolution, blind protoplasm, etc." This then is scientific or rational or Advaitist intellectualism. But Keshab was far from condemning real science, as is shown by his lecture on the Vision of God in the XIXth Century. (1879).

holy men of India monopolise your affection and your homage! Render to all prophets the devotion and universal affection that is their due. . . . Every good and great man is the personification of some special element of Truth and Divine Goodness. Sit humbly at the feet of all heavenly messengers. . . . Let their blood be your blood, their flesh your flesh! . . . Live in them and they will live in you for ever!"

Nothing more noble can be imagined. This is the very highest expression of universal theism; and it comes very close to the free theism of Europe without any forced act of allegiance to revealed religion. It opens its arms to all the purified spirits of the whole earth, past, present and future; for the Gospel of Keshab does not claim to be the final word of the revelation. "The Indian Scriptures are not closed.¹ New chapters are added every year. . . . Go ever farther in the love and the knowledge of God! What the Lord will reveal to us in ten years' time who can say, except Himself?"

But how is this free and broad theism with its serene and assured tone to be reconciled to his abasement at the feet of Christ in the previous year?²

"I must tell you . . . that I am connected with Jesus' Gospel, and occupy a prominent place in it. I am the prodigal son of whom Christ spoke and I am trying to return to my Father in a penitent spirit. Nay, I will say more for the satisfaction and edification of my opponents. . . . I am Judas, that vile man who betrayed Jesus . the veritable Judas who sinned against Jesus and the truth lodges in my heart! . . ."

The overwhelming effect of such a public confession on those members of the Brahma Samaj, who had followed

¹ A favourite idea of Vivekananda may be recognised therein.

² In the sermon: We, the Apostles of the New Dispensation (1881).

³ That is why their writings about Keshab are very careful (as far as I know) to make no mention of such an avowal.

⁴ "Honour Christ but never be 'Christian' in the popular acceptation of the term. . .

their chief up to that point,³ may be imagined.

But Keshab was still debating with himself. He professed Christ but he denied that he was a "Christian."⁴ In a strange way he tried to unite Christ to Socrates and to Chaitanya by thinking of each of them as a part of his body or of his mind.⁵ All the same he instituted the sacramental ceremonies of Christianity in his Samaj, adapting them to Indian usage. On March 6, 1881 he celebrated the Blessed Sacrament with rice and water instead of bread and wine,⁶ and three months later the sacrament of baptism, wherein Keshab himself set the example to the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

Finally in 1882 he took the decisive step. The Christian Trinity of all Christian mysteries has always been the greatest stumbling-block for Asia, and an object of repulsion or derision.⁷ Christ is not Christianity. . . . Let it be your ambition to outgrow the popular types of narrow Christian faith and merge in the vastness of Christ!"

In an article of the same period called "Other Sheep Have I."

"We belong to no Christian sect. We disclaim the Christian name. Did the immediate disciples of Christ call themselves Christian? . . . Whoso believes in God and accepts Christ as the Son of God has fellowship with Christ in the Lord. . . . How explicit is that well-known passage—'And other sheep I have.' The shepherd knows us. Christ has found us and accepted us. . . . That is enough. Is any Christian greater than Christ?"

⁵ "The Lord Jesus is my will, Socrates my head, Chaitanya my heart, the Hindu Rishi my soul and the philanthropic Howard my right hand."

⁶ Keshab read a verse from St. Luke, and he prayed "that the Holy Spirit might turn their grossly material substance into sanctifying spiritual forces that they may upon entering our system be assimilated to it as the flesh and blood of all the saints in Christ Jesus."

⁷ The reason for this is obscure as regards Vedantic India; for she also has her Trinity, and Keshab rightly made it approach the Christian Trinity:—"Sat, Chit, Ananda" (Being, Knowledge, Happiness, which Keshab translated by Truth, Wisdom and Joy) the three in one: Satchidânanda.

Keshab not only accepted and adopted it, but extolled it with gladness¹ and was enlightened by it. This mystery seemed to him, and certainly not without reason, to be the keystone of the arch of Christian metaphysics, the supreme conception of the universe . . . "the treasury in which lies the accumulated wealth of the world's sacred literature—all that is precious in philosophy, theology, and poetry (of all humanity) . . . the loftiest expression of the world's religious consciousness. . ." He defines the three Persons very exactly, I believe, from an orthodox point of view.² Did anything still separate him from Christianity?

Only one thing but it was a world in itself—his own message, the Indian Dispensation. He could never bring himself to renounce it. He indeed adopted Christ, but Christ in his turn had to adopt India and the theism of Keshab. "Begone, idolatry! Preachers of idol-worship, adieu!" (This apostrophe was addressed to the West). Christ is the eternal Word. "As the sleeping Logos did Christ live potentially in the Father's bosom, long, long before he came into this world of ours." He appeared before his physical life in Greece and Rome, in Egypt and in India, in the poets of the Rig-Veda, as well as in Confucius and Sakya-Muni; and the role of this Indian apostle of the New Dispensation was to proclaim

¹ In a lecture of 1882: That Marvellous Mystery, the Trinity.

² "Here you have the complete triangular figure of the Trinity. . . The apex is the very God Jehova. . . From Him comes down the Son. . . and touches one end of the base of humanity. . . and then by the power of the Holy Ghost drags up degenerate humanity to Himself. Divinity coming down to humanity is the Son, Divinity carrying humanity to heaven is the Holy Ghost; this is the whole philosophy of salvation. . . The Creator, the Exemplar, and the Sanctifier, I am, I love, I save; the Still God, the Journeying God, the Returning God. . ." —*Keshab*. Cf. the treatises of classical Catholic mysticism.

"The action whereby the Father engenders de Chantal.

his true and universal meaning. For after the Son came the Spirit and "this Church of the New Dispensation . . . is altogether an institution of the Holy Spirit" and completes the Old and the New Testaments.

And so no part of Himalayan theism was lost in spite of the rude shocks from above and below, which might well have undermined its citadel. By a violent effort of thought, Keshab achieved the incorporation of Christ within it, and covered his own New Dispensation with the name of Christ, believing that he was called to reveal the real meaning of Christ to Western Christianity.

This was the avowed object of Keshab's last message before his death, *Asia's Message to Europe* (1883). "Sectarian and carnal Europe, put up into the scabbard the sword of your narrow faith! Abjure it and join the true Catholic and Universal Church in the name of Christ the Son of God! . . ."

"Christian Europe has not understood one half of Christ's words. She has comprehended that Christ and God are one, but not that Christ and humanity are one. That is the great mystery, which the New Dispensation reveals to the world: not only the reconciliation of Man with God; but the reconciliation of man with man! . . . Asia says to Europe, 'Sister, Be one in Christ! . . . All that is good and true and beautiful—the meekness of Hindu Asia, the

the Son is well explained by the term issuing or coming out. . . *Exivi a Patre*. The Holy Spirit is produced by the return way. . . It is the divine way and subsists in God whereby God returns to Himself. . . In the same way we come out of God by the Creation, which is attributed to the Father by the Son; we return to Him by grace, which is the attribute of the Holy Spirit."

(P. Claude Sequenot: *Conduite d'Oraison*. 1634, quoted by Henri Brémond: *La Métaphysique des Saints*. I. pp. 116-117.)

Surprising though it may seem, Keshab knew the Berullian or Salesian philosophy of prayer. In a note of June 30, 1881, on the renunciation of John the Baptist, he quotes letters of Francois de Sales to Madame

truthfulness of the Mussulman and the charity of the Buddhist—all that is holy is of Christ. . . .’ ”

And the new Pope of the new Rome in Asia intones the beautiful Song of Atonement.¹

But he was indeed a pope, and the unity of reconciled mankind had to be according to his doctrine ; in order to defend it he always kept the thunderbolt in his hand, and he would make no compromise upon the unitheistic principle—the Unity of God.

“Science is one. The Church is one.”

His disciple, B. Mozoomdar, makes him use the denunciatory words of Christ, but more violently.

“There is only one Way. There is no backdoor into heaven. He who enters not by the front door is a thief and a robber.”

This is the antithesis of the smiling words of kindness uttered by Ramakrishna.²

The innate need of unitarian discipline does not tally with religious universalism, and is often unwittingly confounded with spiritual imperialism. It led Keshab at the end of his life to lay down the Code of the New Samhita³ (September 2, 1883), containing what he calls “the national law of the Aryans of the New Church in India . . . God’s moral law adapted to the peculiar needs and character of reformed Hindus, and based upon their national instincts and traditions.” It contains in effect a national unitarianism

¹ “And the new Song of Atonement is sung with enthusiasm by millions of voices, representing all the various languages of the world, millions of souls, each dressed in its national garb of piety and righteousness, glowing in an infinite and complete variety of colours, shall dance round and round the Father’s throne, and peace and joy shall reign for ever.”

² One day when the young Naren (Vivekananda) denounced certain religious sects with his customary impatience, because their practices roused his furious disgust, Ramakrishna looked at him tenderly and said, “My boy, there is a backdoor to every house. Why should not one have the liberty to

—one God, one scripture, one baptism, one marriage—a whole code of injunctions for the family, for the home, for business, for study, for amusement, for charity, for relationships, etc. But his code is a purely abstract one for an India that had not yet come into existence, and whose advent is doubtful.

Was he himself sure that it would ever come? The entire edifice of voluntary reason rested on uncertain foundations, on a nature that could be shared by the East and the West. When illness came⁴ the cement was loosened. To whom was his soul to belong, Christ or Kâli? On his death-bed Ramakrishna, Devendranath his old master to whom he was now reconciled, and the Bishop of Calcutta all visited him. On January 1, 1884 he went out for the last time to consecrate a new sanctuary to the Divine Mother, but on January 8 his death-bed was enveloped in the words of a hymn sung at his own request by one of his disciples about Christ’s agony in Gethsemane.

It was impossible for a nation of simple souls to recognise itself in such a constant mental oscillation. It makes Keshab nearer and more appealing to us, who can study his most intimate thoughts and can see the mental torture accompanying it. It is true, moreover, that the kind and penetrating vision of Ramakrishna understood better than anybody else the hidden tragedy of a being exhausting itself in searching after God, whose body was a prey of the unseen God.⁵ But has a born

enter into a house by that if one chooses to? But, of course, I agree with you that the front entrance is the best.”

And the biographer of Ramakrishna adds that these simple words “modified his Puritanical view of life, which he as a Brahmo had held. Sri Ramakrishna taught Naren how to regard mankind in the more generous and truer light of weakness and of strength (and not of sin or virtue).” (*Life of Vivekananda*, Vol. I, Chapter XLVII).

³ Samhitâ—collection or miscellany.

⁴ Diabetes, one of the scourges of Bengal, of which Vivekananda also died.

⁵ I shall have more to say about the last touching visit of Ramakrishna to Keshab and

leader any right, even if he keeps his anguish to himself, to yield to such oscillations in his very last hours? They were his legacy to the Brahma Samaj; and though they enriched its spirit they weakened its authority in India for a long time, if not for ever. We may well ask with Max Müller¹ whether the logical outcome of his theism was not to be found in Christianity; and that is exactly what Keshab's friends and enemies felt immediately after his death.

His obsequies united in common grief the official representatives of the best minds both of England and of Westernised India. "He was the chain of union between Europe and India;" and the chain once broken, could not be resoldered. None of the subsequent moral and religious leaders of India have so sincerely given their adherence to the heart and spirit of the thought and the God of the West.² Hence Max Müller could write, "India has lost her greatest son." But the Indian Press,

while unanimous in acclaiming his genius, was forced to admit that "the number of his disciples was not in accordance with his desert."³

He was in fact too far away from the deep-seated soul of his people. He wished to raise them all at once to the pure heights of his intellect, which had been itself nourished by the idealism and the Christ of Europe. In social matters none of his predecessors, with the exception of Roy, had done so much for her progress; but he ran counter to the rising tide of the national consciousness, then feverishly awakening. Against him were the three hundred million gods of India and the three hundred million living beings in whom they were incarnate—the whole vast jungle of human dreams wherein his Western outlook made him lose the track and the scent. He invited them to lose themselves in his Indian Christ, but his invitation remained unanswered. They did not even seem to have heard it.

the profound words he poured out like balm on the hidden wounds of the dying man.

¹ Max Müller in 1900 asked Pratap Chunder Mozoomdar, who had taken Keshab's place at the head of the Brahma Samaj and who shared the "Christocentric" ideas of his master, why the Brahma Samaj did not frankly adopt the name Christian and did not organise itself as a national Church of Christ. The idea found a response in P. C. Mozoomdar himself and a group of his young disciples. One of them, Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya, deserves a special study, for he has left a great memory. He passed from the Church of the New Dispensation to the Anglican and eventually to the Roman Catholic Communion. Another is Manilal C. Parekh, the biographer of Keshab, also a convert to Christianity. Both are convinced that if Keshab had lived several years longer he would have entered the Roman Church. Manilal Parekh says "that he was a Protestant in principle and a Catholic in

practice. . . Christian in spirit, inclining to Monatism (faith in the supremacy of the Holy Spirit)" For myself I believe that Keshab was one of those who would have remained at the threshold of the half open door. But it was fatal that his successors opened the door wide.

² *The Indian Empire* saluted in him "the best product of English education and Christian civilisation in India." And *The Hindu Patriot*, "the noble product of the education and the culture of the West."

From the Indian point of view such praise was its own condemnation.

³ *The Hindu Patriot*. In 1921 the total number of the members of the three Brahma Samajas was not more than 6,400 (of which 4,000 were in Bengal, Assam and Behar-Orissa), a minute number in comparison to the members of the Arya Samaj, of which I shall speak later, or of the new sect of pure mysticism, like the Râdhâsvâmi-Satsang.

DECAY OF INDIGENOUS INDUSTRY

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I

As we saw in a previous chapter, the industrial independence of India was maintained during the earlier years of British Rule. In fact, her industrial situation then was probably better than that of England. Calicoes had long been exported from India before they could be manufactured in England. English cloth had to be sent to Holland to be bleached or dyed, while dyeing was a flourishing industry in India. The silk-trade of England had to be protected in 1765 by the exclusion of the French silk from English markets. The English were indebted for the finer varieties of linen to Germany and Belgium, while India manufactured muslins of such exquisite fineness, that a piece could be made fifteen yards wide, weighing only 900 grains. England imported nearly two-thirds of the iron and much of the salt, earthenware, etc., used by her.

But since the middle of the last century, the economic position of India has undergone a most deplorable change. Her indigenous industrial fabric has been shattered, and she has been reduced from the economically sound position of industrial independence to the very unsound one of industrial servitude, and from that of one of the wealthiest countries of the world to one of its poorest.

One of the most important causes of this industrial decadence was the Industrial Revolution in Europe due to the introduction of labour-saving machinery. While Europe was being industrially modernised, India remained in the old-world condition. She was too far from Europe to feel the quickening impulse of progress which transformed that continent; and centuries of slow evolution had given the social structure of the Hindus a rigidity which unfitted it for the ready reception of a sudden impulse.

And the marvellous quickness and suddenness of the Industrial Revolution did not give the Indians any time to adapt themselves to the new order of things. English manufactures poured in, like an avalanche, and swept the indigenous industries before them. The day of manual skill, in which the Indian artisans excelled, was over. Hand-made manufactures could no longer compete with machine-made manufactures. Indian artisans had neither the time nor the education to assimilate the mechanical skill of modern Europe. It was not to be expected that illiterate weavers, or illiterate dyers, or illiterate miners would apply the scientific methods of modern industries to their occupations. If India had her own way, she would probably have protected her industries as most civilized countries protect theirs at the present day. But India could not have her own way; a protective tariff by a British Government against British manufactures was not to be thought of.

Thus the first effect of the industrial expansion of England was the ruin of the artisan population of India. The introduction of the power-loom at first caused great distress among the weavers of England also. They invoked the help of Parliament. "They begged to be sent to Canada. They proposed that the terrible power-loom should be restrained by law; and when that was denied them, they rose in their despair and lawlessly overthrew the machines which were devouring the bread of their children."* But, the distress of the English weavers was only temporary. They soon had a share in the wealth created by the expansion of the cotton industry. It was not till the middle of the nineteenth century that the mechanical skill of modern Europe was transported to India, and the mills and

*"The Nineteenth Century" by R. Mackenzie (1892), p. 72.

factories on modern methods found employment for a small fraction of the artisans who were thrown out of work by the importation of the English manufactures. But the great majority of the displaced artisans have been thrown upon agriculture for subsistence.

Besides the absence of a protective tariff the construction of railways which has been going on apace since the middle of the last century has by facilitating the transport of imported goods proved an important cause of the decadence of indigenous industry. It is true, the railways have developed the export trade in raw produce. But the cultivator, if he gains at all, does not gain to the extent it is generally supposed. The yield from his land has not been sensibly affected by the railways. It is the same now as it was in pre-railway times or even less. He unquestionably gets better prices for his crops. But a portion of the increased profits is consumed in enhanced rent. A portion also goes to pay enhanced wages for labourers, though unfortunately the enhancement is not in the same proportion as that of the prices of food grains. The profits which he has left after meeting these charges may be considered to be the equivalent only of the grain he would have stored, had not the introduction of railways offered him tempting prices to sell it. Whether he is any gainer for having cash instead of a store of grain is a very doubtful point, especially when we consider that the temptation to spend money where one has it in hand, upon festivities and upon various imported articles which the railway has brought to his doors and which mostly partake of the nature of inutilities, futilities and fatuities, is very great. The danger of these articles consists in their attractiveness and comparative cheapness. The cultivator and his family probably make a better show of respectability than they ever did before. But when famine threatens they find they have little money and no store of grain to fall back upon. And

famines have become more frequent of late than ever before.*

True the railways have facilitated the transport of food to famine-stricken districts. But they have also resulted in conditions which are favourable to famines. In the first place, they have by facilitating the transport of imported goods helped to destroy indigenous industries. The artisans whom these industries afforded occupation have been yearly swelling the number of needy peasants and labourers. No doubt some of them have found employment in the railway workshops, and many more find work in the mines, factories and plantations which the railways have helped to develop. But their number is very small, just a little over two millions. Besides, as the largest and most important of the new industries with but few exceptions are owned and managed by foreigners, their profits swell the economic drain from India which leads to her impoverishment. The great majority of the displaced artisans have been driven to be labourers or agriculturists. Large towns with urban populations have dwindled into inconsiderable villages. The increase of agricultural at the sacrifice of artisan population is certainly not advantageous for India. There can be no doubt that a great portion of her wealth depended upon her manufacturing industries, as indeed the wealth of every country must do. Down to the early years of the last century she did not export her food grains, but cotton, silk and various other manufactures. It was especially to participate in the trade of these manufactures that the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the English came to India.

Then, again, the railways have contributed to the impoverishment of India as she has long had to remit to England a large amount as interests for them. As has been observed by H. J. S. Cotton, "the country is too poor to pay for its elaborate railway system . . . and

*Digby's "Prosperous British India," pp. 130--131.

being compelled to borrow in England, has incurred an ever-accumulating debt at what has unfortunately proved to be an ever-increasing rate of interest."* Moreover, what with the obstruction to drainage caused by the embankments of railways and their feeder roads in many parts of the country, notably in Bengal, and the pestilential pools choked with weeds on either side of them, they have been the main cause of the fulminant type of malaria which has prevailed since their construction.† The evil effects of Malaria in Bengal are summed up in the Census Report of 1911 :

"Year by year fever is silently at work. Plague slays its thousands, fever its ten thousands. Not only does it diminish the population by death, but it reduces the vitality of the survivors, saps their vigour and fecundity, and either interrupts the even tenour, or hinders the development of commerce and industry. A leading cause of poverty—and of many other disagreeables in a great part of Bengal—is the prevalence of malaria. For a physical explanation of the Bengali lack of energy malaria would count high."

Thus the railway has directly and indirectly contributed to the decay of indigenous industry.

II

The present system of Education on Western lines is to be placed in the same category as the railway. It has most dexterously forged links for the ever-lengthening chain of India's industrial bondage. Yet, the press and platform of New India rend the skies with cries for its extension and the expansion of a department which may more appropriately be called nation-destroying than nation-building. As was predicted by Macaulay, it has tended to approximate our style of living to the English standard. This "elevation" (as it is euphemistically called) is an undoubted

*"New India," p. 61.

†"Survival of Hindu Civilization," Part 2. "Physical Degeneration, its Causes and Remedies," pp. 21—26.

fact and is noticeable more or less among nearly all classes of the community especially in the vicinity of railways. It consists of :

(1) The substitution of the finer and cheaper mill-made, especially imported, fabrics for the coarser and dearer, though much more substantial and durable, hand-made clothes, and the more plentiful use of the former in the form of shirts, coats, etc. ; of expensive exotic games for inexpensive indigenous games ; of cigarette for *hooka* smoking ; of imported China glass and enamelled ware for indigenous metallic crockery etc., fine shoes for coarse sandals, sugar for *gur*, bottled and tinned medicines and foods, for indigenous simples and fresh foods ; and of strong liquor for home-brewed ale, and its increased consumption.

(2) The acquisition of such habits as tea-drinking and of a taste for expensive musical instruments, such as harmonium, gramophone, etc., and for urban amusements, such as theatres, cinemas, etc.

The quantity of clothing now needed in a household is treble, quadruple or more of what would have been sufficient a generation or two ago. All the members of a middle class family, male and female, infant and adult, must be draped in the various appendages of Western habiliment in conformity with Western fashion as far as possible. Bare legs and bare body would shock the current ideas of decency and æsthetics. The feet must be shod with boots and shoes of Western shape and style which are much more expensive and much less durable than those of indigenous make which were formerly in vogue. Cheap native toys no longer amuse our children. Our young men no longer find pleasure in native games and athletic exercises which cost nothing, but must have football, tennis, badminton, cricket, billiards, etc., which cost a great deal. Indigenous entertainments and amusements for which the great majority had to pay nothing have

been superseded by theatres, circuses, cinemas, etc., which everybody must pay for. Housekeeping in the old style which utilised the resources of the country to the fullest possible advantage, recognised the tending of the cow as one of its most important duties, and turned out delicacies and artistic utilities out of inexpensive things, is a vanishing art in New India. The auditory nerve of the Neo-Indian responds less and less to the notes of indigenous musical instruments, and they are being replaced by the harmonium, and latterly also, to some extent at least, by the gramophone. His tongue is becoming more and more insensible to the taste of Indian dainties, and must have a variety of tinned and bottled foods, solid and liquid. His eyes refuse more and more to be satisfied unless his house is furnished and decorated in the Western fashion, and his grounds laid out with exotic flowers. And his olfactory nerve is becoming more and more obtuse to any fragrance but that of perfumes either genuinely foreign or foreign in native guise. He is giving the go-by to simple indigenous remedies, and apothecary shops whose number in large cities is legion, can hardly keep pace with his ailments and are making deplorable inroads into his purse,—shops in regard to which an eminent medical authority has declared that “the world would be better off if the contents were emptied into the sea though the consequence to the fishes would be lamentable,” and that too in the West where the drugs are available in much fresher condition.

This approximation to the European style of living can hardly be called “elevation.” In many, I may say most, respects, the change is decidedly for the worse. In a climate where minimum of clothing, conformably to the indigenous standard of decency, is conducive to health for the greater portion of the year, covering oneself up from head to foot after the European style cannot but be prejudicial to health. The same remark applies generally to the change of taste in regard to eating, drinking

and smoking, especially in regard to the alarming spread of tea-drinking and of cigarette-smoking.

But whether “elevation” or not, whether for good or for bad, the approximation of the standard of living of one of the poorest communities of the world to that of one of the richest is suicidal. True a very small section of our community composed of some artisans, state servants, lawyers, etc., have more money than before. But they too are generally impoverished.

Impoverishment is a comparative term. If one, having comparatively more money than before, has yet less for his wants, he is certainly poorer. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that the great majority of our middle class have been impoverished in this sense. The candle burns at both ends. Their resources are exhausted on the one hand by the inordinate enhancement of the prices of indigenous necessities, and on the other by the so-called “elevation” of the standard of living which is enlarging their wants. Even incomes which formerly would have been regarded as opulence are now hardly deemed to be bare competence. While milk and the various preparations of milk which form our principal articles of nutrition suited to the climate, have become so very dear that the great majority of our middle class cannot afford to get them in sufficient quantity for bare subsistence, they have to spend comparatively large sums upon the gratification of the new tastes which have sprung up for clothing, shoes, socks, etc., and for amusements and games, such as theatrical performances, circuses, cinemas, billiards, football, tennis, etc., which have superseded the much less expensive indigenous amusements and games. For, the average man blindly follows the prevailing fashion; and with him show counts for more than substances, and the ornamental prevails over the useful.

The so-called “rise” in the standard of living of the people we are talking of has had very far-reaching conse-

quences of a most baneful character. Though frequently descanted upon as an indubitable index of prosperity, it has, in reality, proved a potent cause of the impoverishment not only, directly, of the great majority of the people who affect it, but also, indirectly, of the community as a whole. In the first place, it runs away with resources which should be husbanded for improving agriculture and other industries. Secondly, it entails an enormous increase in the consumption of imported articles which accelerates the decadence of indigenous industry and swells the volume of economic drain from the country. The writer recently visited a village, among the weaving population of which the Ranchi Co-operative Central Bank (the central organisation for financing Co-operative Credit Societies in the Ranchi district) had been making a highly praiseworthy attempt to introduce the flyshuttle loom. One of the most serious objections which the weavers urged against the use of this improved loom, was that they could not find a good market even for the scanty produce of the primitive looms which they had been used to ; what are they to do with the increased out-turn of the improved looms? Yet all the male villagers who congregated round us, including even the weavers themselves, were, almost without exception, well habited in mill-made clothes! It is only the females who still affect the coarse and durable wide-bordered *saris*. The special encouragement which is being given to female education will, no doubt, soon do away with even this small amount of patronage which indigenous industry still receives from them. For in towns they too, especially the literates among them, almost universally adopt the current fashion which favours the more showy, but less lasting mill-made fabrics.

A broad survey of the results of the system of elementary education which has been spreading in India for well-

nigh three generations has forced the conviction upon us that it has not made the cultivators better cultivators, nor the artisans and tradesmen more efficient artisans and tradesmen than before. On the contrary, it has distinctly diminished their efficiency by inculcating in the literate proletariat a strong distaste for their hereditary mode of living and hereditary callings, and an equally strong taste for brummagem fineries and for occupations of a more or less parasitic nature. They have accelerated rather than retarded the decadence of indigenous industries and have thus helped to aggravate their own economic difficulties and those of the entire community. The following remarks which the Superintendent of the Lushai Hills made sometime ago in regard to the effect of education on the Lushais, apply also to the major portion of the mass of the people in other parts of India, especially to the aboriginal section of it :

“They are showing a strong tendency to desert agriculture, their hereditary occupation, and live by their wits. They have undoubtedly more money to spend or waste. This is evidenced by the change which is taking place in their dress. Stout homespun cloths are being discarded for foreign apparel, such as shirts, trousers or “shorts,” coats, caps, etc. Imported yarn is displacing the indigenous article in the manufacture of cloths, and cheap and tawdry articles of personal adornment are becoming very common. Though he may have more money to spend, it is impossible to say that the Lushai is now better off than he used to be. In his village he had all he wanted, and lived a simple and happy life. The effect on his moral character has also been far from satisfactory. It is true that a certain number of the Lushais have taken advantage of the openings for improvement so freely provided by Government and profited by them, but, on the whole the results are depressing, and are such as to give

grounds for anxiety for the future welfare of the race."

It is very doubtful if the literate peasantry have "more money to spend or waste" than their unlettered brethren. They generally live far beyond their means; and if some of them have more money, it is usually obtained not by the improvement of agriculture or manufacture, but by occupations of an unproductive, and not unoften also of a shady, character, the aspiration of the literate proletariat being to enter some service or live upon their wits. The best patrons of native manufactures are still the illiterate peasantry who have not yet taken to shoddy apparel and "cheap and tawdry articles of personal adornment," at least to the extent the literates have. In fact, it is they, especially their women, who have arrested the utter annihilation of indigenous industry.

The subjects which the current system of education comprises have mostly no immediate reference to the requirements of our cultivators, artisans and traders. Their boys cannot derive any earthly benefit, so far as their hereditary occupations are concerned, by memorising the feats of glorified swindlers, thieves and murderers, or by learning the names of mountains, rivers and towns only to be forgotten soon after. If they are sent to schools it is with the view that they may enter some service, preferably Government service, or some profession, preferably the legal profession. The Primary standard is looked upon as a stepping stone to the Middle English or the High School standard, and the High School standard to the Collegiate standard. This is applauded as the "uplift" of the "lower" classes by Government as well as by New India, though it is hardly consonant with common sense to dub the people who pursue agriculture, among advantage; a system which, instead of whom are to be found representatives of the highest Hindu castes, as "lower"

than those who earn their livelihood by service or by some profession of a more or less parasitic character, and to regard the translation of the former, into the fold of the latter as uplift. For a generation or so, in tracts which are called backward, that is, where the present system of education has not made much progress as yet, the literates through the favour and patronage of Government and of missionaries, in the case especially of the aboriginal tribes, appear to prosper, and their prospect seems very alluring. But sooner or later they are sure to be threatened with an economic crisis such as the gentry of Bengal are confronted with to-day.

What our people want is more or better food, and New India vies with the Government in giving them a system of so-called "education" which not only does not enable them to get it, or holds out any reasonable prospect of their ever being able to get it, but, on the contrary, fosters in them tastes and habits which make them despise indigenous products and render them fit subjects for the exploitation of scheming capitalists mostly foreign;— a system which, instead of enlightening their intellect so that they may have a proper understanding of their own interests and those of the entire community, obfuscates it so as to make them oblivious of those interests and sacrifice substance to shadow, exchanging a good portion of what food they grow (which if kept in the country would make famine a rare* occurrence), for imported manufactures, a good portion of which might be easily dispensed with, often without any harm and sometimes with considerable strengthening their moral fibre, weakens it, instead of inculcating in

*The food grains that are exported are usually supposed to represent the surplus left after meeting the requirements of the country. As was observed, however, by Sir William Hunter, if the whole population ate as they should, no such surplus would exist.

them self-reliance and the dignity of honest, productive labour, makes them averse to it, not unoften of a degrading character, instead of fostering economy and self-control, fosters

self-indulgence and extravagance. If there is a panacea for our mundane ills, it is wisdom ; and education which does not contribute to its growth is a misnomer.

PRACTICE OF RELIGION

BY ANANDA

THE CASE OF THE UNMARRIED

By now we are convinced that the only thing worth seeking after in life is God. He alone exists. All else is vanity. This conviction has taken possession of our mind. We feel that our energies should now be exclusively devoted to the realisation of God. Merely talking about Him or speculating about Him does not satisfy us. We want Him as tangibly and really as we now perceive the things of the senses. But how difficult to actually perceive Him this way ! The more we want Him, the further He seems to recede from us. Besides our mind itself is our enemy. Though consciously we want only God, our mind has often other secret desires. They often distract and divide us. It is a continuous hard struggle now. There are also our worldly preoccupations. We have to attend to certain worldly duties. We have to earn our living, serve the family and fulfil social and other obligations. These all take our mind away from the central object of our life.

Of course, if we can formally renounce the world, we can avoid many of these distractions. The world values spirituality too much to grudge a common fare and shelter to persons who renounce for God. And of course there are no more any ordinary family or social obligations. [Of course that does not mean that we become selfish and impervious to the needs of men. We serve society in a different and deeper way by renouncing the world and devoting ourselves to spiritual

pursuits.] But how many can renounce? Renunciation even as an action is not so easy as is imagined. There are various difficulties. It may be there are family entanglements which it is practically impossible to break through. Our mind itself may not be sufficiently prepared. Naturally, therefore, those who will have to remain in the world, in spite of their conviction that God is the only being worth realising, will have a tough work to pursue their heart's desire amidst the preoccupations of the world. We shall try to consider their situation here.

Among them we must recognise two classes: the married and the unmarried. Their cases are not the same. Firstly, of the unmarried. Hindu society has not been, till recently, in favour of celibates remaining in society. It has required them to go out of its pale. Either become monks or householders. The *via media* is not desirable. This attitude of Hindu society is not without its justification. The sex-instinct is strong, very strong in men. And the health and purity of society depend much on the proper regulation of this instinct. Unless a man is inspired by spiritual ideals, it is extremely difficult, nay impossible, to keep the sexual instinct in check. Those who are not spiritually inclined had better marry both for their own sake and for the sake of society. Without spirituality sexuality must have expression somehow or other. It is better to give it a normal

expression through marriage. A more selfish and despicable life than that of one who does not marry in order to avoid domestic and social responsibilities and yet indulges in sensuality, cannot be conceived. Such lives are pests of society and endanger its purity. So Hindu society does not approve of these loose bachelors. Unless you have spiritual idealism you must marry. And if you have spiritual idealism, go out of the society and live as monks do and as one of them. That is good for both you and society. You will have a better and less trying atmosphere and society will have a more clear and shining example in you.

But circumstances have changed. Society is no longer what it was before. Now there is more scope in it for spiritually inclined celibates than ever before. There is far greater scope for service. Formerly most social functions were parts of family duties. Any separate bodies were not required to fulfil those functions. The service of the sick, the hungry and the poor was part of family duty. Now separate organisations are needed for this. The society has also grown far vaster in its scope. Problems are more complex. Everything is being done on an organisational basis. Householders cannot do even a fraction of what is necessary. Celibates have, therefore, very great scope for life and activity within the society now. They can serve men in various ways. And service can be easily spiritualised, in fact, service can and should be done in the spirit of worship. These new opportunities are quite favourable to celibates living within society.

Such celibates, if they have no family entanglements, had better renounce formally. That is better for themselves.

They can continue their service of men even after renunciation. But their position will be better, and strength greater. But if they cannot so renounce, they have to be very careful, especially about the sexual instinct.

They must observe the strictest *Brahmacharya*. This is the foundation. Without it, outward celibacy is miserable. Then there must be regular spiritual practice. And next service. Spiritual practice consists in withdrawing consciousness from the world, body and lower mind and concentrating it on the Divine. It may take any form,—repetition of a name of God, or meditation or reasoning, or mental concentration. But every day some definite regular practice must be made. Without it service will be a mockery and there will be little progress in spiritual life. We are considering here the case of those who really yearn for God. They will, therefore, naturally devote a great deal of time to spiritual devotions. They may not have anything to do with service or any such thing. After attending to their daily worldly duties, they may devote the rest of the time to spiritual practice. But if they cannot thus utilise the whole day, they should employ the remaining hours in acts of service. Perhaps in the present condition of society service must be a part of everybody's life, householders (married and unmarried) or monks. But if we are to neutralise the effect of worldly influences, we must assiduously practise, every minute of our waking life, what is called spiritualisation. It consists in looking upon everything as Divine. This is a very helpful practice. It not only obliterates worldliness, but develops spiritual consciousness very quickly.

Whenever we meet a man, we consider him only as a man. Ours is by no means a clear conception. Do we consider him a body? No. A mind? No. A spirit? No. Our idea of man is a confused conglomeration of all these three. What we want is to perceive him as spirit only. But this is not so easy a task. We have for ages habituated ourselves to associate certain ideas with the perception of what we call man. We consider him to have a certain form, a mind, good or bad,

agreeable or disagreeable, and behind that an indefinite something. If we analyse our conception of man, we shall find that that indefinite something is the essential being. Forms and modes of mind are as it were extraneous wrappings. Yet these wrappings predominate in our conception. And then there is the name. Suppose you meet your friend Hari. Around this name you have associated certain ideas, of body, mind and consciousness; and you call it the man Hari. But analyse. When you meet Hari, do you meet a body only? You will certainly say, No. If that is so, why do you associate a particular body with your idea of Hari? You know perfectly well, it is all matter, it was once small, it has now grown big, and it changes continually. Besides it is very, very limited. But surely you do not think of Hari as being so limited. You rather think that he is a soul, a spirit in essence,—illimitable, eternal, full of bliss. Is it not absurd to combine these two diametrically opposite ideas—body and spirit—together? So whenever you meet Hari, try to eliminate from your consciousness of him the element of body. Try to think of him, if you like in the beginning, as a mind. When you talk to or behave with him, try to feel that you are behaving with a mind and not with a body as you really do now.

But that is only the start. Mind itself is extraneous. You see how outer circumstances change the mind of Hari, how the mind has changed from infancy to manhood and how it is changing every moment. Infinite are the moods of mind. Which of them is really Hari? Of course you will say that of all those moods you find some to be more lasting with him and as such the constituents of his personality. But do you not think that those lasting elements are not also really lasting? We Hindus believe in reincarnation. We know personalities change. Hari's personality also is not

eternal. If that is so, then why think of Hari as a person in that sense, having certain mental modes? Why associate him with the mind? Go beyond that. What do you now find him to be? Beyond all limitations and qualifications, what is he? He is the spirit, he is God Himself. What you have so long considered to be a man is really God Himself, infinite, eternal *Satchidânanda Brahman*. This realisation is tremendous. It is revolutionary. Henceforth whenever we meet Hari, we do not feel his body or mind, we feel him as eternal *Atman* and *Brahman*. *This is spiritualisation.*

It is easy to conceive. But very difficult to perceive. The human name and form have been associated in our mind with certain modes of consciousness, which are the antithesis of the consciousness of *Atman* or *Brahman*. The moment the mind perceives a human form or remembers a human name, those ideas leap into it in association. We have to negate and destroy this association; and we have to associate human name and form with the consciousness of Divinity. It is a very strenuous struggle. Every time that the mind reverts to the former association at the sight of a man, it must be made to forego it and conceive the new association. Thus the practice must be constant, every minute of the day. But how fruitful of results! Of course, in the beginning, it will appear very very difficult. The mind will refuse to act as desired. And the ideas will get confused. But slowly the practice will begin to tell. If we can pursue this practice earnestly, in one year we shall perceive a great change in our consciousness. Men will no longer appear as they do now. With this change in our outlook of man, will come a simultaneous change in our perception of other beings and the world. The world will reveal a new content. It will appear as instinct with Divinity. Our consciousness of our own self will also change. We

shall no longer feel ourselves as body or mind but as something finer and vaster than these.

This is a very fruitful practice. It requires a strong brain and great perseverance. But it is extremely helpful. If one—whether in the world

or outside—practises this, there will be much less obstruction in spiritual progress. Especially those who are in the world should practise this. This will neutralise the antithesis between the world and God and make other spiritual practices easier, and life fuller and sweeter.

THE CHALLENGE OF THE ORIENT

BY VASUDEO B. METTA

In the eyes of an Oriental, Western civilization stands distinguished from all Eastern cultures by the love of change, of war, and of individuality which color its character. Love of change, in particular, glorified as the desire for progress, appears to obsess the Western mind. All changes wrought in political and social institutions, all remoldings of literary and artistic ideals, once they are established and can accordingly be regarded in retrospect, are generally assumed—without question—to be steps forward. Progress and change being thus considered identical, it is difficult for the Westerner to detect steps which may be regarded as retrogression.

The destruction of feudalism, to take an obvious instance, is taken without more ado to have been one move toward the ideal society. Now an Oriental naturally regards this change with less enthusiasm, since he has not, so to speak, participated in the escape and taken sides. He will argue that feudalism rested upon an elaborate system of duties and ranks, such as he himself is used to, while the industrial society which has gradually emerged from the wreckage of feudalism, stresses in their place rights and equalities. He will refuse to admit that the change of outlook is necessarily for the better, and will maintain that it is by a general emphasis on duties and not by stressing rights that society is worked into harmony.

This ideal which makes progress synonymous with change has been definitely adopted among Western peoples—and not unnaturally. They are essentially materialistic. It is not a matter of dispute that at a certain stage of their history nations develop continuously from a material point of view. Material change, that is, becomes quite inevitably material progress. But morality and spirituality do not develop at an equal pace with material advances. The modern West can truthfully claim to have done away with certain notorious evils of antiquity—for example, religious persecution, torture, and slavery. In their place, however, other evils have arisen. Religious wars have given place to economic wars; domestic slavery has been superseded by factory slavery, which is only a slight improvement over the old; and moral and spiritual maladjustments relatively unknown in the past are prominent in modern society. Rather than call the process of change a general progress, the Oriental, unprejudiced in favour of change itself, would prefer to describe it as the transfiguration of certain vices.

In the realm of art, Western love of change is shown with great clearness. The Westerner is amazingly restless in his search for beauty. In nature he has found a relatively permanent charm. The sun, moon, stars, hills, flowers, and animals have at all times attracted him, no less than they have attracted

other races. But beside these objects of permanent natural beauty he has been unable to place equally permanent canons of created beauty.

Eastern peoples—and the idea is difficult for Westerners to appreciate—*have* found such permanent canons of beauty. Conventions, like those of costume, have been quite deliberately maintained in the East because of their inherent and recognized beauty. Hindu women discovered the *sari* three thousand years ago, and have remained faithful to it ever since. Similarly, in painting and architecture, there have been comparatively few changes in Far Eastern styles for over a thousand years. The canons of Indian architecture have remained untouched, save in detail, for many centuries.

In literature the same contrast between East and West is to be observed. In the West one has only to compare any three plays of the moment—a society play, a crook play, and an “expressionistic” production—with a Greek tragedy or an Elizabethan drama, in order to see how greatly the essentials of dramaturgy have changed without any noticeable benefit. In China and India, on the other hand, respect and reverence for the great national writers of the past still reigns; imitation of their styles has continued unbroken through centuries.

Although one may criticize the Westerner for a certain fickleness and restlessness in these matters, it must be admitted, nevertheless, that the ideal of progress, however inconvenient and question-begging, has one practical advantage: the Westerner is naturally optimistic and free from despair. Hoping for better things to come, and, indeed, assuming them, he does his best to realize his expectations through his own efforts.

THE WEST'S PUGNACITY

Love of war—the second distinguishing feature of the Western mind—is a more serious matter, since it manifests itself in continual external and internal

conflicts. It is true that Asiatic peoples have had their external wars, but usually they have sprung from the ambition of kings or military adventurers rather than from the bellicose nature of the populace. The people have been roused only by the presence of invaders. In Europe, on the other hand, the masses have been—and are still—extremely bellicose. This explains why they have made so much of their military men, from pre-Christian times to the present day. The exploits of Alexander the Great, of Cæsar, and of Napoleon have been extolled in a manner which we can see to be disproportionate when the same spirit of exaltation is brought down to the war-time semi-deification of Marshal Hindenburg. The ancient Indians, however, did not consider the invasion of Alexander the Great worth recording in a single book. The Chinese, subject as they have been to military races, have expressed in their long literature nothing but contempt for military men. And even so warlike a people as the Japanese have not, so far as I know, one poem in praise of war.

Oriental society has had the ideal of stability before it; consequently, Oriental communities have usually avoided those conditions and movements which give rise to internal or class warfare. Taking for granted that certain values are eternal and unquestionable, Eastern peoples have refused to undertake the reform of society on any other basis. Thus it is that in Hindu and Chinese communities the saints and men of learning and wisdom have always been placed at the top of the ladder and the manual workers have been confined to the bottom. The law-givers and leaders of these communities upheld this arrangement, not through unreasonable prejudice or lack of humanity, but because they felt that if civilization is to remain more or less synonymous with culture, it should have physical labor as its base, and imagination, learning, and wisdom at its apex. Money-making, it may be noted, came in a position between the two.

Since Western society does not hold any series of values to be permanent—such would indeed be incompatible with the ideal of progress—class warfare is inevitable every time there is a shift in the balance of values. The class which cherishes and most strongly represents a new set of values is placed in conflict with those who defend an older set and are most threatened by its dissolution. Thus, from antiquity, class warfare reddens and disgraces the pages of Western history. In Greece the slaves, in Rome all the depressed classes—slaves, plebeians, and the landless—were pitted against the privileged classes. In the Middle Ages, kings, barons, and people fought a series of triangular duels throughout Europe. By the time of the French Revolution, the bourgeoisie and proletariat had joined hands against monarchy and aristocracy. At present it is the proletariat against all comers; Labor attempts to crush the power of Capital—with ruthless disregard for the classes which lie between the two combatants.

This class warfare, which exists permanently in the West, cannot possibly benefit society as a whole. Its roots and its fruits are always the same—group selfishness, urging one body to triumph over another. Each asserts, perhaps justifiably, that it is inspired by only the highest ideals. But once the members of a class come into power, they are as greedy and group-selfish as any of their predecessors.

WOMEN AND SEX WARFARE

The Western ideal of progress, being essentially war-creating, has brought about an additional variety of human conflict known as sex warfare. Western women, as we have been told for many years, resolved to attain freedom. What that freedom is, when attained, always seems difficult to define, for in a community absolute freedom is either impossible or meaningless. Whatever limited individual freedom we find practicable is determined more by the other members of society whom

we have to regard than by ourselves. However, where it is definitely self-limited, freedom becomes morally admirable. We respect the man or woman who seems to be aiming at a freedom which thinks less of its own enhancement than that of others.

Now the Oriental woman has actually attained this kind of freedom, whereas the Western woman is moving away from it. Her experiments in sex warfare can have only this result. In the West, the Oriental woman is popularly supposed to be a negligible sort of creature in society, and in private life the slave of her husband. But this is not true. She rules her husband in domestic matters, and her children in everything. Yet, in spite of the power she possesses, she has remained singularly selfless. She has the ideal of self-realization in mind as much as her Western sister, but she believes that she can realize herself better by subordinating her ego to that of her family than by pitting it against theirs. This is directly opposed to the principles of the modern Western woman, who believes that self-expression calls for qualities which are the very reverse of self-abnegation.

Restlessness and the violent clashes of groups, classes, and sexes are only two of the many facets of Western individualism. Another, and one which an Oriental notices particularly, is the effect of individualism on Western religion. In the deepest sense, religion has not, and never has had, a strong hold on the life of Western races. They are essentially a fighting people; the means of gaining a livelihood are of more consequence to them than the aims and ends of life itself. Nevertheless, there is a tendency in the West toward personal monotheism—not because the Westerner has a strong intellectual prepossession in favor of a God who is a personal Being, sitting apart from His Creation, but because personal monotheism gives him some assurance that his own individuality exists apart from that of his Maker. The Christian

doctrine of immortality is especially appreciated in the West because it satisfies the believer that his own little individuality will continue after death. The Westerner is instinctively horrified at Buddhism and such other religions which teach that at death a man's individuality is either extinguished or absorbed into that of his Maker. He terms such anti-individualistic religions negative. But they are negative only if one starts with a preconception that everything positive in human vitality is individualistic.

Individualism also makes itself felt in attempts to emancipate man from the bonds of family life. The Oriental, one must admit, has no reason to look with complete pride and complacency upon his subordination to the influence of his parents and the other older members of his family. Indeed, this subordination sometimes stands in the way of criticism and reform, and perhaps prevents him from realizing other ideals. Still, neither does the Westerner have reason to regard emancipation from family life as an unmixed good. It has destroyed or narrowed the scope for self-sacrifice and co-operation. Under the patriarchal system of the East, men and women willingly sacrifice all for the sake of their parents; in the West, the emancipation of the individual from family bonds tends to develop an egoism which more or less disregards all possibilities of sacrifice for the family in that wider sense of the word which includes more than wife and children.

Moreover, the break up of the patriarchal system in the West has blunted the individual's sense of public disgrace. The Oriental thinks of the inevitable dishonor to his family before he indulges in any misdemeanor or vice which is liable to exposure. In the same circumstances, the Westerner considers only his own position. Now presupposing that private conscience is an equally effective censor in both cases, it appears that the Westerner has less check on his evil propensities. An experimental state of society in which

the family counts for little or nothing seems to be exercising considerable attractions in America, Russia, and elsewhere; but if institutions be judged not for their chronological merits or novelty, but for their ethical and practical values, the family system, which is the negation of individualism, deserves better spokesmanship and stronger support in the West than it now obtains.

DEMOCRACY IN THE DOLDRUMS

The political compromise at which warring individualists inevitably arrive is democracy. In fact, democratic forms of government have been put into practice mainly with the idea that they afford the individual his greatest freedom. This *a priori* belief has turned out to be a delusion. Some of the democratic governments of the West are no less tyrannous and capricious than Roman Cæsarism or the much abused despotisms of the East. The liberty of the individual is attacked and harassed in ways which vary from the all-important to the absurd. A compulsion, permanent in some countries and periodic in others, forces the citizen to join the army. Minor prohibitions extend to what he may eat or drink, between what hours he may buy and sell, and where he must register the births, marriages, and deaths which take place in his family.

Western governments are not satisfied with merely imposing external constraints on their people; they interfere with their thoughts and beliefs as well. The democratic government of Athens condemned Socrates to death for teaching his doctrines to the youth of the city, and persecuted Anaxagoras, Aristotle, and other philosophers on similar grounds. In the Middle Ages—and up to the present day in some countries—the Jews of Europe had to suffer a general religious persecution. The Spanish Moors were expelled or exterminated by their compatriots as a genial tribute to their religious independence.

The present situation in the United States scarcely needs emphasis. The law seeks to prevent men and women from drinking or even, in some cases, from smoking; the teaching of the theory of Evolution and the reading of Boccaccio are made misdemeanors in several parts of the country. In the development of democracy the next logical step is socialism. That the real liberty of the individual is not precisely increased under this régime, the greatest socialistic experiment—in Russia—fairly demonstrates.

The famous despotic governments of the East have not, on the whole, interfered with the liberty of the subject so severely as the present democratic governments of the West. The individual has not been forced to fight, any more than to register his births, marriages, and deaths. The Hindus and the Chinese, as we have already seen, were not imbued with any militaristic spirit; nor were they forced to absorb it in wartime, for peaceful work in agriculture, the arts, and industries proceeded uninterrupted. With the possible exception of the Mohammedan rulers in India, the despotic governments of India and China were not prone to persecute people for their thoughts and beliefs. No philosopher in these countries has had to choose between banishment and execution for teaching his views of life. Smoking, drinking, and the like were not made criminal offenses under Indian and Chinese despotisms. That these governments had their defects is not disputed, but it is worth questioning whether these defects were more serious to the individual than those of Western governments, which are based theoretically on the principles of individualism.

It may be remarked that democracy has a deeper hold upon the outward forms of Western governments than on the minds of the people themselves. Class snobbery and the aping of manners fashioned by royalty or aristocratic circles are amusing evidence of the shallowness of democratic feelings.

Should the King of England handle his knife in a peculiar way, English society adopts the mode. Should the Queen of England wear a yellow frock, then yellow frocks become the rage. And when the Prince of Wales began wearing a black tie and white waistcoat, the fashion percolated at a relatively high speed right down to the lower strata of the British middle classes. If the Western peoples were really democratic, they would, instead of imitating their kings and queens, have induced their monarchs to follow popular fashions, thus leveling from below. In India, where there is no pretense of democracy in the Western sense, the decencies of manners are preserved by a complete independence of spirit. Neither in dress nor in any minor point of convention do the people take lessons from their rulers.

ART FOR THE FAVOURED FEW

Art and literature in the West are moving directly away from democratic foundations and are producing a new type of class consciousness. The poetry of Homer and the plays of Æschylus were definitely written and sung for the people at large. The troubadours and trouvères of the Middle Ages sang their songs for kings and peasants alike. The paintings of Giotto and Cimabue and the great Gothic cathedrals were created for all classes of mankind. But individualism has now developed, and art and literature are definitely fenced off. Can anyone maintain that, say, Doctor Bridges or Mr. Epstein works for the joy of the masses, or that the majority of modern Western painters produce their pictures for any but a tiny section of the public? The poets and artists are, on the whole, in definite revolt against the wishy-washy ideals of democracy put forward as a seemly cloak for government; and the aristocratic aloofness which they help inspire in their appreciators may go far to explain why they are so generally ignored or regarded as virtual enemies

to society by most Western governments.

Perhaps Western conditions are more than casually connected with the pronounced note of morbidity in the art of to-day, even including popular art forms such as the films and the commercial theater. Other civilizations have produced artists and writers of a morbid spirit, but none, I think, has yielded so many with such noticeably morbid tendencies. Sex and crime form the background of literary and even plastic art—in relatively crude forms in America and England, and in more perverse manifestations on the Continent. Certainly a partial explanation is to be found in the nervous strain induced by industrialism, and in the enormous extent of forced celibacy.

One of the most pitiable tendencies of modern Western life is the verbal stress laid on the brotherhood of man and the ideal of social welfare, accompanied, curiously enough, by an external exclusiveness and insistence on such prejudice as color bars. The ideal of the brotherhood of man is excellent in itself, but it is only a kind of compensatory expression for a profound discontent with a Western civilization in which it has little force. The lack of ideals of fellowship below the surface and in the reality of working life provokes their outward, verbal, and intellectual expression. Industrialism, working great material progress in the West, has helped to foster an initial spirit of individualism, but this very individualism is thwarted in its most satisfactory expression by industrialism's disregard of the individual apart from his work. Emphasis falls not upon the artisan's pleasure in work well done, but upon the marketable quality and quantity of the product. Leisure and love of knowledge have departed, and with them has gone the capacity for silence and meditation which is so closely connected with the spiritual growth and true individualism of man. Deprived of this spiritual sustenance, the Westerner pities himself and his

neighbors, and turns to vaguely philanthropic feelings.

BROTHERHOOD AND NEW-DISCOVERED HATES

At the same time he indulges in an intense hatred of other races, such as has probably never been known in the past. The Arabs in their great days (as may be seen in *The Arabian Nights*) seem seldom to have despised the Negro or the Spaniard merely because they were beings of different races. What prejudices they had sprang mostly from a religious source. The Chinese, it is true, have had a certain dislike for other races, but they have not flaunted a crop of literary assertions concerning their racial superiority, nor engaged, except in self-defense, in racial wars of extermination or conquest. Actual color prejudice was more or less unknown outside the civilization of the modern West. While the individual has generally preferred men of his own color, a mixture of all races took place under the Roman Empire. The last few centuries of Western domination have created permanent color problems which have yet to be solved.

Like individuals and like nations, civilizations are apt to consider themselves above decay. The color bar may actually precipitate the downfall of Western civilization, and a conqueror come from Asia or Africa may give it an unexpected *coup de grace*. Yet it is not the "Yellow Peril" or any outside competitor that Western civilization should chiefly fear. Far more dangerous, because less tangible and less obvious, are the possibilities of internal disruption. It is customary to assume that Western civilization will progress internally and that it possesses permanent elements which insure its lasting forever. But a civilization based on competition instead of co-operation, in which class warfare is chronic, and in which the practical element is prized far more than moral or spiritual values, in which commercialism is beginning to invade art, literature, and even religion

—that civilization has little vitality or strength to overcome decay.

The individual can attain in life a limited perfection only by proper selection and elimination—not by an all-embracing hunger for change. Create a circle for your life and eliminate from it all that which is unsuited to your constitution in the widest sense; eliminate from it everything clashing with the highest ideals which you wish to realize—then you have some possibility of a harmony. The Greeks of the classical period seem to have grasped this conception very clearly, and so, to a degree, have the modern French, thereby producing the most harmonious culture now existing in the Western world. These two apart, Western peoples have not seen how the lesson applies to the group life; they have been as ecstatic as children, striving to mix all kinds of contradictory ideals—intellectual, moral, and spiritual—as a possible step in the progress to perfection. Instead of a synthesis, therefore, the nations of the West are achieving a conglomeration of mutually antagonistic fragments.

Modern civilization in the West remains chaotic and inharmonious large-

ly because of its mixture of Greco-Roman and Christian ideals. The patriotism, pride, and material joys of a pagan life, which have come down in the classical tradition, are continually jostling and pushing very different ideals—love of mankind, humility, reverence for saintly men, and “the devotion to something afar from the sphere of our sorrow.” Christianity, as is not always remembered, is, by origin, an Eastern religion adapted with remarkable success to Western minds—and changed in the process. Is it too far-fetched to see in the present struggles within the Anglican community symptoms of a real incompatibility, a real incapacity for further adaptation and compromise which will apply to the temporal as well as the spiritual life of Western nations? If the interpretation is correct, Western civilization may have to reverse much of its so-called “progress” before it can attain again to even a temporary unity. In the process of reaction, I believe a more searching inquiry is likely to be made into the ways in which the so-called stagnant civilizations of the East have maintained their equilibrium for so many centuries.

ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

CHAPTER VII

DISCIPLE'S REALISATION

जनक उवाच ।

मय्यनन्तमहाभोधौ विश्वपोत इतस्ततः ।

भ्रमति स्वान्तवातेन न ममास्त्वसहिष्णुता ॥१॥

जनकः Janaka उवाच said :

अनन्तमहाभोधौ In the boundless ocean मयि in me विश्वपोतः the ark of the universe स्वान्तवातेन by the wind of its own nature इतस्ततः hither and thither भ्रमति moves मम my असहिष्णुता impatience न not अस्ति is.

Janaka said :

1. In me, the boundless ocean, the ark of the universe moves hither and thither impelled by the wind of its own nature. I am not impatient.¹

[¹Impatient—affected.

When the wind rises in the ocean, it tosses a ship hither and thither and even sends it down through its impact. But the ocean is not affected by the movements of the ship. Even so, the universe which rests on the reality of the Self is ever changing under the impulsion of its inherent laws. But the changing world does not affect the Self in the least.]

मय्यनन्तमहाभोधौ जगद्दीचिः स्वभावतः ।

उदेतु वास्तमायातु न मे वृद्धिर्न च क्षतिः ॥२॥

अनन्तमहाभोधौ In the limitless ocean मयि in me जगद्दीचिः the wave of the world स्वभावतः of itself उदेतु may rise अस्त' dissolution आयातु may attain वा or मे my वृद्धिः increase न not क्षतिः decrease न not च and (भवति is).

2. In me, the limitless ocean, let the wave of the world rise or vanish of itself.¹ I neither increase nor decrease thereby.

[¹Of itself—by its own nature. A wave is no other than the water of the ocean itself; only name and form have been added; there is no increase of substance. Even so is the world; its reality is Brahman itself. So when the world appears, name and form are superimposed on the reality of Brahman; and when it disappears, name and form vanish. The reality is ever the same.]

मय्यनन्तमहाभोधौ विश्वं नाम विकल्पना ।

अतिशान्तो निराकार एतदेवाहमास्थितः ॥३॥

अनन्तमहाभोधौ In the boundless ocean मयि in me विश्वं universe नाम called विकल्पना imagination (अस्ति is अहं I) अतिशान्तः highly tranquil निराकारः formless (अस्मि am) एतत् this एव alone अहं I अस्थितः abide.

3. In me, the boundless ocean, is the imagination of the universe. I am highly tranquil and formless. In this¹ alone do I abide.

[¹This—namely, the Knowledge that the world is merely an appearance and that the Self in which it appears remains ever calm and formless.]

नात्मा भवेषु नो भावस्तत्रानन्ते निरञ्जने ।

इत्यसक्तोऽस्पृहः शान्त एतदेवाहमास्थितः ॥४॥

आत्मा Self भवेषु in the objects न not (अस्ति is) भावः object अनन्ते limitless निरञ्जने stainless तत्र in that (Self) नो not (अस्ति is) इति so (आत्मा Self) असक्तः unattached अस्पृहः desireless शान्तः tranquil (अस्ति is) एतत् this एव alone अहं I अस्थितः abide.

4. The Self¹ is not in the objects nor² is the object in That which is infinite and stainless. Thus It is free from attachment and desire and tranquil. In this alone do I abide.

[¹Self etc.—The Self is all-pervasive and infinite and cannot therefore be contained by finite objects, such as body, mind, etc.

²Nor etc.—in an absolute sense; for the Self is infinite, i.e., cannot have anything to do with any finite object, and stainless, i.e., cannot have any marks of limitation.

The Self is neither the container nor the contained, for nothing else really exists. The world appears through ignorance.]

अहो चिन्मात्रमेवाहमिन्द्रजालोपमं जगत् ।
अतो मम कथं कुत्र हेयापादेयकल्पना ॥५॥

अहो Oh अहं I चिन्मात्र Consciousness itself एव surely जगत् world इन्द्रजालोपमं like a magic show अतः so मम my कुत्र where कथं how हेयोपादेयकल्पना thought of the rejectable and the acceptable (स्यात् can be).

5. Oh, I am really Intelligence itself. The world is like a juggler's show. So how and where can there be any thought of rejection and acceptance in me?

[A man of Self-realisation looks upon this world as a juggler's show, false and illusory and having no existence even when it is visible to him. As such, he can have no attraction or repulsion for any object whatsoever of the world.]

CHAPTER VIII

BONDAGE AND LIBERATION

अष्टावक्र उवाच ।

तदा बन्धो यदा चित्तं किञ्चिद्वाञ्छति शोचति ।
किञ्चिन्मुञ्चति गृह्णाति किञ्चिद्दृष्यति कुप्यति ॥१॥

यदा When चित्तं mind किञ्चित् anything वाञ्छति desires शोचति grieves किञ्चित् anything मुञ्चति rejects गृह्णाति accepts किञ्चित् anything दृष्यति feels joy for कुप्यति feels angry for (च and) तदा then बन्धः bondage (अस्ति is).

1. It is bondage when the mind desires or grieves at anything, rejects or accepts anything, feels happy or angry at anything.

तदा मुक्तियैदा चित्तं न वाञ्छति न शोचति ।
न मुञ्चति न गृह्णाति न दृष्यति न कुप्यति ॥२॥

यदा When चित्तं mind न not वाञ्छति desires न not शोचति grieves न not मुञ्चति rejects न not गृह्णाति accepts न not दृष्यति feels joy न not कुप्यति is angry तदा then मुक्तिः freedom.

2. It is liberation when the mind does not desire or grieve or reject or accept or feel happy or angry.

[Desiring, grieving, etc., are the modifications of the *Chitta*, the mind-stuff, which may be likened respectively to ripples and a lake. The bottom of the lake is as it were our own true self. We can catch a glimpse of the bottom only when the water is calm and clear and there are no waves. If the water is muddy or agitated, the bottom will not be seen. Likewise as long as there are mental modifications which are possible only so long as we identify ourselves with them, we cannot see the Self and are in ignorance and bondage. But when the mind is calm and we fully dissociate ourselves from its modifications, we realise our true nature and thus attain liberation.]

तदा बन्धो यदा चित्तं सक्तं कास्वपि दृष्टिषु ।
तदा मोक्षो यदा चित्तमसक्तं सर्वदृष्टिषु ॥३॥

यदा When चित्त' mind कासु अपि certain दृष्टिषु in the senses सक्त' attached तदा then बन्धः bondage यदा when चित्त' mind सर्वदृष्टिषु in all the senses असक्त' unattached तदा then मोक्षः liberation.

3. It is bondage when the mind is attached to any particular senses.¹ It is liberation when the mind is not attached to any of the senses.

[In the preceding two verses, bondage and freedom have been explained as identification with and dissociation from the *internal*, mental modifications. Here they are being explained in reference to *external* objects.

¹Senses—*Dristi* means sight or the sense of seeing, and hence any instrument of perception,—any sense.]

यदा नाहं तदा मोक्षी यदाहं बन्धनं तदा ।

मत्वेति हेलया किञ्चित् मा गृह्णाण विमुञ्च मा ॥४॥

यदा When अहं I न not तदा then मोक्षः liberation यदा when अहं I तदा then बन्धनं bondage इति this मत्वा thinking हेलया easily किञ्चित् anything मा not गृह्णाण accept मा not विमुञ्च reject (वा or).

4. When there is no 'I', there is liberation; when there is 'I', there is bondage. Considering this, easily refrain from accepting or rejecting anything.

[Egoism is bondage, constituting as it does the identification of the Self with body, mind, etc.; and egolessness is liberation. When there is no ego, there is no identification of the Self with mind, body, etc., and the Self is realised as one without a second pervading the whole universe. Having this knowledge one becomes perfectly tranquil and free from desire or aversion for anything.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

In This Number

We publish in this issue ROMAIN ROLLAND'S essay on Keshab Chunder Sen, a part of his chapter on the *Builders of Unity*. We find it necessary to add a few words in comment. Speaking of a missionary tour that Keshab undertook in 1873, M. Rolland says: "The tour opened up new horizons and he believed that he had found the key to the popular polytheism, so repugnant to the pure theism. But to this union, realised spontaneously by Ramakrishna at the same time, Keshab brought a spirit of intellectual compromise." It is true Keshab undertook a missionary tour in 1873. But there is no evidence

that he made any attempt to understand or understood the significance of Hindu polytheism about that time. But we have, on the other hand, the witness of Protap Ch. Mozoomdar (in his *Life of Keshab Chunder Sen*) that Keshab thought he had found the key to Hindu idolatry about the year 1879 when again he went on a missionary tour. The article on Hindu idolatry, from which M. Rolland has quoted, was written by Keshab in 1880. It is scarcely correct to say that Sri Ramakrishna realised the union of theism and polytheism about the same time as Keshab. The question simply did not arise with Sri Ramakrishna. If, however, the har-

mony of the different Hindu creeds is meant, it was realised by Sri Ramakrishna long long ago—some 18 years—before Keshab Ch. Sen thought he had realised it. Another point also requires to be noted. M. Rolland says that Keshab Ch. Sen began to proclaim the New Dispensation in 1875. The statement does not seem to be borne out by facts. The New Dispensation was proclaimed by Keshab about 1880. It is true he used the words *New Dispensation* in his lecture, *Behold the Light of Heaven in India*, which he delivered in 1875. But the lecture itself contained little or nothing of the teaching that came to be proclaimed later on as New Dispensation. It was mainly devoted to a consideration of a few theistic similarities between the Jews and the Hindus and between the Christians and the Hindus. . . . *The Challenge of the Orient* by VASUDEO B. METTA is taken from a recent issue of *The Forum* (New York). It is a neat summing up of some of the salient features of the Western civilization from the Indian view-point. A reply to Mr. Metta's article by the celebrated English writer, G. K. Chesterton, appeared in the same issue of *The Forum*. We hope to reproduce it in our next number. After studying at Cambridge and the Sorbonne, Mr. Metta returned to India and practised law in the State of Baroda. Finding this uncongenial, he became art critic of *The Bombay Chronicle*. He next went to New York. He is now in England.

A Reply to Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi has been pleased to express in his *Young India* (July 25) his opinion on our comments in two recent issues of *Prabuddha Bharata** on the cult of *Charka* and *Khaddar*. But we confess we have been disappointed by his reply. He has given us no real argument. We expected a real and substantial justification of the *Charka*

*He has not evidently read our article and note in the June *Prabuddha Bharata*.

and *Khaddar* programme from its originator and chief inspirer. Instead, we have a few commonplaces from him.

Mahatma Gandhi has taken us to maintain the following five propositions in our notes :

1. "India must become industrial in the Western sense ;"

2. "The question of physical existence cannot be solved by the *Charka* ;"

3. "The conditions attached to the success of the *Charka* make too large claims on prevailing tendencies and human nature ;"

4. "The justification and superiority of machines lie not so much in meeting the internal needs of a country as in invading and capturing foreign markets ;"

5. "If India is to live and fulfil her spiritual mission among men, she *must* modernise herself. . . . Let us unhesitatingly and energetically assimilate the modern industrial methods. . . . But along with that we must practise spirituality intensely, create a mighty spiritual idealism in the mind of the nation and a great love for the country so that on the wings of them we may cross over the dark valley of modernism in which the West is sadly groping. *Without spiritual idealism, modernism will spell a speedy ruin.*"

We have to say that this bare catalogue scarcely does justice to our thesis and plea. Devoid as it is of even a brief reference to the reasons which have led us to these propositions, it must have misled the readers of *Young India*. Mahatmaji ought to have mentioned and refuted them. He has merely made a few pointless comments on those propositions.

Yet, let us see if these independent comments can stand examination. At the outset Mahatmaji remarks that the above five propositions "are obviously based upon the assumption that modern civilisation is comparatively a good thing and that it cannot be resisted with any hope of success." The first part of this assumption is obviously not ours. We never sought to compare

even by implication the modern civilization with any other civilization in the notes in question. What we maintain is that, good or evil, living as we do in the modern age and not in the ancient or medieval, we cannot escape the modern civilization. It is only blindness that will not see the palpable fact that India cannot avoid being industrialised when every other country in the world is being so, and when India herself is being mechanised rapidly in various departments of her industrial life. Mahatmaji refers to the "growing body of enlightened opinion in the West," which, according to him, "distrusts this civilization." Surely it was not our purpose to discuss civilization in those notes on *Khaddar*. That the modern Western civilization is not perfect and is aggressively material, has been emphatically declared by ourselves again and again in the pages of *Prabuddha Bharata*. But to cure that civilization of its materialism and to get rid of all machineries and revert to the *Charka* are not identical terms.

No, we do not mean that we are to imitate the West, as Mahatmaji supposes. The question is not one of imitation or originality. The real problem is to determine an industrial system which will be adequate for our purposes having reference to our internal need as well as internal and external conditions. It cannot be arbitrarily chosen. It requires a thorough understanding of several sciences,—economics, sociology, etc., and profound insight into world-conditions and not merely moral considerations. Has Mahatmaji considered the problem in this light? Had he done so, he would not have sought to annul the first proposition in the way he has done. He argues as follows: "The Western civilization is urban. Small countries like England or Italy may afford to urbanise their system. A big country like America with a very sparse population, perhaps cannot do otherwise. But one would think that a big country, with a teeming population

with an ancient rural tradition which has hitherto answered its purpose, need not, must not copy the Western model." Scarcely a serious argument. There are at least two errors in it. (1) Mahatmaji forgets that Western civilization was not always urban. It also was rural before modern industrialism came into being with the invention of steam engines and electrical machineries. (2) He says that "the ancient rural tradition" of India "has hitherto answered its purpose." This is a grievous mistake. This system failed miserably before the onslaughts of modern industrialism as introduced into India through Western commerce. This is really the main reason of our economic collapse. In our notes, we elaborated the reasons why we cannot but industrialise ourselves. We detailed our needs and the national and international circumstances and showed that only present-day industrialism can serve our purpose. Mahatmaji ought to have taken up those points and shown how his *Charka* cult fulfils those needs and meets those circumstances. He has avoided these main issues and has contented himself with saying that "One man's food is often another man's poison," though as a matter of fact one man's food is often another man's food.

His answer to the second proposition is that it "cannot hold water." "On the contrary that question can only be answered by the charkha or its equivalent." He refers to Mr. Gregg's theory of solar power. Does Mahatmaji really mean that in other countries people are being only *replaced* by machines? What we have proposed is no mere *replacement*. Let every ounce of human energy be utilised, and let as much of mechanical energy and natural powers as procurable be *added* to it. Mr. Gregg assumes that India will not have any foreign trade. We admit that if India is not to have any foreign trade, large-scale industrialism will not be quite useful; and we may continue our present existence of semi-

starvation and semi-nudity and of political and economic slavery, till the foreign exploiters of India completely industrialise her for their own gains and reduce us more and more to the states of mere clerks and coolies (for they will establish more and more factories in India with the passing of days, even if we do not), or God in His mercy wipes us off the face of the earth. Hence what Mahatmaji tabulates as our fourth proposition: "The justification and superiority of machines lie not so much in meeting the internal needs of a country as in invading and capturing foreign markets."

But why should we assume that India cannot have any foreign trade? India always had it, if history is to be believed. The Hindus surrendered it to the Muhammadans during the Muhammadan rule and refused to cross the "black waters." Mahatmaji indicates that this condition is to be perpetuated. "Unfortunately or fortunately for India there are no foreign markets to invade and capture," he says. And he argues that "We may invade and capture foreign markets if we will at the same time invade and capture the foreign manufacturing countries," a statement the meaning of which is not quite clear to us. Mahatmaji taunts us for our "grand" scheme for capturing foreign markets. Perhaps we are more hopeful than Mahatmaji. But we cannot forget that we are one of the richest countries of the world in natural resources and one of the most populous. We also find that the economic positions of nations are constantly undergoing change, and that the industrial efforts of other nations are being crowned with success. In face of these facts, we cannot consider India alone as an unalterable mummy.

Mahatmaji's answer to the third proposition is that "in the midst of confusion and disappointment running through so many national activities" the *Charka* has spread "through 2000

villages" and has shown "the steady, though necessarily slow progress. . . . during the past eight years' revival." This is by no means an adequate answer. Besides Mahatmaji has not mentioned how much money and manpower have been expended for that purpose and also what progress modern industrialism has made during that period. Without these facts, Mahatmaji's statistics can scarcely convince.

The above arguments of Mahatmaji are really extraneous. We think, we hope legitimately, that the main consideration behind Mahatmaji's *Charka* cult is not economic, but moral. This fact finds expression in his answer to the fifth proposition. He holds that modern industrialism with its implication of foreign exploitation is irreconcilable with the spiritual idealism of India, that is to say, if India is to be faithful to her spiritual ideals, the only economic system possible is cottage industry; and he quotes the Bible and the Upanishad. This indeed is the foundation of Mahatmaji's economic policy. *We emphatically repudiate this implication of India's spiritual idealism.* We have elaborated our reasons in our June article ("Ring Out the Old, Ring In the New"). We do hold that India can be spiritual and at the same time industrially great with an extensive foreign trade. Mahatmaji's entire philosophy is, as we think, vitiated by one basic error: he wants to apply the highest ideal to one and all indiscriminately. Hinduism has always discountenanced such zeal. It has prescribed to every one according to his capacity. To those who are worldly-minded, it has proposed worldly prosperity and enjoyment, earning of much wealth and conquest of kingdoms. For those who are spiritually inclined, it has prescribed renunciation. This diversity of ideals is embodied in what is known as *Chaturvarga*,—the fourfold ideal of *Dharma, Artha, Kâma* and *Moksha*. Mahatmaji emphasises only *Moksha*. Ideals may be good. But too high ideals often ruin, if they are pressed

on the unprepared. India should beware of this danger.

Mahatmaji is pained that articles with such a conclusion ("dismal" he calls it) should appear in *Prabuddha Bharata* "which is solely devoted to spiritual culture." We are sorry that Mahatmaji has been pained. But we must respectfully submit that we claim to be as faithful to spiritual culture as Mahatmaji himself and that he should not expect that every one would accept *his* ideals and implications of spiritual culture. If Mahatmaji can reconcile himself to Sri Krishna's exhortations to Arjuna to fight and conquer his enemies, which intersperse the sublime spiritual teachings of the Gita, we hope he will find it possible to forgive us our advocacy of industrialism.

Mahatmaji says: "What was more painful still was the exploitation of the name of Swami Vivekanand in connection with the double-edged theory propounded by the writer. The inferential invocation of the authority of the illustrious dead in a reasoned discussion should be regarded as a sacrilege." An organ of Swami Vivekananda's Order, devoted to the dissemination of the Swami's teaching, by "inferentially" invoking him as an authority, commits an act of sacrilege! What a strange indictment! Does Mahatmaji imply that we are misinterpreting the Swami? If so, will he quote chapter and verse?

He thus concludes: "After all we, a handful of educated Indians, are shouldering a serious responsibility in gambling with the fortunes of the dumb millions whose trustees we claim to be. A still more serious responsibility rests upon the shoulders of those of us who claim to possess some spiritual perception." We respectfully bow to this warning. May we hope that the preachers of the *Charka* cult also, whether they claim spiritual perception or not, will heed the same warning?

Kumbha Mela and Buddhism

The great Kumbha Melâ will be held next winter in the confluence of

the Ganges and the Jumna at Allahabad. Thousands of pilgrims will congregate from all parts of India to see the great Mela and have a "darshan" of the great Sâdhus who will assemble there. Hindu religion (in the broader sense of the word) will be represented by all its different sects like Sanâtanis, Sikhs, Jains, Arya Samâjists, etc. But it is a matter of great pity that the largest branch of Hindu religion, i.e. the Buddhists are not now represented (as they used to be in old days) in the holy congregation. It must be admitted that Buddhism like Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Shikhism, Jainism and many other "isms" owes its origin to the great and ancient Hindu religion, and is founded on the three cardinal doctrines, i.e. (i) the Doctrine of Karma, (ii) Doctrine of reincarnation and (iii) Doctrine of Moksha. We all know that like all other sister doctrines Buddhism and Brâhmanism flourished side by side for hundreds of years till both were fused into one, i.e. Neo-Brâhmanism which profitably assimilated a good deal of the Buddhist ideas. There is no lack of historical evidence to show that during the Buddhist predominance and subsequent transition period monks and lay men of both Buddhist and Sanatanist persuasions congregated in most brotherly feelings in the great religious fair at Prayaga. The kings of those days like Harshavardhana scarcely made any distinction in showing honour between a Buddhist Bhikshu or a Sanataust Sannyâsi. A sincere attempt should now be made to induce representatives of our Buddhist brethren to join the great Kumbha Mela at Allahabad. Invitations should be sent to leading Buddhist monasteries in Nepal, Thibet, Burma, China, Japan, Siam and Indo-China, etc. Besides we must not forget to invite our brothers in Malaya States, Bali, Java, and Sumatra. We should not only congregate in a great conference for exchange of opinions and ideas, but arrangement

should be made to include our Buddhist brethren in the great bathing processions that are held during the Kumbha Mela.

REVIEW

THE PHILOSOPHY OF UNION BY DEVOTION. By Sri Srimat Swami Nityapadananda Abadhut. Mahanirban Math, Monoharpukur Road, Kalighat, Calcutta. X+192 pp. Price Rs. 1/8/-.

The book is an English rendering of a Bengali work *Bhaktiyoga-Darsan* by Yogacharya Sri Srimat Abadhut Jnanananda Deva, the translator's Gurn. It is not a philosophical treatment of devotion (*bhakti*), as its title indicates, but a devotee's utterance of his own appreciation and understanding of it in words simple, sweet and calm, flowing naturally from within. In the course of 26 discourses contained in the book, the author has represented the various characteristics and manifestations of *bhakti* in its different stages of development. Frequent reference has been made to such authorities on *bhakti*, as *Narada-Sutra*, *Bhagavadgeeta* and *Gheranda Samhita*, from which he quotes passages and explains them in the light of his experiences. With the same regard for authority, he occasionally mentions the views of his own spiritual master and brother Sannyasins.

The book does not savour of any sectarian spirit. The author is remarkably liberal in his views. He has equal respect for all religious faiths and forms of worship. But his catholicity has not resulted in a synthetic unity of different doctrines and practices, but in only a loose aggregation in which the basic differences between the philosophical outlooks are often lost sight of.

We are at one with the author in his view that devotion (*bhakti*) leads to union with God according to the dualists as well as the non-dualists. But we hold at the same time that there is a fundamental difference in their conceptions of devotion,—a distinction which the author to all appearances ignores. This fact is also evident in the following remark of the translator in his Introduction to the book: "The teachings of Lords *Rishava Deva*, *Sri Krishna* and *Chaitanya Deva* also point to the supremacy of devotion. Even the great *Sankarâchârya*, who is regarded as

the most distinguished upholder of the non-dualistic theory, has said, 'Devotion is the highest of all the causes of liberation.' " But it should be noted that devotion (*bhakti*) as conceived by Sankara is simply another form of knowledge (*jnana*)—consciousness of identity with the Supreme Being, which is, according to him, the only direct means of the attainment of liberation. For, in the very next verse of his *Vivekachudâmani*, from which the above line is in all probability quoted, Sankara explains *bhakti* as the search of one's own self. And the self, he says, is non-different from Brahman. Liberation in his sense is perfect identity with Brahman. But *bhakti* according to the Vaishnavas is supreme attachment to the Divine Being who has a personality distinct from that of the *jiva* (finite self).

Similarly, the author fails to recognise certain distinctive characteristics of the different forms of worship (*sadhana*). In the following passage he attributes the wifely attitude (*kanta-bhava*) of Sri Krishna-worshippers to the worshippers of Siva and Rama. "When a devotee is bent upon holding intercourse with *Siva*, he has to awaken in him the consciousness that he is *Kâlî* or *Durgâ*, etc., then and then only his desire will be fulfilled. When a devotee is bent upon holding intercourse with *Sri Râmachandra* and *Sri Krishna*, he has to do so by awakening in himself the consciousness that he is *Sitâ* and *Râdhâ*, because *Sitâ* and *Râdhâ* are the *Saktis* of *Sri Râmachandra* and *Sri Krishna* respectively." We do not think that the devotees of Siva and Rama identify themselves with *Kali* and *Sita* respectively to realise their supreme love towards the objects of their worship. *Saiva* and *Shakta* cults being based on Advaitism, the identification of the worshipper and the worshipped has been sanctioned, nay, enjoined on them. In that sense a *Shakta* can identify himself with *Kali* or even *Siva* knowing him to be the static aspect of the same *Shakti*. Rama-worship in particular is characterised by servant-consciousness. Even a Vaishnava who

bears the loving attitude of a wife towards Sri Krishna does not as a rule impersonate Radha, but rather seeks her grace following the foot-steps of a *Gopi* (one of her maids of honour) to be a helpmate in their *leela* (sport of love).

The translation though literal reads much like an original work. It contains a number of explanatory notes on the technical terms, which will prove useful to those who are not acquainted with Sanskrit religious terminology. We received a soiled copy. But perhaps the book is good enough in get-up.

The Significance of Jesus. By Rev. N. Macnicol, M.A., D.Litt. The Christian Literature Society for India, Madras, 100 pp. Price As. 12.

The book under review belongs to the 'Things New and Old' series which seeks to explain to Indian readers the fundamental principles of the Christian religion. And it may at once be said that the author has succeeded to a great extent to fulfil the objects of the series. Indeed the significance of Jesus has been nicely presented to the readers in regard to the several epithets which have been applied to him by the evangelists as well as by Jesus himself. So far his attempt is well and good. But we regret that in all those places where he has attempted reflections on and comparisons with the customs and traditions as well as the religion of the Hindus, he has given proof of sad misunderstanding. As for example, the author says: "We see parallels between the thought and the aspiration that the two systems enshrine. Both desire victory over the world. The way to that victory for the Christian is faith in God and self-surrender. These are elements, too, in the Hindu path to release, but each element—God and faith and self-surrender—is a far more shadowy and abstract thing here than it is there; and they lead to a shadowy goal. God (Brahman) is a wraith, and faith is the opening of the eyes to the fact of the world's illusion, while self evaporates in mist and nothingness, constrained by no love, won by no ideal goal." Can ignorance go further? Continues the author: "All these elements have to be enriched—just as the logos idea of the Greeks and of Philo had to be enriched, but far more than was necessary there. A richer moral meaning must be given to them so that they may lay hold of the heart and will. It is by the moralisation of the Indian teaching, the loosening of its Karma bonds, the bringing

of it from the abstract heights down to the level of our common needs, and the bringing of God near to us as one whom Jesus could call, Father—it is by these ways of reconciliation that the Vedantist and the Christian can meet and can, one day, we trust, rejoice together in the experience of a world overcome. But that just means that the house of Hinduism must be built again upon a new foundation, namely the foundation of Christ Jesus." The author is welcome to his dreams. But we may warn him that they will never be realised. The get-up and printing of the book are good.

An Englishman Defends Mother India. By Ernest Wood. Ganesh & Co., Madras. 458 +IX pp. Price Rs. 3/-.

We have read with great interest this excellent book which is a reply to the notorious "Mother India." We wish the Professor had written the book earlier, though its value is not of a transient nature, and had it published in England and America where alone it would have done the greatest service. The work is ably written, in a calm, dispassionate style. The charges brought against India by Miss Mayo have been taken up one by one and replied to with cogent arguments and well-attested and relevant facts and figures. Not only is India vindicated, but she has often come out better in comparison with the West. A great merit of the book is that the author is an Englishman who has been resident in India for many years, knowing many parts of the country quite well and having mixed with Indians intimately. Besides he knows Sanskrit.

The book is divided into 25 chapters, some of the headings being The Family, Marriage, Motherhood, Child-Birth, Widowhood, Religion, Indecency and Vice, Character and Manners, The Cow, Cruelty, Sanitation, Medicine, The Caste System, The Outcastes, The Villages, and The Reforms. There are 50 plates having great evidential value. The best answer to "Mother India" has hitherto been Lala Lajpat Rai's "Unhappy India." The present book is not redundant, but fulfils a real need. We Indians also will profit greatly by its perusal. The author is very moderate in his statements, sometimes even overcautious. But perhaps that itself is a merit in the present case.

The publishers have to be congratulated on the fine get-up of the book.

NEWS AND REPORTS

Ramakrishna Sevak Conference, Dacca, Bengal

The second session of the Vikrampur Ramakrishna Sevak Sammilani was held at Pania R. K. Sevasrama on the 6th, 7th and 8th July. Representatives hailing from about a dozen of Sevasramas joined the conference and discussed the feasibility of a plan of concerted action for social service in Vikrampur in a non-sectarian spirit of co-operation. Srijut Mukundalal Bose of Rarikhil Ramakrishna Sevasrama, who was the Chairman of the Reception Committee, delivered his address and welcomed the President and delegates present. His address was followed by the address of the President, Swami Viswananda of Belur Math. Throughout the three days, discussions on religious and other social matters received the careful attention of the gentlemen present. Many respectable people of light and leading from villages far and near joined the occasion and took an active part in the proceedings. Music and *Sankirtan* formed an important feature. On the last day the annual *Utsab* ceremony was held and hundreds of *Daridra-Narayan*s were sumptuously entertained. A long procession of boats, with a picture of Sri Ramakrishna well decorated and followed by band parties and music, added to the grandeur of the ceremony. It is a matter of deep satisfaction that the people of Vikrampur are evolving a plan of concerted action for social service and propaganda to be carried on in the villages which just at this time stand in need of reconstruction in different ways. Thanks are due to Babu Makhamlal Hore and Babu Heramba Behari Dey, but for whose active interest the session would not have reached this high watermark of success.

R. K. Mission Home of Service, Benares

As in other years, the report of the Home of Service for the year 1928 is a record of good work done. The activities of the Home have been growing from year to year in all the channels as will be seen from the following facts and figures.

I. *Indoor General Hospital*. The total number of new cases admitted was 1,806 of

whom 1,132 were cured and discharged, 148 were relieved of their sufferings, 95 left or were discharged otherwise and 283 died. The daily average number of indoor cases was 134.

II. *Refuge for Women Invalids*. 12 helpless, aged and invalid women were maintained by the Home in a house specially gifted by a gentleman at Dasaswamedh.

III. *Girls' Home*. There were 7 girls in the women's department of the Home receiving education in the local Girls' High School and participating in the general work of the Women's Hospital which is entirely run by voluntary lady workers.

IV. *Home for Paralytic Patients*. 26 paralytic cases were accommodated and treated during the year.

V. *Dharmasala for the Poor and the Helpless*. About 190 people were given shelter and food during the year under review.

VI. *Outdoor Dispensary*. During the year 28,706 new cases attended the Outdoor Dispensary and the number of repeated cases was 43,258. The daily average attendance was 201 and the total number of operation cases was 668.

VII. *Outdoor help to Invalids and Poor Ladies of respectable families*. There were 165 permanent recipients of such outdoor relief during the year and this cost the Home Rs. 2,266/- in money and 143 mds. 13 srs. 12 ch. of rice and *atta* besides clothing and blankets.

VIII. *Special and Occasional Relief*. Special and occasional help was given as far as practicable to 1,235 persons during the year.

Besides all these, the Home has 25 beds for poor invalids who are temporarily admitted and given food and shelter till they are in a position to make provision for themselves.

During the solar eclipse of the year cholera broke out in an epidemic form in Benares and a band of workers of the Home engaged themselves solely in nursing and treating the cholera cases day and night. The number of cases treated was 57 of which 30 died.

The total receipts of the general fund on all heads amounted to Rs. 50,146-2-7 and the total expenses to Rs. 38,012-14-0.

The immediate needs of the Home are :
 (a) Endowments for beds for the sick and the invalid. The total cost of permanent endowment for each bed is Rs. 3,000/- for the sick, and Rs. 2,500/- for the invalid.
 (b) Beddings and clothings. (c) Construction of a suitable building to house the workers.
 (d) Construction of a good kitchen and store-room in the women's department. (e) Construction of an Invalid Home for women.

Any amount, large or small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by
 (i) *Hony. Asst. Secy., Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, Luxa, Benares City, U.P.*; or
 (ii) *The President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal.*

R. K. Mission, Dacca

The annual report of the Dacca Branch of the R. K. Mission for the years 1927 and 1928 is to hand. It humbly tries to fulfil all the objects of the Mission by carrying on works of service under all its three heads, viz., I. Missionary, II. Educational, and III. Charitable.

I. *Missionary.* *Weekly Sittings* were held altogether 242 in number, in four different centres of the town, in which there were readings from holy books and discourses; *Classes and General Discussion* on the Gita, Upanishad and works of Swami Vivekananda were held; *Bhajans and Kirtans* were arranged; *Lectures and Discourses* by learned professors and monks of the R. K. Order were delivered; and *Birthday Anniversaries* of Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Buddha, Sankara, Chaitanya, Sri Krishna and Jesus Christ were celebrated.

II. *Educational.* The Centre conducts a free school in its own premises with 50 boys on the roll, and guides and manages two free schools with 50 boys and 40 girls on the rolls in a village five miles from the

town. Poor students were temporarily maintained in the Mission House. There are a library and a reading room in the Mission premises and another in the centre of the town. And there is a gymnasium within the Mission compound.

III. *Charitable.* (a) *Outdoor Dispensary:* There were 4,133 and 4,675 patients treated in the years under review. (b) *Outdoor Seva Work:* Medical help was given to 34 patients, and 63 patients were nursed in their own houses; and 22 dead bodies were cremated. (c) *Cholera Relief:* The Mission arranged relief work in several places in times of cholera in epidemic forms. (d) *Famine Relief:* Towards the relief of the helpless famine-stricken people of Balurghat, a sum of Rs. 101/- and some old cloths were sent to the Secy., R. K. Mission, Belur. Besides all these, 39 (in 1927) and 30 (in 1928) families were helped every month with rice and 21 persons were given temporary pecuniary help.

The total receipts on all heads amounted to Rs. 4,188-14-5 and Rs. 4,221-6-5½ and the expenses to Rs. 2,337-15-0 and Rs. 2,570-5-1½ in 1927 and 1928 respectively.

The present needs of the Mission are :
 (1) To secure permanent right of a plot of land situated within the Mission compound, the approximate cost of which is Rs. 4,000/-.
 (2) To construct a pucca drain costing Rs. 2,000/-.
 (3) A permanent fund.
 (4) A fund to start some free primary schools in villages and to inaugurate a circulating library with arrangements for magic lantern lectures, the initial expenses for which would be Rs. 2,000/-.

We congratulate the Centre for its various activities and hope the generous public will liberally help it to extend its usefulness. Any help will be thankfully received and acknowledged by *The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Wari, Dacca, Bengal.*

“Renunciation and Service are the two national ideals of India. Intensify her along these channels and the rest will take care of itself.”

—Swami Vivekananda.

R. K. MISSION FLOOD RELIEF WORK

The Secretary, R. K. Mission, writes under date 24-8-29 :

The public is already aware that we have been carrying on extensive relief work in the flood-stricken areas of the Sylhet and Cachar Districts of Assam. The number of relief centres, including the three recently opened in the Hailakandi Sub-division, is eight. From these centres covering an area of 164 square miles, not only food but clothes and medicines also are being distributed to the needy. Hut-building which is a necessity in all the centres, has been finished in one, *viz.*, Tarapur. The condition of the people in the affected areas is simply deplorable. Many are homeless ; a great many are victims to various stomach complaints due to eating improper food ; while the vast majority are facing starvation and lacking sufficient clothing. In the last three weeks ending 19th August we have distributed, besides some clothes, 1,037 mds. 10 srs. of rice to 8,000 people belonging to 275 villages. Our two dispensaries, under expert physicians, are treating about 160 cases daily. We have been distributing some fodder for cattle too.

Our work in Akyab in Burma, is no less exacting. In the week ending 3rd August last, from our four centres 310 bags of rice and 137 pieces of cloth have been distributed to 5,332 people belonging to 51 villages. Our charitable dispensary there treated 179 cases of dysentery, etc., during that week.

Reports of heavy floods have been reaching us from parts of the Midnapur District, but owing to want of funds we have succeeded in opening only one centre, at Radhaban in the Tamruk Sub-division. A dam on the Khirai having given way, about 20 square miles of land comprising some 45 villages, have been inundated. In 30 of these villages standing crops have been destroyed. This has dealt a terrible blow to the poor people, who had already suffered from scant crops during the last two years. Our first distribution from the Radhaban centre took place on the 24th August. Reports have not yet reached us.

Our work in Assam will have to continue for 5 or 6 weeks more. At present our weekly expenditure in Assam alone is nearly Rs. 3,000/-. The funds at our disposal, however, are almost depleted. We earnestly appeal to all generous hearts to help us in this extremity. We are confident that our appeal will meet with a prompt response. Contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses :

- (1) President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O., Howrah, Bengal.
- (2) Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.
- (3) Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Muktaram Babu Street, Calcutta.

Supplement to Prabuddha Bharata

We thankfully acknowledge receipt of the following donations for Assam flood relief, from 22nd June to 31st July, 1929.

	Rs. A. P.		Rs. A. P.
Sj. Basanta Kumar Chatterji ...	10 0 0	Secy., Bar Association, Burdwan	25 0 0
„ Ganga Charan Mukherji ...	25 0 0	Sj. Benode Behari Maity ...	25 0 0
„ N. R. Banerji ...	10 0 0	„ N. N. Sen Gupta ...	30 0 0
„ Dharendra Nath Ganguli ...	4 0 0	„ B. Chandra ...	10 0 0
„ M. M. Dhar ...	5 0 0	„ P. C. Majumdar ...	5 0 0
„ Panchanan Pal ...	10 0 0	Members, Executive Engineer's	
Secretary, Rangpur Loan Office	50 0 0	Office, Midnapur ...	4 2 0
Sj. Harendra Nath Chakravarty	35 0 0	Sm. Kadambini Dutta ...	4 0 0
„ Visindas Dewandas ...	10 0 0	Sj. Fakir Chandra Ghose ...	1 0 0
„ Satya Charan Ghose ...	5 0 0	A friend ...	10 0 0
„ Benode Behari Ray ...	5 0 0	Sj. Nani Lal Chakravarty ...	5 0 0
Paksey Vivekananda Chhatra		Sm. Annapurna Devi ...	1 0 0
Sangha ...	10 0 0	Sj. Basanta Kumar Ghose ...	2 0 0
Do. (2nd instalment) ...	31 0 0	„ Charu Chandra Bose ...	50 0 0
Secy., Ponabalia Relief Com-		„ J. M. Sen ...	1 0 0
mittee ...	10 0 0	„ B. K. Bose ...	1 0 0
Sj. S. P. Banerji ...	2 0 0	„ Ashutosh Banerji ...	1 0 0
Miss Rama Pramanik ...	5 0 0	Parsee Bagan R. K. Society ...	9 0 0
Mr. Shyam Sundar ...	5 0 0	Sir Gurudas Institute ...	35 0 0
Non-official Relief Committee		Sj. Sarat Chandra Mallik ...	5 0 0
with R. K. Sevashrama,		Sympathiser ...	50 0 0
Tamluk ...	150 0 0	Sj. S. C. Dutt ...	25 0 0
Sm. Santoshini Devi ...	5 0 0	„ Sushil Chandra Sen ...	25 0 0
Secy., R. K. Sevashram,		„ I. C. Ghose ...	10 0 0
Sarishabari ...	50 0 0	„ J. M. Chowdhuri ...	10 0 0
Sm. Moni Kumari ...	5 0 0	„ B. K. Biswas ...	10 0 0
Sj. Kartic Chandra Sarkar ...	15 0 0	„ R. N. Bose ...	10 0 0
„ Satish Chandra Guha ...	10 0 0	„ P. C. Dey ...	10 0 0
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Sm. Simanthini ...	12 0 0	Workmen, Coonwar Silk Mill ...	65 0 0
Mr. Samuel Bose ...	5 0 0	Sj. Nripendra Nath Mitter ...	1 0 0
„ Anadi Mukherji ...	10 0 0	„ Biswa Ranjan Sanyal ...	1 0 0
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A friend ...	0 8 0	Assam and East Bengal Flood	
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„ O. C. Ganguli ...	25 0 0	„ Durgapada Das ...	25 0 0
„ Debeswar Mukherji ...	10 0 0	Paksey Vivekananda Chhatra	
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(Sd.) SWAMI SUDDHANANDA,
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25-8-1929.