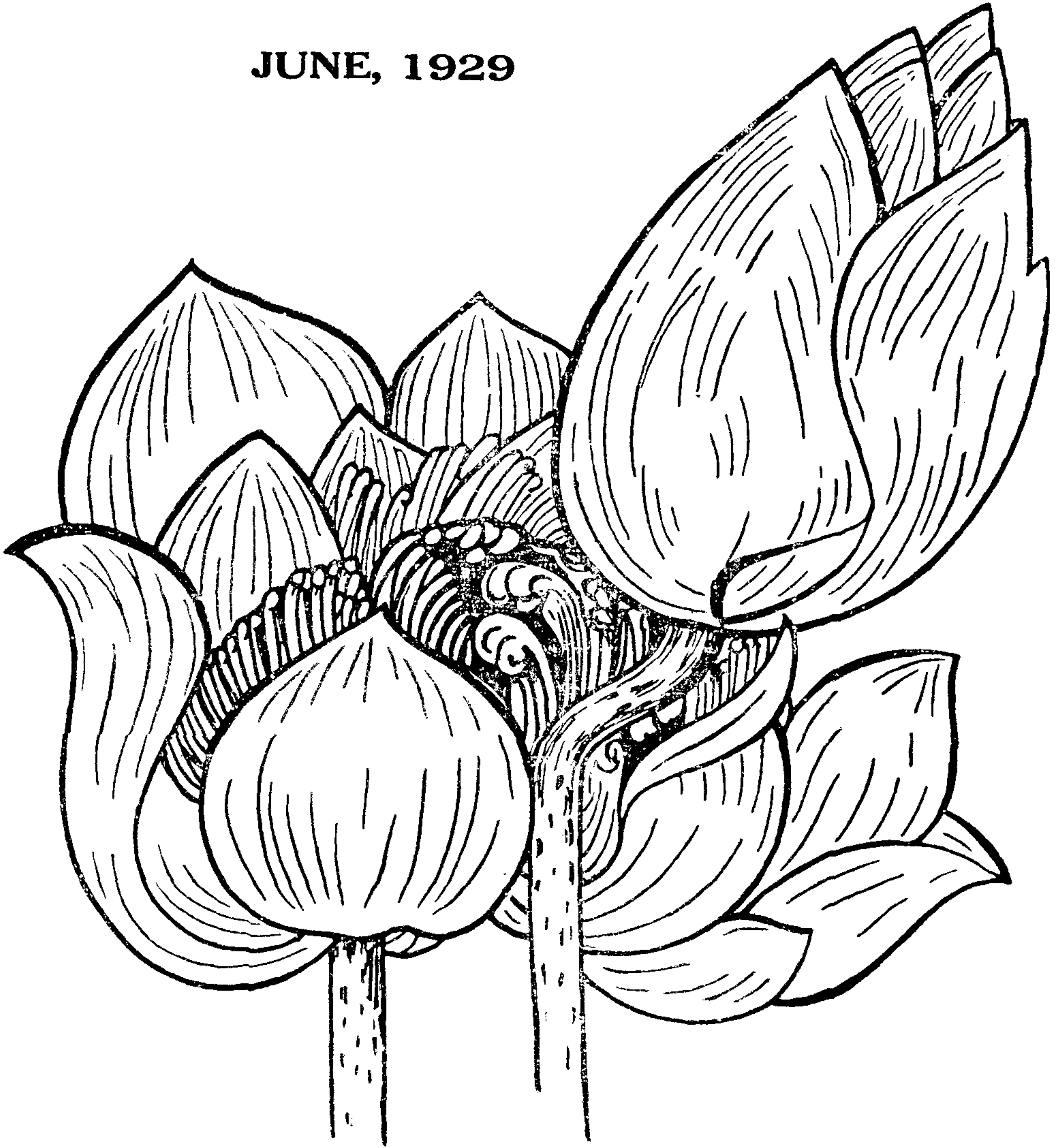


JUNE, 1929



Prabuddha Bharata

OR AWAKENED INDIA

PRABUDDHA BHARATA

JUNE, 1929

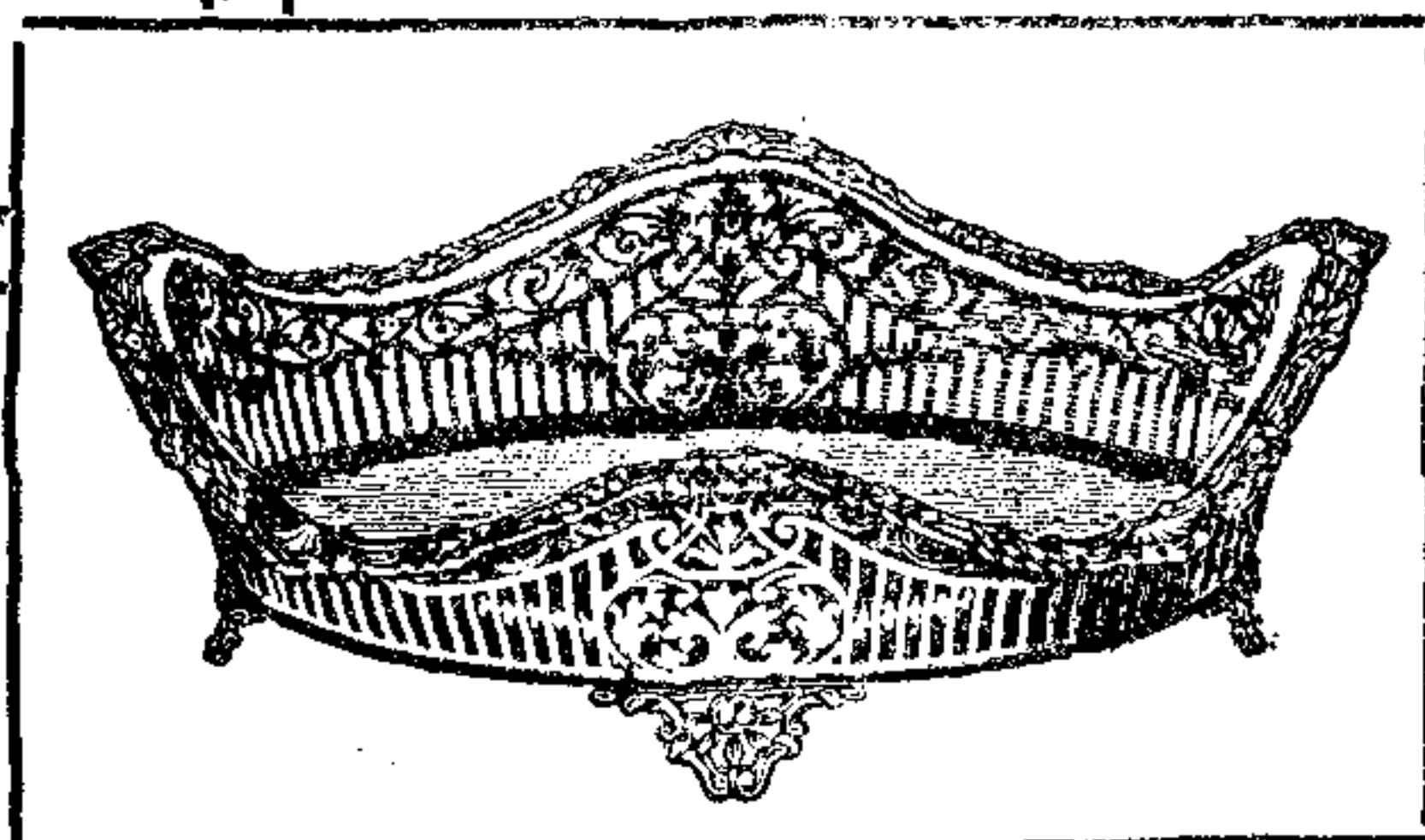
CONTENTS

	PAGE.
Unpublished Letters of Swami Vivekananda	261
A Dusky Philosopher from India—By <i>Blanche Partington</i>	262
Ring out the Old, Ring in the New—By <i>the Editor</i>	265
The Diary of a Disciple	273
India Hitherto a Nation—By <i>Pramatha Nath Bose, B.Sc. London</i>	275
What is Ahimsa—By <i>Swami Jnaneswarananda</i>	280
Ideals in Education—By <i>an Old Boy</i>	282
The Bauls and Their Cult of Man—By <i>Kshitimohan Sen</i>	288
Practice of Religion—By <i>Ananda</i>	292
Is Hinduism Doomed?—By <i>Hari Charan Mukerji, M.A.</i>	295
Synthesis of Ideals—By <i>Sister Nivedita</i>	298
Ashtavakra Samhita—By <i>Swami Nityaswarupananda</i>	300
Notes and Comments	303
Review	307
News and Reports	309

Editorial Office:—MAYAVATI, ALMORA, HIMALAYAS

Publication Office:—182A, MUKTARAM BABU STREET, CALCUTTA

SUBSCRIPTION: Inland Annually Rs. 4, Single Copy As. 7 ;
Foreign Annually \$3 or 11s.



**M A D R A S
SILVER-WARE
F A M O U S**

for its beauty and the absolute purity of Silver used. Made by
THE LARGEST MODERN FACTORY

ALSO

GOLD AND GEM-SET JEWELLERY

in many intriguing Artistic Patterns.

Ask for

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE

Vummidi Ramiah Chetty, Guruswamy Chetty & Co.
24-25, China Bazaar Road, Madras.

**RETAILERS WANTED IN OTHER CITIES
FOR OUR WHOLESALE PRODUCTS**

Prabuddha Bharata

JUNE, 1929

Volume XXXIV



Number 6.

“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

XI

(To an English Friend)

Almora,

20th June, 1897.

Let me tell you plainly. Every word you write I value, and every letter is welcome a hundred times. Write whenever you have a mind, and opportunity, and whatever you like, knowing that nothing will be misinterpreted, nothing unappreciated. I have not had any news of the work for so long. Can you tell me anything? I do not expect any help from India, in spite of all the jubilation over me. They are so poor!

But I have started work, in the fashion in which I myself was trained—that is to say, under the trees, and keeping body and soul together anyhow. The plan has also changed a little. I have sent some of my boys to work in the Famine districts. It has acted like a miracle. I find, as I always thought, that it is through the *heart*, and that alone, that the world can be reached. The present plan is, therefore, to train up numbers of young men (from the highest classes, not the lowest! For the latter I shall have to wait a little), and the first attack will be made by sending a number of them over a district. When these sappers and miners of religion have cleared the way, there will then be time enough to put in theory and philosophy.

A number of boys are already in training, ~~but~~ the recent earthquake has destroyed the poor shelter we had to work in, which was only rented, anyway. Never mind. The work must be done without shelter, and under difficulties. As yet it is shaven heads, rags, and casual meals. This must change, however, and will, for are we not working for it, head and heart?

It is true in one way that the people here have so little to give up—yet renunciation is in our blood. One of my boys in training has been an executive engineer, in charge of a district. That means a very big position here. He gave it up like straw!

A DUSKY PHILOSOPHER FROM INDIA

BY BLANCHE PARTINGTON

Had I been a little wiser or a little less wise—a little knowledge is a dangerous thing—it is possible that my prevailing sensation on meeting the Hindoo monk, Swami Vivekananda, would have been other than an irresistible inclination to get behind something or somebody for fear of my aura telling unkind tales of me.

These Eastern seers are such strange folk, and our auras we have always with us. That mine was radiating curiosity and “nerves” and other undesirable original sins in every direction, I was painfully aware, but either the Swami, through knowledge, has come to charity, or else he is as comfortably unconscious of auras as the rest of us, for his greeting was gracious and kindly as might be. Bowing very low, in Eastern fashion, on his entrance to the room, then holding out his hand in good American style, the dusky philosopher from the banks of the Ganges gave friendly greeting to the representative of that thoroughly Occidental institution, the daily press.

I couldn't see much of him at first, for his eyes, which are very large and brilliant, and black, of course, but I found afterward that he was taller than common, of much dignified grace of movement, and of a color calculated to make artists of fish wives. It made me dream of “heathen idols, the temple bells aringing,” of splendid mosques and bazars, gold and ivory, bejeweled rajahs and elephants, and the whole gorgeous confusion of color which does duty for the foreigner's conception of that ancient rich land of India. And the

Swami himself—a Buddha come to judgment! It is exactly the type. When he is not smiling, and the Swami is a humorous soul, there is the same suggestion of eternal inscrutableness in his face, the same suggestion of immutable poise in his figure. The repose of the Vere de Vere is not in it. One might, indeed, suggest that the quickest way of learning to be English would be to study manners in India! An undoubted addition to the Swami's striking picturesqueness is the wonderful red robe he wears. One cannot accuse a Swami of studying his complexion, yet the effect is identically the same as if the question had been studied with utmost nicety. Perhaps the Swami Vivekananda is not without the very smallest spice of the universal vanity. I asked for a picture to illustrate this article, and when some one handed me a certain “cut” which has been extensively used in lecture advertisements here he uttered a mild protest against its use.

“But that does not look like you,” said I.

“No, it is as if I wished to kill some one,” he said, smiling, “like—like—”

“Othello,” I inserted rashly. But the little audience of friends only smiled as the Swami made laughing recognition of the absurd resemblance of the picture to the jealous Moor. But I do not use that picture.

“Is it true, Swami,” I asked, “that, when you went home after lecturing in the Congress of Religions at the World's Fair, princes knelt at your feet, and a half dozen of the ruling sovereigns of

India dragged your carriage through the streets, as the papers told us? We do not treat our priests so."

"That is not good to talk of," said the Swami. "But it is true that religion rules there, not dollars."

"What about caste?"

"What of your Four Hundred?" he replied, smiling. "Caste in India is an institution hardly explicable or intelligible to the Occidental mind. It is acknowledged to be an imperfect institution, but we do not recognize a superior social result from your attempts at class distinction. India is the only country which has so far succeeded in imposing a permanent caste upon her people, and we doubt if an exchange for Western superstitions and evils would be for her advantage."

"But under such regime—where a man may not eat this nor drink that, nor marry the other—the freedom you teach would be impossible," I ventured.

"It is impossible," assented the Swami; "but until India has outgrown the necessity for caste laws, caste laws will remain."

"Is it true that you may not eat food cooked by a foreigner—unbeliever?" I asked.

"In India the cook—who is not called a servant—must be of the same or higher caste than those for whom the food is cooked, as it is considered that whatever a man touches is impressed by his personality, and food, with which a man builds up the body through which he expresses himself, is regarded as being liable to such impression. As to the foods we eat, it is assumed that certain kinds of food nourish certain properties worthy of cultivation, and that others retard our spiritual growth. For instance, we do not kill to eat. Such food would be held to nourish the animal body at the expense of the spiritual body, in which the soul is said to be clothed on its departure from this physical envelope, besides laying the sin of bloodguiltiness upon the butcher."

"Ugh!" I exclaimed involuntarily,

an awful vision of reproachful lambs, little chicken ghosts, hovering cow spirits—I was always afraid of cows any way—rising up before me.

"You see," explained the Brahmin, "the universe is all one, from the lowest insect to the highest Yogi. It is all one, we are all one; you and I are one—" Here the Occidental audience smiled, the unconscious monk chanting the oneness of things in Sanscrit and the consequent sin of taking any life.

It is weird and beautiful, like far-off echoes of some ancient oracle, to hear the deep and musical chant of the Sanscrit scriptures, in which to vary the intoning of one syllable is a deadly sin. It falls from the monk's lips as dear and lovely poetry rises from a Western heart, and chant and translation, chant and translation, ring out their alternate music and truth through all his talk and teaching. He was pacing up and down the room most of the time during our talk, occasionally standing over the register—it was a chill morning for this child of the sun—and doing with grace and freedom whatever occurred to him, even, at length, smoking a little.

"You, yourself, have not yet attained supreme control over all desires," I ventured. The Swami's frankness is infectious.

"No, madame," and he smiled the broad and brilliant smile of a child; "do I look it?" But the Swami, from the land of hasheesh and dreams, doubtless did not connect my query with its smoky origin.

"Is it usual among the Hindoo priesthood to marry?" I ventured again.

"It is a matter of individual choice," replied this member of the Hindoo priesthood. "One does not marry that he may not be in slavery to a woman and children, or permit the slavery of a woman to him."

"But what is to become of the population?" urged the anti-Malthusian.

"Are you so glad to have been born?" retorted the Eastern thinker, his large eyes flashing scorn. "Can you conceive of nothing higher than this warring, hungry, ignorant world? Do not fear that the you may be lost, though the sordid, miserable consciousness of the now may go. What worth having is gone?"

"The child comes crying into the world. Well may he cry! Why should we weep to leave it? Have you thought—" here the sunny smile came back—"of the different modes of East and West of expressing the passing away? We say of the dead man, 'he gave up his body;' you put it, 'he gave up the ghost.' How can that be? Is it the dead body that permits the ghost to depart? What curious inversion of thought!"

"But, on the whole, Swami, you think it better to be comfortably dead than to be a living lion?" persisted the defender of populations.

"Svaha, Svaha, so be it!" shouted the monk.

"But how is it that under such philosophy men consent to live at all?"

"Because a man's own life is sacred as any other life, and one may not leave chapters unlearned," returned the philosopher. "Add power and diminish time, and the school days are shorter; as the learned professor can make the marble in twelve years which nature took centuries to form. It is all a question of time."

"India, which has had this teaching so long has not yet learned her lesson?"

"No, though she is perhaps nearer than any other country, in that she has learned to love mercy."

"What of England in India?" I asked.

"But for English rule I could not be here now," said the monk, "though your lowest free-born American negro holds higher position in India politically than is mine. Brahmin and coolie, we are all 'natives.' But it is all right, in spite of the misunderstanding and oppression. England is the Karma of India, attracted inevitably by some inherent weakness, past mistakes, but from her blood and fiber will come the new national hope for my countrymen. I am a loyal subject of the Empress of India!" and here the Swami salaamed before an imaginary potentate, bowing very low, perhaps too low . . .

"But such an apostle of freedom—" I murmured.

"She is a widow for many years, and such we hold of high worth in India," said the philosopher seriously. "As to freedom, yes, I believe the goal of all development is freedom, law and order. There is more law and order in the grave than anywhere else—try it."

"I must go," I said; "I have to catch a train."

"That is like all Americans," smiled the Swami, and I had a glimpse of all eternity in his utter restfulness. "You must catch this car or that train always. Is there not another, later?"

But I did not attempt to explain the Occidental conception of the value of time to this child of the Orient, realizing its utter hopelessness, and my own renegade sympathy. It must be delightful beyond measure to live in the land of "time enough." In the Orient there seems time to breathe, time to think, time to live; as the Swami says, what have we in exchange? We live in time; they in eternity.

".....but coming to plain facts, we find that all the castes are to rise slowly and slowly; however, there are thousands of castes and some are even getting admission into Brahmanhood, for what prevents any castes from declaring they are Brahmins? Thus caste, with all its rigours, has been created in that manner".....Swami Vivekananda.

RING OUT THE OLD, RING IN THE NEW

BY THE EDITOR

I

Hinduism considers life to be a mixture of good and evil and more evil than good. This is one of her fundamental convictions. But she has not stopped with this. She has also found out remedies. Two means of eliminating evil have been before her. One is the practice of outward and inward good, which may be characterised as the path of *Ahimsā*; and the other is the practice of *Karma Yoga*, non-attachment, whatever the outer forms of activity. There is a clear distinction between the two. The one emphasises the purity of both the inner and outer aspects of action. Not only our motive, but also our outer activity should be pure. Our actions should not be harmful to any one in any respect. It will be seen that this insistence on the non-injurious form of our actions necessarily limits the scope of our activity. We cannot do all actions. We may scarcely resist others. We may not fight. Our food must be strictly vegetarian,—even that, perhaps, after Sir J. C. Bose's discoveries, may not be allowable. Not all kinds of vocations may be ours. Of course, this is a very noble ideal. If any one lives up to it, he is a saint and a blessing to mankind. But there is a consideration which makes us reluctant to welcome it as a healthy ideal for the collective humanity. It is a practical consideration. We must not forget that the vast majority of mankind are full of passions, desires and evil tendencies; so much so that if they are made to practise *Ahimsa*, the result will be only formal and hypocritical; and nothing is more harmful than a false life. The unfortunate results do not however end there. People become also timid, cowardly, lazy and eventually torpid. They become spineless in every way. A mere formal

non-violence takes away from the health and vigour of life. The nation becomes weak. It easily succumbs to foreign aggression. It has to submit passively to foreign domination and become slavish both in body and mind. The other path, that of *Karma Yoga*, avoids these evils. According to it, the essential element is inner non-attachment. And this non-attachment *can be practised*. The outer forms of our action may be anything. Arjuna refused to fight, with apparently noble reasons. But Sri Krishna, the teacher of *Karma Yoga*, ridiculed his pleas and urged him to fight. What can be more vicious than killing for the sake of wealth, kingdom and earthly glory? But the Lord assured him that if he worked with non-attachment, not only would it not affect him, it will, on the other hand, bring him spiritual illumination. This is the Hindu view *par excellence*. The vocations of men may appear harmful; they may actually harm others. That does not matter. Hinduism concedes that if we are to transcend our present state of being and realise the state beyond all *gunas*, if we are to get rid of our passions, desires and evil tendencies, we must work our way *through* them, we cannot evade them. So work them out in action. But take care—do not attach yourself to the results of action; that will only lengthen the chain. This view is more helpful in several respects. It does not ask us to limit our activities within formal non-violence and thus avoids national stagnation and emasculation. There is also another advantage: it does not obstruct the natural growth of the collective life. This fact is often lost sight of. We must remember that the collective life is not merely an aggregate of individual lives. Its symptoms and ways are not always those of individuals. It has a life of its own, with

its own methods of procedure and fulfilment. It evolves from age to age throwing out new forms of collective being and opening unaccustomed ways of individual fulfilment. Individuals can but take advantage of them. Those men and nations succeed most, who understand the nature of the new being earliest and live up to it most enthusiastically. No doubt all civilised peoples have their extramundane ideals which they cannot change. What is wanted is a reconciliation between the new being and the ideals with the least obstruction to and denial of the former. The doctrine of Karma Yoga is quite in accord with this important fact. It does not insist on fixed forms. Any new form is welcome to it. The doctrine of Ahimsa is not so pliable. It is rigid. It refuses to conform to the necessities and novel expressions of the collective being. This is one of the reasons why creeds insisting on formal Ahimsa have not succeeded in the world.

The choice of Hinduism therefore is better. The doctrine of Karma Yoga is more rational, more universal and more in conformity with the tendencies of mankind.

II

In the present age, we require a new application of Karma Yoga to our individual and collective problems. Many intricate problems are facing us at this juncture of our history. One is economical. What kind of economic life shall we build up? This problem, if it had affected only our material interests, could be solved in any convenient way we liked. But it has its spiritual aspects also which cannot be ignored without great prejudice to our national and individual self. Let us here state the problem briefly.

We lack physical comforts lamentably. We are exceedingly poor. All Indians must have comfortable living. They must have lucrative occupations and free outlets for their energy and creative activity. Nay, even luxuries

they must have. For without *bhoga* (enjoyment) there cannot be *tyāga* (renunciation). Therefore India must become rich. There must also be enormous surplus wealth without which the nation-building activities of India cannot be carried on adequately. There is also the question of defence. India has real fear from Russia, China and other nations. All these require wealth. Adequate means must be found of earning this required wealth. We must keep this end in view and devise means accordingly. It may be said: India's ideal is spiritual self-realisation. It is enough if Indians had the common necessities of life and a simple living ensured. They need not try to become one of the most prosperous nations on earth. Spiritual greatness is enough for them. Other greatnesses they need not yearn for. This is no doubt a fine ideal. But there are certain difficulties in the way of its being followed. First of all, India is not in a mood to listen to such a proposal. India wants all-round greatness. Secondly, India wants a tremendous accession of *rajas*. All kinds of creative activity must be encouraged. We must express ourselves and aggrandise ourselves in the world before we can be in a fit condition to practise *nivritti*. And it is a fact, which Swami Vivekananda repeatedly pointed out, that we are most of us immersed in the deepest *tamas*. So infinite scope must be provided for self-expression in thought, word and deed to all Indians. That means titanic activity. Activity is needed not only for the enrichment of the national exchequer, but also for the inner enrichment of the individual. We do not want money for money's sake, but for the higher purpose of national prosperity and mental freedom and growth.

If such is our problem, what is the solution? What kind of economic system should we build up? Mahatma Gandhi has been preaching the *Charka* and *Khaddar*. He eschews cloth-mill industry. He has so far spoken about

cloth-production only. But the underlying idea seems to be that India should depend on cottage industry in all matters,—the pure and non-violent means of earning livelihood as he considers it to be. We are not convinced that this system can produce the required wealth and offer adequate scope for India's creative activity. Another idea is that of the combination of cottage industry with large-scale industrialism. This is quite a nice idea. But the point to be decided in this connection is which of them should be emphasised. Even the greatest enthusiast for cottage industry would admit that in many lines of business, large-scale industrialism has become already too firmly established to be dislodged. Take the case of transport. Can railway accessories, motor cars, etc. be produced in cottages? Centralised, well organised, huge plants alone can meet the need. What about iron-products? Are we to have industrial concerns like Tata Iron Works or village smithies? What about printing? What about paper? What about the steamers, air-planes? The very desire to produce commodities cheaply and economically will force us to organise large-scale industries, huge trusts and syndicates. Cottage industries can always be encouraged wherever there is scope for it. The present Western tendency of the rationalisation of industry is no humbug. The logic of events compels it. And when industry has been rationalised, agriculture must follow suit if it is not to be forsaken. In America farming is becoming less and less attractive on account of its poorer return than industry. Unless agriculture is also rationalised, it cannot draw many people to it. Of course these prospects are yet far from India. What we are trying to indicate is that the moment you give a place to large-scale industry in your economic scheme for India, you yield almost wholly to it. There cannot be any check to the use of machinery. You will find modern industrialism more

to your economic (apart from spiritual) purpose than cottage industry. Besides, the desired combination between them will not serve our purpose. We cannot get sufficient wealth through it. We have sometimes read of schemes for the economic regeneration of India, devised by interested Westerners. They insist on retaining our ancient system, organised on co-operative basis. But if you ask them to divulge their vision of the future India, you will always find that they are not thinking of her as one of the most prosperous nations of the world, a nation amongst nations. They are always thinking of contented peasantry, having enough to live on comfortably, honest, moral, industrious and happy, without bothering about other kinds of greatness. Well, we for ourselves do not think of India's future in these terms. And we confess that we have not yet known of any other system than modern large-scale industrialism which can fulfil our material needs adequately. That alone can yield us the necessary wealth and give us sufficient scope for our all-comprehensive reascent activity. We have spoken of this some time before and we beg to be excused for this repetition. But this is a subject which requires careful consideration and reiteration is perhaps excusable.

III

We have considered thus far the essentially material aspect of the economic question. But as we have said before, with us that is not the only aspect to be considered. The urgent question is the spiritual aspect. If material prosperity means spiritual death, we must shun large-scale industrialism at any cost as a method of producing wealth. But is not large-scale industrialism capable of spiritualisation? Is it really an antithesis of spirituality? Two reasons at least appear to characterise it as unspiritual: it is soulless; and it causes the exploitation of the masses by a few capitalists and of one

country by another. Let us see if these charges against large-scale industrialism are real.

Industry has at least two sides. It not only produces commodities for monetary profit, but also stimulates the creative faculties of men. Our heart wants culture in and through work. We want to accomplish beautiful and ingenious things for our inner satisfaction. Here is the special value of handicrafts. Man's individuality finds scope for expression in them. Machine-produces, it is said, are devoid of this satisfaction. The designers of machines may have some satisfaction; so also perhaps the organisers of factories. But the large majority of operators derive no such satisfaction. They are not so much the masters of tools as parts of the tools themselves. This starves the heart of man and their creative faculty to a great extent.

But how far is this defect peculiar to large-scale industrialism? Was there any age in which the large majority of people were engaged in industries which gave them scope for individual expression? We often forget that most of them toiled to produce the raw material on which the experts wrought. And those experts were few. Most artisans worked mechanically. Very few rose to the level of art. Even in the present day wherever hand-weaving is still prevalent, how many of the weavers satisfy their artistic craving or individuality through their labour? Few, very few indeed. Most of them work mechanically day in day out. Besides, are we sure that all workers dislike mechanical work? It has been found, on the other hand, that the majority of workers like repetitive work.

And what per cent of population is affected adversely by modern industrialism? It will be readily granted that America is one of the most mechanised of countries. According to the 1920 Census of Occupations, the total persons gainfully employed there were 41615000. Of this number there were 7972000 in

factories, not including officials. Outside factories, the number of persons engaged in mechanical work was 827000. But more than half the factory workers did not run any danger of becoming slaves by submitting to the rhythm of machines outside their own control; they were either not operating machines at all or they were operating machines under their personal control, or they were repairing and inspecting machines. The number of potential slaves or robots were therefore about 5000000. The population of the United States in 1920 was 105711000. So the possible number of robots works out at five per cent of all men, women and children and about twelve per cent of those gainfully employed. Is it an appalling figure? The machine age has in fact benefited no class more than the unskilled workers of the cities; they have a shorter working day, a higher standard of living and greater facilities for travel and education.

And we must remember that there is also compensation. If the heart is being starved to a certain extent in modern industrialism, it is being fed almost to satiety by the sense of power. The modern worker is an extremely efficient being, fully alive to and exulting in his inherent capabilities. This consciousness of himself as a dynamo of power and controller of huge mechanical forces makes great compensation to the heart. No doubt it lacks variety and delicacy. But what is lost in quality is to some extent made up for in quantity. The fact is, this mechanical age has also changed the value of the apparent man. He no longer seeks satisfaction in the consciousness of a puny, isolated individuality, howsoever unique, but as a unit of a vast collective being, glorying in the collective glory and sharing in and influencing its life. This brings a great satisfaction to the heart. All ages do not seek satisfaction in the same way. Why should we want that all ages should be uniform? It is natural, on the other hand, that each age should

have its uniqueness. So the present mechanical age purposes this kind of satisfaction to man,—the realisation of man as a centre of power.

But we must not run away with the idea that the present age is absolutely or even largely devoid of the individual uniqueness of achievement. It is true that in industry, great uniformity prevails with the large majority of workers. But the attainments of their leisure hours often make up for the loss of variety. The pursuit of hobbies has become a common practice with many. These works of love offer outlets to individual peculiarities. Various types of public enjoyment also provide food for the varieties of heart's desires. The medieval men lacked the sense of power in their work, though some of them found their heart's satisfaction in their skill; and joys of life were certainly limited and uniform.

IV

But it has been argued that if man is to truly spiritualise his actions, he must be in close contact with the human objectives of his service. A man must know whom he is serving with his labour in order to conceive his work worshipfully. Large-scale industry does not help us in this respect. We work on, but we do not know whom we are ultimately serving. Decentralised industry is, therefore, more helpful to spiritualisation. Large-scale industrialism is soulless. It cannot be denied that cottage industry is more soulful in this respect. But here also there is the fear of making a fetish of the old ways. We must not be idolatrous. Is there no chance of making modern industrialism equally soulful, nay, more? It is true that the West is not trying to do so. But herein lies the need of India. India must prove to the world that modern industrialism also can be spiritualised.

We have to clearly understand the tendencies of modern industrialism before we can find out how to spiritualise it. Modern conditions, especially the

economic conditions, are remoulding collective life on a new basis. If formerly family was the economic unit, now it is the individual. It is true that this description is more true of the West than of India at the present time. But there is no doubt that the same conditions are going to prevail also in India more or less sooner or later. Signs are already patent. The joint-family system is rapidly disintegrating. And men and women, boys and girls are learning to think of their duties more in reference to a wider existence than the family. Conjugal relations are no longer the same as before. In fact, industrialism which is the key-note of modern socio-economic developments in the West, in spite of some contrary forces, is also rapidly being accepted as the gospel in India. It is useless to seek to escape this. Swami Vivekananda said: "The society is for the individual, not individual for society." Strangely enough, individualism itself is generating the idea of a far vaster collective life than communalism ever did. Now individuals are learning to consider themselves first as members of nation or humanity and secondly as members of families. This change of outlook has meant change in various departments of life. Children do not consider that their first duties are to their parents. In the name of country or humanity, they easily overlook their parents. Wives are no longer satisfied with performing her duties by her husbands alone. They hear the call of duties also in the wider life of society and country. On the other hand, if the father is no longer the lord of all the family members, he is also no longer responsible for the entire well-being of them. The state must take up many of those responsibilities which formerly rested on the head of the family. The state has to look after the health and education of children. The state must provide for their living. The state must also provide for the old age.

In short, all the activities and functions of the community are now being

slowly organised on a nation-wide basis, and as a result, the functions of family are being lost one by one. A family may be considered to have seven functions: affectional, economic, educational, protective, recreational, family status and religious. Almost all these functions are being slowly usurped by larger bodies. Both husbands and wives have to earn. Wives cannot keep house. It is more convenient now to dispense with many of the functions of home and depend on outside agencies for fulfilling them. Slowly but surely these changes will be felt also in India. Women will have to become earning members of the family. But apart from economic reasons, the modern tendency of organisation also has helped the disintegration of family. For the care of children can be much better taken by expert nurses than busy and untrained mothers. Boys and girls will receive much better education in the residential schools of experts than under the parental roof. Patients are better treated in a hospital or nursing home than in their own homes. Better cooked and cheaper food is available in restaurants. We may also buy tinned food. Amusement and recreation are better organised outside the home. And the importance of family status is speedily dwindling away with the growth of the *Sudra* power. As has been observed by a Western sociologist, though the family has declined in the West, the individual is not worse off because of it. For the functions of the family have not really disappeared. They are still performed by agencies other than the family, notably by the state and industrial organisations. "So far as the individual is concerned it may be that these functions are performed better for him by agencies other than the family. The kindergarten teacher may render the function better than the parent, the state may protect better than the father, and canned soup may even be better than homemade soup, and, certainly, manufactured cloth is better than homespun." From this we must not be under-

stood to mean that we want to destroy the family deliberately in India. We think that even when all other functions of the family are lost, the affectional aspect will still remain and ensure its existence. It is not at all true that the existence of the family is any way antagonistic to the cosmic view of life. The two are quite in accord with each other. We in India have to demonstrate it not by sticking anyhow to the old forms, but by assimilating the new.

This disintegration of the family is only a sign of a new integration. The individuals are being organised on a new basis. How does the individual fare in the change? It must be admitted that this revolutionary change has not always proved happy to the morals of men and women. But that is perhaps mostly due to the exigencies of the transition. For the new conception is not necessarily devoid of moral or spiritual idealism, at least in so far as its possibilities are concerned. Men and women are learning to think in terms of nations or humanity and not in those of the family or community as they used to do before. There is a growing sense of responsibility for much larger groups of men than the family. This widening of consciousness cannot but be spiritually uplifting. We must repeat here that the changes we have alluded to above are more real in the West where alone modern industrialism is fully active. It is true that the conditions described are not so true of India. But let us say again that a part at least of these changes will also be felt in India. Anyhow in judging the nature and possibilities of modern industrialism it is best to take it as it is operative in the West. And in the West the modern men and women are feeling themselves more and more as units of the larger community of the human race. The feeling is yet incompletely expressed and distorted in its expression through the murky atmosphere of their yet unprepared mind. But the impulse, whatever its expression at the present time, is towards a universal sweep, compre-

hending the entire human race. If this tendency can be transmuted into a spiritual feeling, modern industrialism will be a great blessing to mankind. What is now appearing as a spiritual loss will appear as a spiritual gain. There is no inherent spiritual defect in modern industrialism. What is required is that the wider cosmic consciousness that underlies it has to be spiritualised. We must make the modern facilities of organisation the instruments of our worship. And it is not at all difficult of accomplishment. Only a higher imagination and broader intellectual vision is necessary. The possibilities of the modern industrial civilisation, as we have visualised them here, may not have been so conceived by the Westerners. It is quite possible, on the other hand, that they have gone to the extreme in their pursuit of the form. But it cannot be denied that the form that is being developed,—the form of world-wide organisation in all departments of human life and activity—has behind it the impulse and inspiration of a spirit which is indeed sublime and divinely glorious. The West is running after and perfecting the form without the balancing perfection of the spirit. Hence it is that her activities are proving so disastrous to the better interests of humanity and a curse to the happiness of the weaker races of the world. The West must be made to realise and develop the spirit. India alone of all nations can help her most in this.

It is true that if the objects of service be in direct contact with us, spiritualisation becomes easier. But this physical proximity is itself a galling limitation to finer minds. Why should our mind be cramped within the sensible? Can it not easily transcend these limitations and sympathise with even the vast unseen? Culture is perhaps nothing but the capacity to harmonise oneself with the previously unknown greatness. We want higher culture, wider conceptions of reality and life and a deeper sense of direct responsibility for humanity. In fact, not only must the

quality of our conception of reality be noble, the magnitude of it also must be as wide as humanity, nay, the universe itself. As a matter of fact the ideal of education is also conceived to be encyclopedic to-day. These three elements go hand in hand: an encyclopedic intellectual ideal; a sense of infinite powerfulness; and large-scale industrialism: all these being the cause and effect of that change of outlook which no longer counts the human being as a unit of a family or community *par excellence* but pre-eminently as a member of a nation or humanity itself. This is the predominant tendency of the modern age. One thing is certain: we cannot either suppress or ignore it. It must have its way.

We have seen that it is not against spiritual idealism. It is in fact a new form which like the preceding forms can easily lend itself to spiritualisation. The new outlook has to be transmuted. In fact it can find its natural fulfilment only in the conception of the spiritual solidarity of the entire human race and its activities. It is tending that way. Let it be India's privilege to bring about this consummation. Why should India think that she can reconcile her spiritual idealism only with one particular form of economic life? It is always India's function to fulfil the unfulfilled and give expression to the inarticulate. What the West is groping towards, let India at once illumine by her synthetic wisdom.

V

The other objection, that it causes the exploitation of the masses by the classes, and of the weaker races by the stronger races, we must say is fundamentally correct. We admit this is a defect. This is, on the whole, a sad tale. But so far as India is concerned, she need not be unnecessarily squeamish about it. This is not the first time she will have to go out exploiting. Ancient Indian merchants used to fetch much wealth from foreign lands. And at

home also, the exploitation of the masses by the classes was not unknown. Yet these things did not stand in the way of her spiritual activities. We do not believe that the exploitation of the wealth of foreign countries will stand against India's spirituality. Her ideal is *Chaturvarga*,—*Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kâma* and *Moksha*, and not merely *Moksha*. In fact the present ruthless exploitation by the West of the coloured races can be stopped only by the East becoming industrial. When all the principal races of the world will have reached industrial efficiency, the necessity of an equitable adjustment between the nations of the world will become urgent. The Western races are already feeling the necessity of economic adjustment among themselves. Asian races must qualify themselves to claim seats in their conferences. That qualification will never come unless they become industrial in the modern sense. They will remain simply the dumping ground of foreign exploiters. This is the prospect before the world. The sooner all the civilised nations grow vigorous in every respect, the better for them and the world. We have to avoid the evils of modernism not by denying the present developments and sticking to our old policies, but by hastening the realisation of the ideal towards which the modern movements are tending.

As regards exploitation at home, why is it necessary that there should be exploitation of masses by classes? Cannot industries be nationalised, as some industries are even now? Why cannot large-scale industries be conducted on co-operative bases? Surely the labour movements all over the world are tending towards that consummation. The differences between labour and capital are not irreconcilable.

VI

We have tried to advocate the case of modern industrialism and to show that it is not necessarily against the spiritual nature of India. We have

tried to show that it represents a new outlook, without a consideration of which we cannot properly evaluate the symptoms of either the economic or social or cultural life. That outlook, so far as it has been defined, yet lacks a spiritual character. But it is clear that its fulfilment and perfection is an ideal which is supremely spiritual and is much more noble, universal and exalted than the domestic and communal. Why are we insisting on modern industrialism being accepted in India? We do not deny its evils. If we had thought that we could do without it, we might let it alone. But we feel that we cannot do without it. We want our nation to grow above all spiritual. That is our ultimate aim. But in order that spirituality may grow, we must be a normal people first: we must grow healthy, have material prosperity, enough of material comforts and enjoyment of the goods of the world, and have proper education, and unlimited field for the exercise of our normal faculties. If cottage industry could do all these, we would have gladly said *Amen!* But it cannot. Hence we are compelled to welcome modern industrialism, in spite of all its evils. And the sooner we welcome and assimilate it, the better.

But perhaps this is not all that we ought to say about modern industrialism. If it is the outer expression of a new spirit and a new outlook, are we in India going to accept it? Does not the ideal of the worship of the *Virât*, as preached by Swami Vivekananda, point to the same ideal? Is it not the perfect vision of that which is shortly emerging in the Western mind from its chaos, confusions and struggles? If that is so, will not the new ideal seek appropriate expression in our life of action? What kind of action will that be? Will it be after the pattern of the past ages, slow and small? Or will it be titanic, resurgent with the powers of gods, world-moving and cosmic? Is the future not going to be at once the

age of the realisation of tremendous power and its renunciation? If so, shall our industrial life be petty and poor, or shall it be stupendous and

sublime? Let us answer these, and if we have the eagle's vision and the lion's heart, let us welcome the New Revelation.

THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

22ND MAY, 1911.

Eight o'clock at night. The Disciple and L. were sitting before Swami Brahmananda at Balaram Bose's at Baghbazar in Calcutta.

L. said to the Swami: "Maharaj, I have been thinking of asking you a question for some time. Is it true that you saw some spirits in the Udbodhan Office a few days before the passing of Swami P.?"

Swami: "Yes, I did. I sometimes see spirits. One day from upstairs I saw two very tall and robust figures standing near the western staircase. They looked man-like, but there was a weird and bizarre aspect about them. They disappeared very soon; but the sight made me anxious. I enquired if any one had seen there a ghost before. No, they had not. I saw such spirits once or twice again; and I felt that some evil was imminent. I felt very sad at heart. A few days after P. passed away.

"I saw a spirit in this house also, near the yonder stairs. I felt that this presaged evil. I went away to the Math. A few days after, S.'s wife died."

Disciple: "I am told you also saw a spirit at Dacca."

Swami: "Yes, in that house where we stayed. On the second day of our arrival there, I saw it, looking like a Musalman, standing at the door. This made me sad, and I thought I would leave the house if I saw it again. But it did not appear any more. Much singing of the Holy Names went on there. That is perhaps why it fled. Evil spirits cannot stand the name of God."

Disciple: "It was this spirit perhaps which prompted S.'s son to commit suicide. There was no apparent reason for his action. But the boy was feeble-minded, and probably could not stand the spirit's persuasions.

"I have heard of a family in which a lady committed suicide by hanging herself from the branch of a mango tree. Another lady, after that, began to gaze at the tree and one day suddenly committed suicide by hanging herself from that very tree. Another girl also began to gaze at the tree in a similar way. A strict watch was kept over her. She was asked why she gazed at the tree. She said: "Some one from the yonder branch has been calling me to come and hang myself." The tree was at once cut down; and there was no further trouble."

L: "Maharaj, did you see anything more?"

Swami: "I have seen both good and evil spirits. While I was at Dakshineswar with the Master, a man at the Temple fell very ill. There was no one to look after him, so I nursed him for a few days. One night as I was sitting near him, his suffering became intense. I did not know how to mitigate his suffering. So I thought that I would repeat the Lord's name for his relief. After I had made *japa* for some time, a kind of slumber came upon me and I saw a vision. A girl about twelve years old came and stood near me. I asked her: 'Will he get cured?' She nodded and replied, 'Yes' and vanished. The very next day, the patient began to recover.

"I also saw a good spirit while I was living at Brindaban. The house

where I lived was in a lane which was called the 'Ghost Lane'. Hari Maharaj (Swami Turiyananda) occupied the next room to mine. It was my habit in those days to get up at midnight and practise *japa*. I would often notice the spirit of a Vaishnava standing by me telling his beads. I saw him almost every night and was not afraid. One night, being very tired, I was sleeping heavily. Suddenly some one gave me such a push that I was thrown a few feet off ; and I heard some one saying : 'Get up. It is already twelve. Won't you make *japa*?' The push roused me. I felt frightened and called out to Hari Maharaj. 'Are you awake, Hari Maharaj?' I asked him. 'What is the time now?' A few minutes after, the temple-music indicating midnight began to play. If I were not awakened that night in this fashion, I could not get up at twelve.

"I also had a good vision at Benares. They were singing the *Ram-nam* in the main hall of the Sevashrama. The singing of the first invocations had just begun when I saw an old man enter slowly and sit by the picture of Sri Rama. I had never seen him before, so I looked at him twice or thrice ; and a few moments after I saw him no more. I then remembered that Mahavir (Hanuman) comes wherever the name of Rama is sung. Probably he came. Tulsidas also had a similar vision."

Disciple : "What was that, Maharaj?"

Swami : "Tulsidas used to pour water every day at the foot of a tree in which lived a spirit. The water pleased it highly. It appeared before

Tulsidas and said : 'I am highly pleased with you. Tell me what you want.' He said : 'I want only the vision of Rama. Can you tell me how I can get it?' It replied : 'It is not for me to get you that vision. But I may give you a suggestion. There is a place in Benares where the Ramayana is read every day. Mahavir attends the reading regularly. Take refuge in him, he can help you in having the vision of Rama.' 'But how shall I recognise him?' 'He arrives first, in the guise of an old Brahmin, sits in a particular corner and leaves last.'

"Tulsidas accordingly found the place and saw Mahavir come and sit as indicated by the spirit. When Mahavir was about to leave, Tulsidas clasped him by the feet and said : 'I have recognised you. Graciously tell me where I can get the vision of Rama.' After much entreaty Hanuman said : 'Go to the Chitrakot mountain. There you will see him'.

"Tulsidas went to Chitrakot and one night, in deep forest, he heard the sound of music coming from afar. He enquired about it and was told that it was the singing of *Ramlila*. He went and found the place and saw Rama, Sita and others sitting (he thought they were actors) and the singing of *Ramlila* going on. When he came back, he said how he had enjoyed the singing of *Ramlila* on the mountain-top. They said : 'Are you mad? There is no habitation there. It is deep wilderness. How can there be *Ramlila* there?' Tulsidas understood. He had actually seen Rama!"

The Disciple bowed at the feet of the Swami and left.

—"You must take some pains by way of *Sadhana*; the *Karmas* must be speedily worked out. When the smiths melt gold, they blow with bellows fan and pipe all together to make the fire blaze high; and only when the gold has been dissolved do they ask for a smoke. All this time they have been sweating on the brow, but they can get a chance to smoke only after they have done.

INDIA HITHERTO A NATION

BY PRAMATHA NATH BOSE, B.SC. (London)

'There is no statement more common in the West and in new India than that India has hitherto not been a nation, but a mere heterogeneous congeries of races, sects and creeds; and that she is just now in the birth-throes of nationhood under Western influence. To our mind, the reverse of this statement is true. India has hitherto been a nation which is now being disintegrated.

There are three fundamental unities which in varying degrees of preponderance underlie the conception of nationhood, viz., geographical, cultural, and political.

"It is sometimes said by friends of India," observes Dr. Anand K. Coomarswamy, "that the National movement is the natural result of English education, and one, of which England should in truth be proud, as showing that under 'civilization' and Pax Britannica, Indians are becoming at last capable of self-government. The facts are otherwise. If Indians are still capable of self-government, it is in spite of all the anti-national tendencies of a system of education that has ignored or despised almost every ideal informing the national culture."*

Sanskrit literature abundantly testifies to the gradual evolution of the notion of the geographical unity of India. During the earlier period of their settlement the Indo-Aryans considered Northern India, which they called Aryavarta, to be their home. The rivers invoked by the Aryan Rishis in their prayers were confined to Aryavarta—the Ganga, the Jamuna, the Saraswati, the Satadru (Sutlej), the Parusni (Ravi), the Asikni (Chenab), the Vitasta (Jhelum), the Arjikiya (Beas), and the Susoma (Indus). As they spread over Southern India, their

geographical outlook was widened, and they came to regard India, as we know it now, to be their country. The rivers of the South then claimed an equal share of their veneration as is evidenced by the following hymn which replaced the narrower one of the Rigveda:

Gange cha Yamune chaiva
Godavari Sarasvati,
Narmade Sindhu-Kaveri jalehsmin
sannidhim kuru.

[O Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Indus and Kaveri, approach this water offered by me.]

The catalogue of sacred places which are resorted to by all Hindu pilgrims was expanded so as to embrace those of the South such as Kanchi (Conjeveram) and Ramesvara, and that of sacred mountains was enlarged so as to comprise Mahendra (the Eastern Ghats) and Malaya and Sahya (the Western Ghats). Reformers like Samkaracharya and Chaitanya made a tour of the whole of India, and the former emphasized his idea of its unity by establishing *Maths* in the north (the Himalaya, Jyotirmath), the south (Sringeri), the east (Gobardhan at Puri) and the west (Sarada at Dwaraka).

As the Aryans spread from the banks of the Indus, they came in collision with the aborigines, who, naturally enough, opposed their advance, fought them, disturbed their sacrifice, and harassed them in endless ways. For such acts, which no doubt appeared to the Aryans as acts of doubtful courtesy, they called their adversaries, "Dasyus" (robbers), "Rakshasas" (evil spirits), &c. Epithets of the grossest invective were heaped on the devoted heads of the poor aborigines. They are described as irreligious, impious, and lowest of the low; they are also in some texts con-

* "Essays in National Idealism", p. 96.

temptuously called *black-skinned*—a very significant epithet, as the Sanskrit term for 'Caste' primarily means colour, which according to some scholars points to an original difference of colour as the first origin of caste. The Aryan immigrants, like the dominant races of ancient Peru and Egypt, had a fairer colour than the aborigines. Thus, during the Rigvedic period, there were, if I may so express myself, two 'colors'—the fair (Aryan), and the black (Dasyuite or Dasa). But the Aryans ultimately succeeded in conquering and subjugating their opponents; and instead of exterminating the conquered tribes, or reducing them to a condition of slavery, they followed a policy characterised by mercy and humanity. The aboriginal tribes—now called Sudras—were incorporated with the Aryan society though on the hard condition, that they should occupy the lowest position in it.

As they spread among the aborigines whether as conquerors or as colonists, the Aryans propagated their culture among them. The Aryanisation of the aborigines gradually reacted upon the original religious system of the Aryas. It is probable that the different forms of demonolatry prevalent among the various sections of the aborigines, especially the Dravidians of the South, shaped, moulded and refined by Aryan thought, gave rise to Saivism. We do not know the exact steps which led to the transformation of the Vedic Rudra into the Mahadeva of later Hinduism. It was however an accomplished fact in the earlier centuries of the Christian era. The Indian Dionysos of Megasthenes is usually indentified with Siva. Sivaite figures alternating with Buddhist symbols are represented on coins of the Indo-Scythian kings about the beginning of the Christian era. Siva is the great patron of the ancient dramatic and other literatures. He is represented in a twofold character—the terror-inspiring and the beneficent. He is the Auspicious, as well as the Terrible. His

wife also appears in similar double character. She is Uma, the gracious, and Ambika, the good mother, as well as Kali, the black one, and Karala, the horrible. In these twofold aspects we trace, however indistinctly, the fusion of Aryan and non-Aryan conceptions of the Divinity, the former beneficent and lovable, the latter destructive and terrible.

Thus there arose that grand synthesis of religions which is known in history as Hinduism, and which embraces all shades of religious thought from the Vedantism of the highly cultured Aryan to the fetishism and animism of the aborigines. Though professedly based upon the Vedas, it is no more like the Vedic religion than man is like the protoplasmic germ out of which he is supposed to have been evolved. It is not the creed of the Rigveda, nor of the Brahmanas, nor of the Upanishads, nor of the Puranas; it is neither Saivism, nor Vaishnavism, nor Saktism; yet it is all these. The keynote of Hinduism is struck by Sri Krishna in the Bhagavadgita :

“However men approach Me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine.”

There is a remarkable unity in the diversity of the forms of faith comprised under Hinduism. Though there are numerous Saiva, Vaishnava and other sects, the number of sectaries is comparatively insignificant. The majority of the Hindu community accept the whole system of Hindu mythology. Preference for any particular deity does not preclude the worship of the other deities. Sectarianism, that is, strict adherence to one divinity or one faith, is quite unusual. The same Hindu will often in one round of pilgrimage visit temples dedicated to Siva, Krishna, the Devi, Rama, Ganesha or Hanuman. The same Hindu will often in the course of one year celebrate the worship of these and various other divinities; and if he is philosophically disposed, he will with

Bhartrihari exclaim: "One god, Siva or Krishna."

The ethical principles which underlie the various subdivisions of Hinduism including Buddhism and Jainism, are altruism, renunciation and *Karma*.

It is their ethical development which enabled the Hindus to integrate the foreign elements into their system of civilization, and thus place it on a stable basis. It is with ethical development that the racial cleavage between the Aryans and the non-Aryans began to disappear, and they were gradually fused into one nation, known in history as the Hindu, inspired by the same ideals and worshipping the same gods and goddesses. India suffered repeated invasions from outside, by the Greeks, the Parthians, the Scythians and the Huns, who succeeded in establishing their authority in various parts of the country. Sooner or later, however, they were either expelled or became Hinduised, adopting the Hindu religion, the Hindu literature and the Hindu institutions. The Greek Menander who had his capital at Kabul (about the middle of the second century B.C.) became a convert to Buddhism—an offshoot of Hinduism—and has been immortalised under the name of Milinda in the celebrated Buddhist work entitled "The Questions of Milinda." The Scythian (Kushan) Kadphesis II was an ardent votary of Siva, and his successors, Kanishka and his son Hushka, were enthusiastic followers of Buddhism. The Pallavas of Parthian origin, who for four centuries were the premier power in Southern India, were completely Hinduised, and Kanchi (Conjeveram) has since their time been one of the most important strongholds of Hinduism. The Saka (Scythian) Satraps of Saurashtra (Kathiawar) adopted either the Brahmanical or the Buddhist cult of Hinduism.

The Hindus like the Chinese have never, since they attained the highest stage of their civilization some centuries before the Christian era, been pervaded

by the military and the predatory spirit. Altruism has always been with them the most important of the cardinal virtues. As in China, so in India, wealth never formed the basis of social rank; wisdom and virtue were held in the highest esteem, and there was perfect freedom of thought.

The incursions and invasions of the Mahomedans for a time exerted a disintegrating influence upon Indian nationhood. But Hindu culture ultimately succeeded not only in opposing it but also in capturing the Moslem mind and strongly influencing Moslem culture and Moslem administration. Settled in India the Mahomedans by degrees became more or less Hinduised. The zeal for the propagation of Islam abated. The blind bigotry of the Moslem was gradually tempered by the philosophic culture of the Hindu, and Hindu influence on the religion and government of the Moslem gradually became more and more marked.

On the other hand, the uncompromising Monotheism of the Mahomedans exerted a strong and wholesome influence on Hinduism. It was chiefly this influence that produced that galaxy of earnest reformers who shed such lustre on India for three centuries from the fourteenth to the seventeenth. They all preached the unity of the Godhead; they all abjured caste-distinctions; and they all admitted Mahomedans into their sects. Ramananda, Kabir, Nanak and Chaitanya were four of the foremost among them. The catholicity of Kabir was so great that to this day Mahomedans claim him as one of their persuasion. The thesis of one of Nanak's earliest sermons was: "There are neither Hindus nor Mahomedans."

The result of this wholesome action and reaction between Hinduism and Mahomedanism was a spirit of sympathy and amity which was accentuated by the fact, that while among the cultured classes Pantheism presented a point of contact between the two communities (the Sufism of the one being but little

distinguishable from the Vedantism of the other), there were among the mass of the Mahomedans large numbers of converted Hindus who could not divest themselves of their prepossessions for the practices and prejudices of the religion they had abandoned, and shared the joys of Hindu processions and festivals.

The Hindus also joined the Mahomedans in such festivals as the Moharram. There were two principles common to Hindu and Mahomedan cultures which facilitated their assimilation and which were eminently favourable to peace and concord. One of these was Renunciation. The Hindus and Mahomedans vied with one another in paying homage to ascetic saints irrespective of their caste or creed. The Hindu Sadhus and Mahomedan Fakirs served as common bonds of the two communities.* Renunciation also made for amity in another way. It made the people generally lead a simple life and thus, on the one hand, avoid that intensity of the struggle for animal existence which is a fruitful source of jealousy and discord between individuals and classes, and on the other, devote their savings to charity and social service which cemented the different communities. Then, there was the principle of *Karma* among the Hindus and that of Fate among the Mahomedans. However they might differ in theory, in practice they made for contentment, and therefore, for peace and social harmony. The rural life which the people led almost universally, and substantial village self-government which they enjoyed and which made them to a great extent independent of the central Government were also important factors of unity between the various communities.

This amicable spirit was generally reflected in the policy of Governments, whether Hindu or Mahomedan. Knowing how strong Hindu feeling was about cow-killing, some of the emperors at Delhi endeavoured to check or stop it. In this connection the following advice given by Babar to his son Humayun is of considerable interest :

“O my son ! People of diverse religions inhabit India ; and it is a matter of thanksgiving to God, that the King of Kings has entrusted the government of this country to you. It therefore behoves you that :

1. You should not allow religious prejudices to influence your mind, and administer impartial justice having due regard to the religious susceptibilities and religious customs of all sections of the people.

2. In particular refrain from the slaughter of cows, which will help you to obtain a hold on the hearts of the people of India. Thus you will bind the people of this land to yourself by ties of gratitude.

3. You should never destroy the places of worship of any community and always be justice-loving, so that the relations between the king and his subjects may remain cordial and there be peace and contentment in the land.

4. The propagation of Islam will be better carried on with the sword of love and obligation than with the sword of oppression.

5. Always ignore the mutual dissensions of Shias and Sunnis, otherwise they will lead to the weakness of Islam.

6. Treat the different peculiarities of your subjects as the different seasons of the year so that the body politic may remain free from disease.”†

* The bigoted Mahomedan historian, Khafi Khan, was horrified at the conduct of the Europeans of his day who did not allow “religious mendicants to come into their bounds. When one found his way unawares, if he were a Hindu, he was subjected to such tortures as made his escape with life very doubtful, and if he were a Musalman he was imprisoned and worried for some days, and then set at liberty.”

† Many anecdotes are told of the influence of Guru Nanak on Babar. When Babar destroyed the town of Eminabad and the neighbouring villages, there was a general massacre of the people, and Pathan as well as Hindu habitations were plundered and levelled to

The brightest period of the Mahomedan Empire was unquestionably the period between the accession of Akbar and the deposition of Shah Jehan, and it was during this period that Hindu-Moslem amity was best exhibited. Akbar prohibited the killing of cows, and performed the *Homa* (a Hindu ceremony). "He also introduced," says the orthodox Badaoni, "though modified by his peculiar views, Hindu customs and heresies into the court assemblies, and introduces them still in order to please and gain the good-will of the Hindus." Abul Fazal, his most cultured Mahomedan courtier, was held by some of his contemporaries to be a Hindu. Jehangir was the son of a Hindu wife of Akbar. Shah Jehan also was the offspring of a Hindu Queen of Jehangir. The pro-Hindu policy of Akbar was continued by both Jehangir and Shah Jehan. The contest between Dara and Aurangzeb was really a contest between enlightenment and bigotry. Dara wrote a book attempting to reconcile the Hindu and Mahomedan doctrines. He had translations made of fifty *Upanishads*. Aurangzeb triumphed. But his triumph was only temporary, ending with his reign and did not lead to any serious attenuation of Hindu-Moslem cordiality which lasted till about two generations ago. Speaking of the relation between Hindus and Mahomedans in the Deccan, Hamilton observes in his "East India Gazetteer" (published 1828): "There is a considerable Mahomedan population in

the countries subject to the Nizam, but those of the lower classes, who are cultivators, have nearly all adopted the manners and customs of the Hindus." In Rangpur district (Bengal) he noticed, "that the two religions are on the most friendly terms, and mutually apply to the deities and saints of the other, when they imagine that application to their own will be ineffectual." Speaking generally of Hindusthan he observes: "For almost a century past, the Mahomedans have evinced much deference to the prejudices of their Hindu neighbours, and strong predilection towards many of their ceremonies." Dr. Taylor writing in 1839 says in his "Topography of Dacca": "Religious quarrels between Hindus and Mahomedans are rare occurrences. These two classes live in perfect peace and concord, and a majority of the individuals belonging to them have even overcome their prejudices so far as to smoke from the same *hookah*." Lord Meston, when Lieut. Governor of the United Provinces, observed: "From time immemorial Hindus and Mahomedans have lived together at Ajodhya and Fyzabad in peace and amity. As a symbol of this happy unity you see Mahomedans worshipping at Babar's mosque and Hindus paying adoration at the shrine of Ramchandra's birth place within a few yards of each other, and within the same enclosure wall."

Considerable political unity was the result of this friendly feeling. It was

the ground. It is said that the Guru not approving this sort of *zulum* managed to secure an interview with Babar, who, hearing of his pious movements in prison had rather himself desired to see him. The Guru's words had such a magic effect on his mind that he showed him a special respect while all his courtiers saluted him. The Emperor asked him to accept a present from him. The Guru replied that he wanted nothing for himself, but requested that the captives of Eminabad might be released. Upon this the Emperor ordered that they should be set free and their properties, restored to them. His Majesty was so pleased with the Guru that he asked him to accompany him. The Guru at first promised to remain only one day with him, but on being pressed to remain three days he at last consented. Once he was so affected that he fell into a trance and became unconscious. Babar was alarmed, and when the Guru stood up he prayed him to be gracious to him. The Guru replied, "If thou, O Emperor, desirest kindness, set all thy captives free." Babar agreed and the Guru said, "Thy empire shall remain for a long time." His Majesty on this ordered that all his prisoners should be clothed with robes of honour, a matter which caused the Guru much pleasure and satisfaction. Then the Emperor asked for instructions, and the Guru said, "Deliver just judgments, reverence holy men, forswear wine and gambling. The monarch who indulgeth in these vices shall, if he survives, bewail his misdeeds. Be merciful to the vanquished, and worship God in spirit and in truth."

—*Ramananda to Ram Tirath*, pp. 46—47.

evidenced on one memorable occasion during British Rule. Canning who was Governor-General at the time soon ceased to speak of the Sepoy War as a "mutiny," but called it a "rebellion," a "revolt." During the Mahomedan period Akbar realised the idea of the political unity of India as fully as Asoka did in Buddhist and Vikramaditya in Hindu times. Emperors like Nasiruddin and Akbar could not have carried out their strongly pro-Hindu policy had there been any strong opposition from the Moslems. It was no doubt resented by some bigoted Moslems. Badaoni, for instance, writing about Akbar's reign makes this caustic observation: "The Hindus are of course indispensable ; to them belongs half the land and half the army. Neither the Hindusthanis (Musalmans settled in India), nor the Moguls can point to such grand lords as the Hindus have among themselves." But the fact, that men like Badaoni had to rest contented with such atrabiliar outbursts, shows that they had no backing among the people. On the other hand, the intolerant anti-Hindu policy of the bigoted Aurangzeb met with vigorous opposition from the Hindus which ultimately led to the downfall of the Mogul Empire ; and it

would seem that they were helped even by Government officials in this opposition. "The infidel inhabitants of the city and the country around," says Khafi Khan, "made great opposition to the payment of the Jezia (a capitation tax). There was not a district where the people with the help of the Faujdars did not make disturbances and resistance." Sirajadowla is another instance of a despot, though of a different type, to depose whom Hindus and Mahomedans joined hands.

Political unity under Moslem rule is also inferable from the fact that Mahomedan sovereigns could ignore the communal principle in their administration without giving rise to serious discontent. They might have parasitic noodles hanging about their courts, but they generally selected for responsible posts the best men available regardless of caste or creed. Not to speak of Akbar, whose most trusted councillors were the Hindus, Mansing, Todar Mull and Birbal and the Hinduised Mahomedans, Abul Fazal and Faizi, the fittest men were generally appointed irrespective of their caste or creed even by Mahomedan rulers without pro-Hindu proclivities, at least of a pronounced character.*

WHAT IS AHIMSA

BY SWAMI GNANESWARANANDA

The aphoristic portions of Sanskrit religious literature are very much condensed, symbolic and mystic—mystic in the sense that if we only read the words, we fail to enter into the inner realms of knowledge. Behind the words lie hidden the so-called esoteric knowledge, to obtain which we urgently need an illumined teacher and the study of

the vast commentaries, as also reverential study of the lives and deeds of the perfected ones who are the living illustrations of these truths.

In course of our study of the *Yoga-Sutras* of Patanjali we are taught as one of the very first steps to *Yoga*, to practise *Ahimsa*. What does *Ahimsa* mean? It is difficult to convey the real

* During the reigns of the Emperors Feroksir, Rafi-ud-Darjat, Rafi-ud-dowla and part of the reign of Mohomed Shah, Ratan Chand, who was Deputy Vizir, enjoyed immense influence. Ibrahim, king of Golconda, had Jagdeo for his prime minister. When Alivardi Khan became Governor of Bengal he appointed as his prime minister Janakiram. Mohanlal was the trusted minister of Sirajadowla. Among his other officers who held high positions of trust were Durlabhram and Ram Narayan.

import of this term in English. The particle *A* at the beginning is negative, meaning *Absence of*. The main word *Himsā* means envy, jealousy, hatred, injury and killing, both separately and collectively. Thus if I translate *Ahimsa* as *Non-injury* or *Non-killing*, much of the real significance and esoteric meaning of the Sanskrit word is lost.

In order to be a *Rajayogin* or in fact any *Yogin*, we are required to practise *Ahimsa* as the very first step of our exercises. The question that demands practical solution is: How far are we to extend the practice of this doctrine? Is it to be taken quite literally, or are we to modify the scope of its application? The confusion becomes worse confounded when we look at the lives and teachings of such great masters as Sri Krishna, Buddha and Christ. In the *Gita* (X. 5, XII. 13, XVI. 2) Sri Krishna extolls the doctrine of *Ahimsa* to the skies, urging Arjuna to adopt it, and in the same breath he asks him to fight the battle and kill his enemies. Is Sri Krishna inconsistent? Buddha, the greatest advocate of *Ahimsa* that the world has ever produced, in a conversation with Devadatta on killing for food, gives tacit assent to meat-eating by his disciples. (Meat-eating among the followers of Buddha was forbidden much later by King Asoka in his Sarnath edicts.) Was Buddha inconsistent? Christ who teaches not to resist evil drives away the money-changers from the Temple of Jehova, whip in hand. Was Christ inconsistent? In fact such inconsistency might be discovered in the life of every great master, ancient or modern. What then are we to decide? Either these masters were all hypocrites or there remains much to be understood by us regarding the real and practical meaning and import of this doctrine of *Ahimsa*.

The Sanskrit word *Ahimsa*, technically speaking, has a clearer reference to the subjective side of the doctrine than to the objective, in so far as it

refers more to the *Vritti* or mental impress than the outward expression or action through the senses. The subjective and objective sides of each action are too obvious to need any discussion in detail. The *subjective* is the side of disposition or *Buddhi*—the thinking and feeling side; and the *objective* is the side of execution or action—the external side of it.

Now, suppose you are injured by a person and your mind is terribly disturbed; and you are thinking within yourself how to retaliate, and you are perhaps enacting a scene of bloody revenge in your mind fifty times over, whereas in actual killing you could kill but once. Do you not think that the impress of such a feeling on the mind is one of deeper mischief than some cases of actual killing? Such a phenomenon is psychologically and subjectively *Himsa*, although the party might not receive a single blow or even a harsh word from you.

On the other hand, suppose here is a helpless calf suffering from some incurable disease and the horror of that suffering is intense. A *Mahātmā* who loves the poor calf, impelled by the motive of mere love and sympathy, finding no means to save the poor animal and having no other impression on his mind than that of love and good will, expresses his love in the destructive form of "killing" the animal. What is your verdict on such an action? Subjectively, it is absolute *Ahimsa*, although objectively the action expresses itself in the form of *Himsa*. For a *Yogin* specially, the subjective aspects of action are more important than the objective. The *Yogin's* study and exercises are with the mind. Thus the doctrine of *Ahimsa*, as it should be understood by a student of *Yoga*, can be summed up thus: If by any thought or feeling, not to speak of action, you imprint on the mind-stuff the black spot of injury or even ill-feeling towards any being, it is *Himsa*, no matter what you 'do' or 'do not do'. Subdue it. But if

by your so-called action of objective *Himsa*, you do not have the impress (*Vritti*) of injury on the mind-stuff, but if, on the contrary, the *Vritti*, as it is impressed on the mind-stuff, be one of absolute poise, love or sympathy, it is *Ahimsa*. Do not worry about it. Above all, when your subjective feeling of love and poise does not give the lie to your action, or, in other words, when there is a perfect harmony between your subjective and objective aspects of *Ahimsa*, you are fixed in *Ahimsa*. Strive hard to attain it.

In the light of this explanation there is no contradiction or inconsistency in the lives of Krishna, Buddha, Christ or the other great ones.

In applying this explanation to the question of food, we must make special note of the fact that the question of food has also to be considered from other view-points than that of *Himsa*. Here we discuss only the problem of *Ahimsa* regarding this practical question. When you eat meat or fish or even a potato or a carrot, if you do not have that black scar of disturbing and harmful impress or *Vritti* on your mind-stuff, it is not *Himsa*. After Sir J. C. Bose's discovery, one should not

be cowardly or hypocritical enough to draw a fictitious line of demarcation between the lives of animals and vegetables, so as to say that meat-eating is *Himsa* and vegetable diet is *Ahimsa*. But vegetarianism has its own value apart from the question of *Himsa*.

In conclusion, I am tempted to present my personal method of observing this doctrine, of course to the extent of my humble ability. To me the positive and constructive side of the doctrine seems more important and appealing. This doctrine of *Ahimsa* cannot be one of negation only. For, if that be so, a stone-wall is the greatest observer of this doctrine. Thus I find the necessity of converting the doctrine into a positive one. In its positive form I can state it thus: "Thou shouldst always vibrate the thought of love and sympathy to all beings." Thus if any thought in me obstructs the positive current of love and sympathy, it is *Himsa* and I should take care to stop it at once. We should always bear in mind that we have to follow the doctrine of *Ahimsa* of the hero, and not the coward, of the *Mahatma*, and not of the hypocrite.

IDEALS IN EDUCATION

BY AN OLD BOY

In *Prabuddha Bharata* for January, 1929, an article appeared from the pen of a visitor on the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home at Madras. Many of the readers of the magazine asked the management of the institution for fuller particulars regarding especially the educational ideals at the back of the Residential High School, forming part of the Home. One question that has been repeated is: "What are the distinctive features of this school?" The following is an attempt to give a brief answer

I

The first distinctive feature of this school is that *it is a home before it is a school*. In other educational institutions in our country, the school proper, as it is called, plays the more important part, and hostels, if there are any, attached to the school, have very little influence on the collective life of the school. Schools are started first and hostels are added afterwards. This seems the natural order. But in our school the growth has been in the reverse way and it is not by accident.

It has ever been the cherished ambition of the organisers to make the institution more and more like a truly cultured and ideal home, as its name indicates, and place less emphasis on instruction and examination. The inmates are to form a happy family. The purpose is not so much to make the boys know what they did not know, but to make them behave, as they did not behave. This is best achieved, as Pestalozzi laid down, "by training the child as early as possible in the various daily duties of domestic life." Not only in this particular institution of the Ramakrishna Mission, but wherever that body starts an educational institution, it always starts with a 'home', for that is the place best suited for the building of character.

This is the ancient *Gurukula* ideal. The students, sons of princes and peasants alike, lived in their master's home like the children of the house, without having to pay for their boarding, lodging or tuition, and learnt their lessons not for examination but for life, while helping their master in his daily duties. So in our school the teachers and the taught live in close and harmonious relationship; they greet each other on getting up from bed in love and reverence; they share the same simple fare together; they work and share the joys and sorrows in common. The boys are made to feel that they are living in a world which is their own and that they have to give part of their life to build up the school. They are given the freedom to manage their own affairs as much as possible, and to realise that the institution is not complete without them and that it waits for its completion through their co-operation. Even the youngest children have their own share of the household work, in most cases chosen by themselves according to inclination and capacity. Children of barely ten are not merely content but happy and cheerful to live in this atmosphere scarcely seeing their parents or relatives for months and years; for they feel

quite at home here and realise that the place is a piece of their own creation.

II

The second distinctive feature of the school is the inculcation of the *dignity of labour*. It follows as a corollary to what has been said above. The impressions of one or two distinguished visitors to the institution may be given to show how others regard the Home in this aspect. Says Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, C.I.E.: "The boys themselves practically manage the whole institution and, as happened at the time of my visit, including the cooking of their food and serving it. The whole responsibility being thrown on the boys, habits of self-help are formed, which, coupled with attention to regular observance of religious practice, cannot but equip them for the battle of life when they go out into the world." The Right Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri remarks: "Some idea of the discipline and love of work pervading the Home may be formed from the facts that the cook is almost the only paid servant, and the entire place is a model of tidiness, orderliness and attractiveness. The inmates are obviously happy, active and healthy." And Sir P. C. Ray records: "It was a kind of pleasant surprise to me to find that in this unique institution boys are being trained in a most splendid way to develop self-help, character, charity, discipline and brotherhood. Every student is to do not only a portion of the general management but is also trained in some practical line such as cloth- and carpet-weaving, basket-making, carpentry, etc. Here the students enjoy a happy atmosphere of brotherhood unadulterated with even a trace of communalism." The Government Inspecting Officer says: "It is interesting to note that so much time is devoted to manual training and that the literary education is in no way adversely affected. In other words, it might almost be asserted that because of the attention paid to manual train-

ing the boys are better fitted to undertake their literary studies.”

A word of explanation is necessary to show how this training is fitted into the life of the school. All the household work is done outside the school hours by a rotation of shifts, and the workshop practice forms part of the school time-table ; and the time-table is so arranged that it repeats itself not by week days but once in three working days. One-sixth of the schooling time or half a day once in this period of three days is given to manual training. The courses deal both with theory and practice. Practical work includes the making of furniture in carpentry ; dhoties, towels, blankets, and woollen carpets in weaving ; trays, flower baskets, boxes, mats, etc. in rattan work. In each department there are always some orders on hand so that there is an earnestness to give satisfaction. Waste cannot be wholly avoided but is kept at a minimum. The articles made are mostly sold away at our premises, but if a large number get stacked, the boys go out on holidays and find a sale in the streets of the city ; they take a peculiar pride and pleasure in selling the products of their own manufacture, and on these occasions canvass fresh orders too.

All this forms an integral part of the education imparted in the High School to every pupil. Besides, there is an industrial school with a separate workshop equipped with up-to-date machinery to give specialised training to those who, after the completion of their study in the High School, intend to take to manual occupation as a calling in life.

It is not to be supposed that all the boys educated in the school will eventually take to hand work to eke out a livelihood ; but it is certain that whatever vocation or profession they may take to later on, they will be much more interested in the productive occupations of the community in which they live and

will be able directly or indirectly to contribute to the economic betterment of the country. As Mahatma Gandhi says, one who spins a little yarn or produces a single cloth has done more to promote indigenous industry and self-reliance than hundreds who talk all day of doing good.

Thoughtful and progressive men now recognise the fact that while there is always a demand for men and women of the highest type of scholarship, the education imparted to the average individual should be such as to bring him into direct contact with the development of the material resources of the country. India annually exports several millions of bales of cotton and fabulously large quantities of many other kinds of raw materials. Here is the foundation for the building up of a rich and powerful country. The way lies through teaching handicrafts (instead of quill-driving) to a large proportion of bright youths and teaching mechanical and practical methods of agriculture.

Booker T. Washington, the Negro emancipator, says in his book, *Working with the Hands* : “When any people, regardless of race or geographical position, have not been trained to habits of industry, have not been given skill of hand in youth, and taught to love labour, a direct result is the breeding of a worthless idle class, which spends a great deal of its time in trying to live by its wits. If a community is educated exclusively on books and is not trained to habits of applied industry, an unwholesome tendency to dodge honest productive labour slowly develops ; the people acquire a fondness for wasting valuable hours in discussion of idle politics ; they continually fret for fear that no means will be left to provide them with a living.” This applies word for word to the present situation of our country and the remedy is obvious.

III

The third distinct feature of our school is the *spirit of freedom* that it breathes. As institutions grow, the

machinery of codes and laws becomes cumbersome and tends to stifle life, and so it is with our education departments to-day. The managers of schools in their anxiety to conform to certain standards and to obtain aid from the Government, have stereotyped the schools. A school with an individuality of its own is a rare thing.

The modern school atmosphere is most artificial in our country, in dress, manners, in the language of common conversation and teaching, in the subjects of study, in the rigid time-table, and, worst of all, in the complacent forgetfulness of the world of spirit. It is time we extricate ourselves from this maze, accepting the limitations only in so far as they are absolutely necessary and not deterrent to our ideals.

In our school we have tried to keep this objective in view. Ours is a Government-aided recognised complete secondary school, preparing pupils for the S.S.L.C. Public Examination. Still it has been possible to achieve a large amount of freedom from conventional standards. The District Educational Officer writes: "It is pleasant to find a management with such fixed ideals and determined that no mercenary considerations shall interfere with the desire to realise the ideals."

What arrests the foremost attention of a visitor to the school is its tone of simplicity and the absence of artificiality. The boys move with their teachers as with their own elder brothers, and their manners are pleasing and natural. The teachers and pupils attend classes in very simple dress of such material that can be daily washed. A great and learned Professor of the Calcutta University when he came on a visit to the school refused to step into the class-rooms, and on being pressed, he replied: "When I see your boys squatted on their *kushâsanams* and in such simple habit, the class-room appears to me like a shrine where the little ones are gathered for prayer. It would amount to a sacrilege if I went in

with my shoes and uniform. Let not your boys learn to associate greatness with this kind of dress."

As for furniture, each boy has a small box-desk placed before him on the floor. This arrangement not only gives greater freedom of movement but gives a better appearance to the room and allows of the floor being washed and cleaned without difficulty. Then the walls are filled with beautiful and instructive pictures which form an important educative influence.

Scribbling on walls and cutting furniture which are so common in ordinary schools are conspicuous here by their absence. The credit does not go so much to the teachers for their effective supervision as to the boys themselves. The buildings have been raised and equipped as a temple of learning and they are maintained in that spirit. Their neatness and beauty so impresses the inmates that they do not even touch the walls with soiled hands.

With regard to the medium of instruction, the vernacular (Tamil) is used in all subjects which the pupil is not expected to take with him to the University, *i.e.* in Elementary Mathematics, Elementary Science, Indian History and Geography. The non-language subjects taught in English are Advanced Mathematics, Science and History under the C Group. These can also be vernacularised when the University leads the way. The change minimises largely the difficulty experienced by the pupils in learning through a foreign medium. It means also a saving of time and energy which can be utilised to better purpose. Along with English and a vernacular, the pupils study also Sanskrit as a compulsory third language up to the fourth form, and later on as optional. Sanskrit is the common classical language of Hindu religious culture and it must find a place in any scheme of education for Hindu children.

The rigidity of the time-table is partially relaxed by class-teaching being confined to the forenoon session in the

case of the boys studying in the higher forms. The afternoons are devoted to individual work on the laboratory plan, special rooms being set apart for each subject equipped with the necessary apparatus and appliances and supervised by a teacher. Each boy can go into any subject room at any time and remain there for such time as he chooses. One boy of a particular class may spend a whole afternoon in the library and another in the Science laboratory, while a third apportions his time among three or more subjects at his choice. The merit of the system lies in the freedom it gives to the boys to work according to their own speed and their own inclinations. While the more intelligent boy may be left almost to himself and allowed to spend the time he saves after finishing the allotted work to develop his special talents, the less endowed pupil may be more carefully attended to by the teacher. Under this arrangement, the pupil ceases to be a passive recipient of information and becomes an active agent in gathering knowledge for himself. This cultivates self-confidence which is the true basis of character-building. Every boy begins to have a certain amount of faith in his own capacities. During our annual prize distributions, strangers are often puzzled to find that almost every boy of the school carries away a prize and they remark that prizes lose all value when so many are given away. In our opinion that is our strong point. The critics forget that it is not in the same subject that all the prizes are awarded. One is good at sports, another in secular study, a third in music, a fourth in painting, a fifth in the scriptures, some in manual work, others in literary competitions, writing and oratory and so on. The numerous prizes only indicate the attempt that is being made to draw the best out of each individual in the firm belief that every one ought to be good at something.

The ample scope that is provided for a variety of healthy occupations solves

the question of discipline. Besides attending to their regular study and play, the boys manage the household, do gardening, learn music or painting or some other fine art when they have a talent, edit and publish their own magazines, hold meetings and conduct debates, and take part in active social service whenever occasions demand it. If, however, there is a dereliction of duty or a misdemeanour or some minor offence, the boys get these things corrected themselves through their captains and judges, the offenders being kept off for a period from play or being given some extra work to do. The teachers interfere rarely.

This kind of life must give the boys correct judgment and a right idea of what freedom means. "I call that man free who fears wrong, but fears nothing else. I call that man free who has learned the most blessed of all truths—that liberty consists in obedience to the power and to the will and to the law that his higher soul reverences and approves. He is not free because he does what he likes, but he is free because he does what he ought and there is no protest in his soul against the doing." This takes us to our last and most important point *viz.* the place of religion in education.

IV

The attention that *religious life* receives in our school is its fourth distinctive feature. Freedom in the true sense can be achieved only through religion and therefore no education can be complete without it. "What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

It is true that religion is to be caught and not to be taught. But does it mean that this thing of the greatest importance is to be left to chance and take care of itself? Is the educated young man supposed to be equipped for the struggle of life to feel helpless in the face of moral and spiritual difficulties? All the help that a knowledge of reli-

gion and of the lives of spiritual giants can give ought to be secured. And most important of all, the young must have before their eyes the example of men who live up to the ideals, who have a perfect faith in the eternal life before them. The silent influence of the latter can never be described or estimated.

This is sought to be realised in our school by the contact with men of renunciation belonging to the Ramakrishna Order, who live close by and by the example of Brahmacharins and householders on the staff, who are mostly old boys of the institution imbued with the spirit of service and sacrifice.

As for instruction the Bhagavad Gita is the main text. The boys when they are between the ages of 10 and 12 learn to recite the whole of it by heart. After they have picked up a little knowledge of the Sanskrit language, they study its meaning. When they are older, they go deeper into its philosophical truths. Side by side with this, a fairly complete knowledge of the epics, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Bhagavata, is given through storytelling. The lives and teachings of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda and a comparative study of religions with a course through the Bible and the Koran complete the course.

While care is taken to see that in practice the denominational differences of the boys are respected and each individual worships God according to his family traditions, influences are set at work which would open their mind slowly to a wider concept of religion and to the realisation of the truth that all paths lead to God. Representatives of various religions are invited to give the boys the best interpretations of their own faiths; e.g. one series of lectures arranged during a Dasara festival was on the lives and teachings of Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhava, Chaitanya and Ramakrishna.

The birthdays of these Avatara Purushas are observed in the institution with the same reverence as those of Rama and Krishna.

Sri Ramakrishna used to say: "Let your love and devotion to your *Ishtam* be like the unparalleled love of a chaste woman to her husband. But you know while her heart is all given to her lord, she serves her father-in-law and mother-in-law and other relatives with the greatest respect. So while you are devoted to your own religion, revere the faith of others and bow down your head wherever men are assembled in the name of God. Truth is one; the seekers call it variously." Whatever else education may bring, it must bring this faith in a higher life and this width of vision.

V

In the end, when all has been said, the question will be asked whether these ideals have been attained in our institution. Our answer is that the attainment of all our deepest ideals is not a thing of a day and results cannot be immediately perceived. Though the pole star may never be reached, it alone however stands fixed among myriads of moving ones and shows the way to the mariner on the wide ocean. Such are our life's ideals. All that we can therefore say is that we strive our best to keep the ideal bright before our vision.

If, however, any one wants to judge the work by the results, may we humbly ask him not to seek for men great in the eye of the world, by their wealth or position or power, nor to expect mass production of goodness and holiness, but to judge by the testimony of the pure and simple lives which some at least out of the many who received the education here have been enabled to lead, who remember the institution with gratitude and who feel they owe the best portion of their life to its influence?

THE BAÜLS AND THEIR CULT OF MAN

BY KSHITIMOHAN SEN

(Continued from the last issue)

The age-long controversy regarding *dwaita* (dualism) and *adwaita* (monism) is readily solved by these wayfarers on the path of Love. Love is the simple striving, love the natural communion, so believe the Báüls. "Ever two and ever one, of this the name is Love," say they. In love, oneness is achieved without any loss of respective self-hood. Some of their ideas on this point are to be found in the *Chaitanya-Charitám-rita*, from which we cull a few stray lines :

The follower of Love obeys neither reason
nor scripture.

*

He who worships Krishna by the way of
Love, easily tastes of his sweetness.

*

Neither wisdom nor austerity is part of
Love.

*

Love seeks to please God; desire seeks
to please oneself.

*

Not for me the cheap love dependent on
riches.

*

He who glorifies Me and despises himself,
—Me he captures not with such love.

*

I give the name of love to that which has
the two-fold aspect :

The love accompanying the right of
possession, the love free of all ties.

The last idea occurs thus in Dádu :

The body is for the world: the dweller
within it for God.

The Báüls also have their own ideas in regard to the love of man for woman. Being asked whether he had experienced such love, a Báül replied: "I once had a wife, my son, and for ten years or more my body was by her side. Then she departed from this world. It

was ten or more years after that when, suddenly, for a moment, I knew her for the first time. And at her loving touch I became as gold."

The *Chaitanya-Charitamrita*, has the verse :

In mutual attraction they came together,
leaving all else,
But their union may or may not be, save
by the grace of God.

Naturally the Báüls do not look upon the love of woman as something to fight shy of, but rather as the greatest of helps to spiritual realisation. Space compels me to restrict myself to a bare outline of their doctrines in this connection.

They compare woman to a flame, of which the heat is for the use of the household itself, but the light shines far and wide. The first is called her *vighraha* (formal) aspect and the latter her *ághraha* (ideal) aspect. In the former she belongs to husband and home, in the latter she is capable of energising all and sundry. He who deals with her exclusively in the first aspect, insults her womanhood in its fulness. The internal enemies that obstruct the complete vision of her are man's lust, distraction and egotism.

The idea of *Parakîyá* (the woman not belonging to oneself) has been woefully misunderstood. The Báüls look upon the knowledge of self as a door to divine realisation or liberation. But one's self cannot be truly known unless it becomes manifest through the love of another. Even God the Omniscient knows not His own bliss, and so seeks to discover it through the love of His creatures (symbolised by Rádhá in the Vaishnava Scriptures). So is the love of a woman, who is under no social

compulsion, appreciated by the *Sahajíás* as a means of man's self-knowledge and liberation. The idea has unfortunately been degraded by being understood in some quarters as a plea for promiscuous love between the sexes.

Then come the terms *ekarasa* (the emotion that unites) and *samarasa* (the harmony of emotions). Space is overcome by the motion of the body; time by the course of life. And all gulfs can be bridged by the spiritual process of *samarasa*. If *Shiva* and *Shakti*, wisdom and devotion, remain apart, they cannot function to any purpose. "When *Shiva* and *Shakti* are united, then results *samarasa*."

Kabir says :

When Love and Renunciation flow
together, like the Ganges and
Jamuna,

That alone is the sacred bathing place
which can give the boon of *prayága**
(supreme union).

Says the *Báül* :

While *Shiva* and *Shakti* remain apart
The right and left streams (of reason
and of feeling) remain apart likewise.
Then reason is useless, all is emptiness,
and liberation hopeless.

Listen, O *Mádhá*, says *Jagá*,

Penances and formulas, fasting and
pilgrimage, reading and learning all
are then futile.

If thou wouldst gain the supreme end,
get the different streams to mingle
wise.

Samarasa, with its equivalent *ekarasa*, is therefore, obviously another name for love. It is the outflowing joy of love that alone can serve to synthesise the several one-sided endeavours of man. "It is only by this *sahaj* (simple) way," says *Sundardas*, "that man's life can be attuned to the Divine song." And as we have already shown, this *sahaj* way of love is the one that has been followed and advised by all the Indian mystics.

Trikálayóga (harmony between past, present and future) is another important doctrine of this cult. Life itself is the regulation of the activity of the present in accordance with both past and future. Kabir once admonished an irreverent learned person thus: "Your life is an expensive bridge of marble, but it has failed to touch both banks," implication being that he was sacrificing the future to the present.

The *Báül* gives the same warning thus :

You have devoured the three "times"
(past, present and future) all at one
time.

To what end, O miserable one, have you
allowed yourself to come to this pass?

You have bartered away the golden key,
now will you now enter the treasure-
house?—

How gain your inmost self?

O wretched one, you bring your fate on
yourself!

*

Great opportunities had you, my heart,
but you let them slip with overmuch
neglect.

Yours is now the wondrous store-house,
but you have lost its mystic key.

The folly of allowing the material interests of the present to stunt the future growth of the spiritual life becomes apparent when it is too late,—when those interests have flagged with the waning physical desires, but the wasted spiritual powers can no longer be recovered.

The same need exists for the reconciliation of the antagonism between the outer call of the material world and the inner call of the spiritual world, as for the realisation of the mutual love of the individual and Supreme Self. It is a case for the application of the same *samarasa*. The God who is Love, say the *Báüls*, can alone serve to turn the currents of the within and the without in one and the same direction.

* The pilgrimage (*lit.* bathing place) at the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna is called *Prayága*.

Kabir says :

If we say He is only within, then the whole Universe is shamed. If we say He is only without, then that is false. He whose feet rest alike on the sentient and on the inert, fills the gap between the inner and the outer worlds.

The inter-relations of man's body and the Universe have to be realised by spiritual endeavour. Such endeavour is called *Kāyā Śādhan* (Realisation through the body). There are numberless instances in the poems of Dādu where the body has been eulogised as the seat of the Almighty, the pilgrimage of pilgrimages, the sacred place of worship, of realisation, and of final liberation. One of the recognised methods of attaining this realisation is the use of the rhythm of breathing as a rosary for meditation, in place of the usual beads. This process of realising the cosmic relation of body and universe through meditation on, or by the help of, the process of inhaling and exhaling the outer atmosphere, is called *ajapājapa* as distinguished from *japa* (the telling of beads). The anthropomorphic narrowing of the Infinite Spirit of the Universe by inviting Him into the confines of the body has, however, to be guarded against. The endeavour should rather consist in the expansion of one's own self into the universe by means of the cultivation of *samarasa*.

Another process in this *Kāyā-śādhan* of the Bāüls is known as *Urdha-srōta* (the elevation of the current). Waters flow downwards according to the ordinary physical law. But with the advent of Life the process is reversed. When the living seed sprouts the juices are drawn upwards, and on the elevation that such flow can attain depends the height of the tree. It is the same in the life of man. His desires ordinarily flow downward towards animality. The endeavour of the expanding spirit is to turn their current upwards towards the light. The currents of *jiva* (animal life) must be converted into the current of *Shiva* (God-life). The former centre round the

ego, they must be raised by the force of love.

Says Dādu's daughter, Nanimāta :

My life is the lamp afloat on the stream.
To what bourne shall it take me?

*

How is the divine to conquer the carnal,—

The downward current to be upwards turned?

As when the wick is lighted the oil doth upwards flow, so simply is destroyed the thirst of the body.

The *Yoga Vāsistha* tells us :

Uncleansed desires bind to the world,
purified desires give liberation.

References to this reversal of current are also to be found in the Atharva Veda (X,2,9 ; 2,34). This reversal is otherwise considered by Indian devotees as the conversion of the *sthūla* (gross) into the *sūkshma* (fine).

The Bāül sings :

Love is my golden touch,—it turns desire
into service;
Earth seeks to become Heaven, man to
become God.

Another aspect of the idea of reversal has been put thus by Rabindranath in his *Broken Ties* :

If I keep going in the same direction along which He comes to me, then I shall be going further and further away from Him. If I proceed in the opposite direction, then only can we meet. He loves form, so He is continually descending towards form. We cannot live by form alone, so we must ascend towards His formlessness. He is free, so his play is within bonds. We are bound, so we find our joy in freedom. All our sorrow is, because we cannot understand this. He who sings, proceeds from his joy to the tune; he who hears, from the tune to joy. One comes from freedom into bondage, the other goes from bondage into freedom; only thus can they have their communion. He sings and we hear. He ties the bonds as He sings to us, we untie them as we listen to Him.

This idea also occurs in our devotees of the Middle Ages.

The Yoga of the Bāüls is essentially different from that of the Tantrics

who are mainly concerned with the different methods of gaining occult and other powers for serving some end. The *Sahaj* endeavour seeks the bliss of divine union only for its own sake. Mundane desires are therefore accounted the chief obstacles in the way. But, for getting rid of them, the wise *Guru*, according to the *Báüls*, does not advise renunciation of the good things of the world, but the opening of the door to the higher self. Thus guided, says Kabir :

I close not my eyes, stop not my ears, nor torment my body. But every path I then traverse becomes a path of pilgrimage, whatever work I engage in becomes service. This simple consummation is the best.

The simple way has led its votaries easily and naturally to their living conception of Humanity.

Rajjabji says :

All the world is the *Veda*, all creations
the *Koran*,
Why read paper scriptures, O Rajjab,
gather ever fresh wisdom from the
Universe.

The eternal wisdom shines within the
concourse of the millions of
Humanity.

The *Báül* sings :

The simple has its thirty million strings.
Whose mingled symphony ever sounds.
Take all the creatures of the World into
yourself
Drown yourself in that eternal music.

The raising of the *Rétódhára* (semi-nal current) to the higher centres, the process of piercing or rousing of the *chakras* (spiritual force centres) are special esoteric doctrines of which I can only make passing mention on the present occasion.

I conclude with a few more examples of *Báül* songs, esoteric and otherwise, from amongst many others of equal interest.

By Gangáram, the *Namasudra*.

Ah, the comings and goings with every
breath of ours,
The mantram of *ekarasa* makes them all
into one.

In you are the fourteen regions, amid
them is yourself,
Yet of these comings and goings naught
have you understood!
Meditate on this life movement, prince
of Yogis will you be,
Realising how finite and unbounded are
One, as you breathe in and out.
Of all ages, then, you will count the
moments, in every moment find the
ages,—
The drop in the ocean, the ocean in the
drop.
If your endeavour be but *Sahaj*, beyond
argument and cogitation,
You will taste of the nectar of *rasa*,
the precious quintessence.
Blinded are you by overmuch journeying
from bourne to bourne,
O Gangáram, be simple! Then alone
will vanish all your doubts.

*

Past the seven seas, across the eight
mountains.
You will come to the essential principle.
From *pátál* then you will mount the sky,
To descend again on the regions below.
Throughout the six seasons will last your
festival,
In every *kamal* will be your play.

By Jagá, the *Guru* of Gangáram.

Within you is the unfathomable sea, its
mystery you have not solved,
No banks or shores has it of scripture-
texts or rules or rites.

Over its bottomless, shoreless expanse
nor creed nor book will show the
way.

Yet cross it you must, or fruitless will
be your great boon of human life.

Could you but open your locked door, to
find your relations with All,

If by the grace of your *Guru* your
obstructions be but removed,

Then, says Jagá, would you be gloriously
fulfilled.

By Balá, the *Kaivarta*.

O'erhead is the mind-ravishing blue
lotus of the sky.

How dazzling shine its uncounted petals
in the limitless blue.

And as the beams of nectar flash from
its sky-filling vastness

The drunken mind flies into its ineffable
expanse, enraptured

Cries Balá, O brother, but what am I
to do,
For ever and anon I lose my way!

By Bishá, the disciple of Balá.
The simple Man was in the Brindaban
of my heart,
Alas, how and when did I lose Him,
That now no peace I know, at home or
abroad?
By meditation and telling of beads, in
worship and travail,
The quest goes on for ever;

But unless the Simple Man comes of
Himself,
Fruitless is it all;
For He yields not to forcefulness of
striving.

Bishá's heart has understood right well
That by His own simple way alone, is
its door unlocked.

"Listen, O brother man," declares
Chandidás, "the Truth of Man is the
highest of truths, there is no other
truth above it."

(Concluded)

PRACTICE OF RELIGION

BY ANANDA

WHEN SHALL WE RENOUNCE?

When is one in a condition to renounce the world? This is an important question. Much of the success of spiritual life depends on a correct answer to it. If we renounce when we have not yet acquired fitness for it, failure will be writ large on our future. Dryness and despair will overtake us and the mind will go astray. If we are fit, and yet do not renounce, we shall waste precious qualifications and shall be deprived of spiritual glory which otherwise can be ours.

Yet it is true that it is very difficult to give a correct reply to the above question. Various answers have been given to it by various people. Swami Vivekananda repeatedly said that a beggar cannot renounce. Only one who possesses worldly powers or prosperity can renounce them. Renunciation by one who has nothing is meaningless. Does this mean that unless one is materially prosperous, one cannot renounce? No. What the Swami meant is that one must have the power and energy in him, which is requisite for acquiring earthly glory. There must be the consciousness of that power in one. There must be that sense of triumph; and not fear and

the sense of defeat and flight. This is cowardice, and cowards are ill fitted to embrace the life of renunciation. This inner consciousness of power is meant by Swami Vivekananda. And when we have that we choose to employ it for spiritual purposes,—we withdraw it from the world; and then it is renunciation. Worldly people have the idea that they are capable of managing the so-called affairs of the world more efficiently than monks. It is a delusion. Monks possess a power which if they employ it to the discharge of so-called worldly duties, proves them to be much more than a match for the most astute of the worldly wise. And why? Because they have not escaped from the world by the back door but have scaled its heights and soared into the golden empyrean.

And one who sincerely watches his mind, can easily find out if he has acquired that inner power and sense of victory. If he has, then this is a sign for renunciation. He will prosper in the new life.

There is another sign which we consider very sure and comprehensive. The average man is full of desires, especially for sexual enjoyment and

earthly power. He is ever athirst for them. He eagerly seeks to possess the objects of sense-enjoyment. His whole life and energy are devoted to their pursuit. If he is debarred from enjoying them or acquiring them, he will become mad and eventually die. But not all people are of this nature. There are some who have reached a higher state, though their number is small. They do not seek sense-enjoyment. Their mind is generally turned inwards. But they are not yet free from evil *samskâras*. They have desires for enjoyment latent in their mind. So whenever any object of enjoyment approaches them, their mind is disturbed, and goes forward to enjoy it. If, however, they go away from it, the mind calms down and turns inward again. Such men, if they do not come in contact with the external objects of enjoyment, may by and by get rid of their bad *samskâras* and eventually transcend all desires. In that exalted state, they will not be affected even if sense-pleasures are thrust on them. Their mind will never lose its calm and poise and will always remain fixed in the Atman.

Of course, these last class of men are best fitted to renounce. In fact, they have already renounced. They are already free. For them renunciation will mean only a formal change. Their number, however, is very very small, and we need not consider them on the present occasion. The middle class,—those who live above desires when aloof from external objects of enjoyment—are the persons who concern us most. Such persons indeed are fit to renounce. Let us watch ourselves. If we find that when we are not in contact with the objects of enjoyment, we do not feel any desire for them, we may be sure we are in a position to renounce. Renunciation will then be extremely helpful to us. This is the sign. If our mind hankers for sense-objects, even when they are not perceived, we must know that we

are not yet ready. We must plod on in the world till the mind is sufficiently purified.

External renunciation is necessary and beneficial. Some there are who argue that only internal renunciation is necessary. They are self-deceived. If we are to grow spiritually, we must keep the mind free from the agitations of desires. Most spiritual aspirants belong to the middle group. They feel all right when they are not in contact with the objects of desire, when they live away from them. Such a favourable situation cannot be created without external renunciation.

The greatest hindrance to renunciation is lust. Because of this, people seek for mates, and this in turn creates a household with its innumerable obligations, bondages and miseries. The mind, therefore, should be carefully observed as regards lust. Is it free from it? Or how strong is the passion? As we have indicated above, the condition of renunciation is not necessarily absolute freedom from lust. This absolute freedom, Sri Ramakrishna said again and again, cannot come without the realisation of God. Till one has realised God, lust will remain in more or less measure. But we must notice if the mind hankers for the satisfaction of lust, or if it is agitated only when the objects of passion are near at hand. In the latter case renunciation is safe. If one keeps away from those objects, and lives in a pure atmosphere, the latent *samskâras* can easily be managed and slowly eradicated.

Apart from these inner conditions there are also external conditions to be considered. Swami Vivekananda thus explained *Sannyâsa* in course of a lecture in America :

“When a man has fulfilled the duties and obligations of that stage of life in which he is born, and his aspirations lead him to seek a spiritual life, and to abandon altogether the worldly pursuits of possession, fame, or power ;—

when by the growth of insight into the nature of the world, he sees its impermanence, its strife, its misery, and the paltry nature of its prizes, and turns away from these,—then he seeks the True, the Eternal Love, the Refuge. He makes complete renunciation (*Sannyāsa*) of all worldly position, property and name, and wanders forth into the world to live a life of self-sacrifice, and to persistently seek spiritual knowledge, striving to excel in love and compassion, and to acquire lasting insight. Gaining these pearls of wisdom by years of meditation, discipline and inquiry, he in his turn becomes a teacher, and hands on to disciples, lay or professed, who may seek them from him, all that he can of wisdom and beneficence.”

The Swami says, “When a man has fulfilled the duties and obligations of that stage of life in which he is born.” The duties of the present life have to be fulfilled, before we can renounce. There are two aspects of this prescription. As to the external, *i.e.*, domestic and social, one cannot perhaps ever completely fulfil them. One idea (which is much prevalent in the South) is that one should not renounce till one has married and brought forth a son. The idea is no doubt to perpetuate the family and the family-culture as a factor of social well-being. But to seek to fulfil this condition is always dangerous. One who has once tasted sexual joy, will find it very hard to relinquish it afterwards. The little *vairāgya* that he might have before will vanish with the enjoyment of conjugal felicity. There is also no knowing when the duties will ever come to an end. Duties are an interminable chain. One link produces another. One must break loose. Generally speaking, there is no automatic freedom. The Swami’s prescription, therefore, should be taken more in its internal, psychological aspect than in the external. So long as we *feel* that we have not done our duties by our relations, and so long as

the consciousness of this defection pricks our conscience, it is best we do not renounce. For even if we renounce, our mind will always hark back, and secretly dwell on the sufferings of those left behind, and this will weaken the mind, and will prove an impediment in the pursuit of the new life. We must, therefore, be sure of our own mind above all. Unless there is a burning desire for God-realisation, so much so that we feel that we will die unless we renounce the world, the thought of our dear ones suffering will always prove a hindrance to our spiritual progress. We must be sure that those who are dependent on us do not suffer from want of food and other such necessities when we renounce. That is enough. Mental suffering they will surely have. That one cannot always provide against.

There are some stock arguments against renunciation, which may be briefly considered here. One is that God’s creation cannot continue unless people marry. There cannot be a more stupid argument than this. First of all, very few renounce. The celibacy of a handful of persons cannot affect God’s creation. Secondly, how do we know that it is our duty to maintain God’s creation? Did God ever say that? If God creates, He also destroys. Both are equally important to Him. Thirdly, man’s supreme duty is to know and love God. A man who is attached to the world can *never* know and love God. The one aim of life is to realise God in everything. How can one who aspires after that realisation make a brute of himself in respect of a woman?

A second argument is that one must marry in order to please one’s parents and provide them with a daughter-in-law to cherish and serve them. This is also a foolish argument. Parents cannot always be satisfied. No one is bound to so satisfy. As regards their service, why, one can oneself attend on them so long as they live. Parents do not live for ever. Some day they will pass

away. One will then be entirely free. For the service of parents, marriage is not necessary.

A third argument is somewhat real. It is that it is best to marry so long as there are sexual instincts in the mind. We have already said that if the instincts are too strong, marriage is desirable. But if they are feeble, one should not be unnerved and place the noose of wedlock round one's neck. By indulging in sexual passions, one cannot get rid of them. There may be external pacification through marriage, only degradation, and not victory over them which is what we seek.

Often the question is asked: "Shall I renounce?" Yes, renunciation is the most natural course. We are born

alone, we die alone. We must live also alone. That is natural. To marry and beget children is really unnatural. But one must be fit to renounce. We have indicated how to judge it. Let us watch our mind and see what it wants and how it behaves. If it does not want enjoyment unless the objects of desire are near it, we may safely renounce. But let us also consider the external conditions, if our *Vairāgya* is not too strong. Let none suffer for want of physical necessities because of our renunciation. Let us also see if renunciation will make us feel guilty of defection of duty. We must carefully consider these points. Otherwise the mind will be enfeebled and the pursuit of the new life will be lame and half-hearted.

IS HINDUISM DOOMED?

BY HARI CHARAN MUKERJI, M.A.

When we see the active propaganda carried on by the followers of other religions and the conversions that are daily being made from Hinduism, the question naturally suggests itself to us, "Is Hinduism doomed?" Will it disappear from the face of the globe in the course of a few decades or centuries? We who profess this religion and have been nurtured in it cannot but think of such a consequence as nothing short of a calamity, because in that case the priceless truths that have been discovered by the Hindu sages through millenniums and which undoubtedly constitute the glory of Hinduism, will be entirely lost to the world. The world of course will go on as before, there will be religious men then as now, and many of them will attain salvation through right living and thinking, for Hinduism, unlike other religions, does not dogmatically assert that salvation is possible only through its means and not through any other. It is only a means to an end, and all means which

will ultimately lead to the end are equally approved. But in the case of the disappearance of Hinduism as a living force from the world, the invaluable truths that have been discovered through Self-realisation, will be lost and will perhaps never be rediscovered, as the materialistic lives that we now live will not allow us to live in the spiritualistic plane, which is indispensably necessary for these discoveries. We in these days live, move and have our being in a material world; and so it is impossible for us to project ourselves on the spiritual plane in order to discover its secrets. This seems to me to be the greatest loss that the world will suffer at the disappearance of Hinduism. The question may arise, "Is the menace of its extinction at all serious?" I for myself am apt to think that it is serious, and unless something is done immediately, we shall suffer such a set-back that it will take a long time for us to recover the lost ground. Conversions to Islam and Christianity

are going on apace. In Bengal which was predominantly a Hindu province, the Mahomedan population now preponderates. The Indian Christian community now numbers more than fifty lacs and is increasing at the rate of one lac per annum mostly through conversion. Now this rate may be further accelerated if it comes to the case of mass conversions, for in that case their numbers will increase not according to the rule of arithmetical but geometrical progression. Many Hindus are apt to think that as the community is very large, they can afford to neglect these efforts of the missionaries of other religions, and they complacently think that it will take hundreds of years to make any appreciable diminution in their numbers if the present rate of progress is maintained. But to think in this manner is nothing less than following an ostrich-like policy and to court sure disaster. This is lulling us into a false sense of security when real danger stares us in the face. It is highly desirable that the Hindus realising the gravity of the situation should rise equal to it and neglect no means which is likely to consolidate their position.

But no religion can stand in competition, however great may be the efforts to prop it up, unless there is intrinsic truth in it. Religion has been invented to satisfy the inward craving of man who is not always content with leading merely an animal existence and wants spiritual consolation and solace. Man cannot live by bread alone. A time comes in the life of many of us when mere worldly prosperity does not satisfy us and we hanker after something more. In the case of many more, trials and tribulations of life turn their attention to spiritual solace. Now a religion which claims to be a real religion must be judged by this standard, *viz.*, whether it can satisfy the spiritual needs of man, whether it can give him ineffable joy and peace. Secondly, religion must not only satisfy the mind,

it must also prompt us to right living and thinking. It must bring about our regeneration by driving away from our minds all baseness and corruption and filling them with noble sentiments and ideas. Now, judged by these standards, Hinduism has not been found wanting. Millions of souls thirsting for the knowledge of the Infinite have found entire satisfaction in the tenets of this religion. All their doubts have been removed and they have enjoyed perfect religious bliss. Even in these degenerate days when we find women making pilgrimages to the holy shrines with the greatest devotion, and gladly submitting to all sorts of privations and troubles, and even smilingly facing death, we cannot deny that the religious spirit is alive in us. Once again when we see the Vaishnavas enjoying ineffable joy in singing the praise of God, we are compelled to admit that religion is still a living force in our midst. Judged also by the standard of moulding human life and profoundly modifying our course of action, Hinduism cannot be said to be inferior to any other religion. It has not only preached pacifism and *ahimsa*, but it has also been successful in converting the Hindus into the most pacific and tolerant people in the world. This is something to its credit, which no other religion can claim. Whatever may be the precepts of their prophets and founders, Islam and Christianity have not been particularly noted for the translation of this doctrine of *ahimsa* into actual life. Men of exemplary life and character too have not been wanting in our midst, and their influence on succeeding generations has been of a lasting nature.

But the greatest claim of Hinduism to continued existence lies in the noble philosophy it has evolved. All religions attempt to solve the mysteries of the universe, its creation and its preservation, the nature of God and man, and the relationship existing between the two. In this sphere the success of

Hinduism has been unique. Whereas other religions were satisfied with offering superficial explanations of these mysteries, which have not been able to stand the test of science and which have to be recast in the light of modern discoveries, Hinduism has offered the most rational explanation. The advance of science has rudely shaken the religious beliefs of the Christians. But it has only confirmed our belief in our own religion, because the truths which are now being discovered after such a laborious process and which only touch the fringe of the question, were known to the Hindus thousands of years ago and have been assimilated by even the ordinary people. Our religion has nothing to fear but everything to gain from the advancement of human knowledge.

But these priceless truths of Hinduism are known only to a few outside Hinduism and we have taken no steps to spread these doctrines far and wide. The present world-wide success of Christianity seems to be due mainly to ceaseless propaganda. The Muhammadans too now seem to be wide awake and frantic efforts are being made by them to establish agencies for the spread of their doctrines in Europe. But Hinduism has been woefully lagging behind. Yet there is no doubt that there is a glorious future before Hinduism if we can take advantage of the present opportunity. Christianity seems to have failed to answer the religious questions of many ardent inquirers, and they are turning to Islam or Occultism for solace. Many more in their despair have become entirely apathetic to religion. Now, at this psychological moment, if the sublime truths of Hinduism are preached, they will surely succeed in impressing them deeply. If these truths have hitherto impressed only great philosophers and thinkers, they will surely impress the masses if we know how to approach them.

But once again it will not simply do to preach these doctrines. We must

also live up to them. The preachers of our religion will be so to say our ambassadors to foreign peoples, and it is upon them that the success of our attempt will depend. They must be men of ideal character and profound learning. They also must be able, energetic and enterprising, filled with a buoyant optimism and with faith in the future of their religion. Ordinary people form their ideas of religion from the life and conduct of those who preach it. If they find these latter learned and energetic, noble and self-sacrificing, they conclude that the religion which they profess must also be good. These men too will have to carry on a ceaseless propaganda defending their own people against the calumnies and misrepresentations to which they have been subjected through the centuries on account of the deliberate efforts of interested parties. To European minds, Hinduism is inextricably connected with the suttee, child-sacrifices, practice of cruel austerities, untouchability and other real and fancied social and religious customs. We shall have to convince them that wherever these defects exist, they go counter to the spirit of our religion and have been condemned by our reformers in no uncertain terms. They are the abuses that have crept into the society and they are being weeded out slowly but surely.

But religion is something more than a mere system of doctrines and theories explaining the mysteries of the universe. It lays down a code of social rules and regulations for the good government of the society. The latter necessarily has no intimate connection with the former, but in the minds of the vast majority of the people it comes to be invested with a certain amount of religious sanctity and is thought to form an integral part of religion. It is in this sphere that Hinduism seems to me to have been grievously at fault. It has come to be associated with a code of social laws which under the present circumstances is often unworkable and

detrimental to the best interests of religion and has been a great handicap to our progress. Social laws are drawn up for the good government of society according to the ideals supplied by religion. But human society is something dynamic and not static. It is constantly moving forward and never at rest. Therefore, the social ideals of one age may not be suitable for another, for the conditions of life must have considerably changed in the interval. Society must be wide awake to these changes and should be ready to revise and recast its ideas and ideals with the changed circumstances. It must possess the capacity to adapt itself to environment. If it can do so

it will live and progress, otherwise its death-knell will be sounded, and the social laws instead of being a help will be a positive hindrance. All great living religions must possess this adaptability. It is regrettable that Hindu society has lost the needed mobility. It is sticking to many harmful customs. It must revise its traditions and customs regarding women and the lower classes. It must change in many other directions in order to come up to the level of modern requirements. If, however, with dogged pertinacity it refuses to submit to necessary changes, then I am afraid its fate is sealed and no amount of boosting will save it from its inevitable doom.

SYNTHESIS OF IDEALS

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

There are few illustrations of that 'interchange of the highest ideals'—which the Swami Vivekananda held to be our ideal under present conditions,—finer than the existence of Christianity, in the West, furnishes. There are, as a Christian preacher has pointed out, two types of virtue, the heroic and the passive, and the Christian gospels glorify the passive virtues from end to end. Christianity, as a faith, never holds up the heroic virtues to the emulation of the Church.

Heroic virtues, we may take it, are such as friendship, courage, patriotism, valour, and their kindred active qualities. Amongst the passive virtues we may enumerate endurance of suffering, patience under injuries and affronts, humility, submissiveness, and an unresisting and unresenting spirit. The hero is characterised by vigour, firmness, and resolution. He is daring and active, eager in his attachment, inflexible in his purposes, violent in his resentment. The man of passive virtue is meek, yielding, forgiving, willing to suffer, silent and gentle under rudeness

and insult. He sues for reconciliation, where a man of the opposite type would demand satisfaction.

It would be a mistake to think that all virtue resided in either of these, and that its contrast represented lack of goodness. Instead of this, we have to think of the two as complementary types. Both are great, both are ideal. But they are different. Want of heroic virtue is rudeness, violence, meddlesomeness, dishonesty: want of passive virtue is cowardice, sluggishness, obstinacy, sulkiness. It is clear therefore that each is a type in itself. Neither is to be regarded as the defect of the other. Greatness and goodness are attainable by both paths, in both forms.

From the Hindu point of view, indeed, with our national tendency to synthetise ideals, we cannot help seeing that the passive virtues are those of woman, the heroic those of man; the passive those of the domestic, the heroic those of the civil, or supra-domestic, life. And in the history of the world, it is easy enough to see

that heroes belong to the nation, and saints to the church; that is to say, that the one calls for masculine, and the other for feminine qualities, in their highest and noblest forms.

Christ represented the highest power of the passive type. "When He was reviled, He reviled not again. When He suffered, He threatened not." This was precisely the source of the thrill He gave to that world of Roman brutality and aggression, on which His name and personality first dawned. A realm of force and violence received a hint for the first time of a power that works in silence, a voice that speaks with intensity instead of fury, a strength that is moral rather than physical. Rome was not without thinkers and scholars, but she had never dreamt of organising thought and scholarship! Her primal instinct was for the organisation of force. In this form she threw a stone into the lake of time whose outmost ripples are seen to-day in America, in spontaneous eagerness to subdivide labour and thus organise every action, turning the single man into an unintelligent screw or cog-wheel in a vast human machine.

Christ, on the contrary, was the Asiatic man. His was the ideal of conquest by spirituality, of the shining-forth of strength, instead of its clash and struggle, of acceptance as a greater power than rejection, of knowledge as greater than deed.

Haughty captains of the Roman Empire, and rude barons of Europe's Middle Ages, caught the gleam of the great ideal; and, out of the struggle between native instinct and genuine appreciation of the foreign ideal, Europe, in course of time, has wrought the history of the Church, with all its long roll of martyrs, saints, and spiritual shepherds; with all its tale of religious orders and the tasks they carried out, in the advancement of civilisation; with its Love of the People, and its tendance of the lamp of spirituality.

No mean achievement, in the record of man on the planet Earth.

Where would Europe have been, however, if she had abandoned her own nature, in order to appropriate the virtues of Christianity? If,—instead of violence and force slightly modified by the vision of divine patience and suffering,—she had practised asceticism and piety, slightly modified by an inborn turbulence and quarrelsomeness? We can see that the whole dignity of the story depends on the co-existence of two opposite forces, one of which is decidedly preponderant, while the other is strong enough to exert a very powerful curbing force upon it. The people who can easily abandon their own character in the name of a new ideal, are not worth capturing for that ideal. It is the man who is conscious of a hard struggle within, who does most in the world. The skill of the charioteer is nought, if the horses be without spirit and impulse.

Each age in the life of a nation reveals its own characteristic goal. The world-epochs are rooted in the interchange of world-ideals. But without the great basis of previously accumulated character to work upon, the welding and modifying influence of new thought would be of little account. When this exists, the new idea becomes in truth, even as the Founder of Christianity said of it, "as an handful of leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, *till the whole was leavened.*"

How high are the towers and spires of historical evolution, as they loom upon us through the morning mists of the future of man! In truth, great lives have been amongst us, great new thoughts have been cast into our midst. The life of the future may for the moment be hidden in our three measures of meal, but let us take courage! *The whole shall be leavened!*

ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

By SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

CHAPTER III

TEST OF DISCIPLE'S SELF-REALISATION

अष्टावक्र उवाच ।

अविनाशिनमात्मानमेकं विज्ञाय तत्त्वतः ।

तत्रात्मज्ञस्य धीरस्य कथमर्थार्जने रतिः ॥ १ ॥

अष्टावक्रः Ashtavakra उवाच said :

आत्मानं Self तत्त्वतः in its true nature अविनाशिनं indestructible एकं one विज्ञाय knowing आत्मज्ञस्य of the knower of Self धीरस्य of one who is serene तत्र your कथं how अर्थार्जने in the acquisition of wealth रतिः attachment (अस्ति is).

Ashtavakra said :

1. Having known yourself as really indestructible and one, how¹ is it that you, serene and knower of Self, feel attached to the acquisition of wealth?

[Janaka is not yet fully established in the state of Self-realisation. Ashtavakra is therefore testing him and pointing out the anomalies of his behaviour in order to improve him.]

¹ How etc.—A man of Self-realisation knows himself to be perfect, immortal and all-in-all and does not want anything. How can he earn money?]

आत्माज्ञानाद्दहो प्रीतिर्विषयभ्रमगोचरे ।

शुक्लेरज्ञानतो लोभो यथा रजतविभ्रमे ॥ २ ॥

दहो Alas यथा as शुक्लेः of pearl-oyster अज्ञानतः from ignorance रजतविभ्रमे illusion of silver (सति being caused) लोभः greed (भवति is तथा so) आत्माज्ञानात् from ignorance of the Self विषयभ्रमगोचरे in the objects of illusory perception प्रीतिः attachment (भवति is).

2. Alas, as greed arises from the illusion of silver caused by the ignorance of the pearl-oyster, even so does the attachment to the objects of illusory perception arise from the ignorance of the Self.

[Ashtavakra is pointing out to Janaka that his attachment to the things of the world is due to the ignorance of the true nature of the Self, for nothing but the Self really exists, the objects of the senses being only an illusion. When the Self is truly known, our attachment to the so-called sense-objects ceases, even as our greed of silver ceases when the illusion of seeing it in the pearl-oyster vanishes.]

विश्वं स्फुरति यत्रेदं तरङ्गा इव सागरे ।

सोऽहमस्मीति विज्ञाय किं दीन इव धावसि ॥ ३ ॥

सागरे In the sea तरङ्गाः waves इव like यत्र where इदं this विश्वं universe स्फुरति appears सः that अहं I अस्मि am इति this विज्ञाय knowing किं why दीनः poor इव like (त्वं you) धावसि run.

3. Having known yourself to be That in which the universe appears like waves on the sea, why¹ do you run about like a miserable being?

[1 Why etc.—All our fear, misery, helplessness or want proceed from the conception of the universe as other than our own self. As the waves are no other than the sea itself,

even so the universe is nothing but our own self. One attaining such knowledge should become serene, fearless and self-contained.]

श्रुत्वापि शुद्धचैतन्यमात्मानमतिसुन्दरम् ।

उपस्थेऽत्यन्तसंसक्तो मालिन्यमधिगच्छति ॥ ४ ॥

आत्मानं Self शुद्धचैतन्यं pure intelligence अतिसुन्दरं surpassingly beautiful श्रुत्वा hearing अपि even (जनः person कथं how) उपस्थे to generative organs अत्यन्तसंसक्तः deeply attached (सन् being) मालिन्यं impurity अधिगच्छति attains.

4. Even after hearing oneself to be pure intelligence and surpassingly beautiful, how¹ can one become unclean² through deep devotion to lust?

[1 *How etc.*—Self-knowledge and lust cannot exist together. He who has known the Self cannot find any other thing beautiful and attractive. Lust is coveting the body.

2 *Unclean*—Lust creates and increases the body-consciousness and is an unclean condition of mind. It clouds spiritual consciousness.]

सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

मुनेर्जानत आश्चर्यं ममत्वमनुवर्त्तते ॥ ५ ॥

सर्वभूतेषु In all things आत्मानं Self सर्वभूतानि all things च also चात्मनि in Self च and जानतः knowing मुनेः of the sage ममत्वं egoism अनुवर्त्तते continues (इति this) आश्चर्यम् wonderful.

5. It is strange that the sense¹ of ownership should continue even in the sage who has realised the Self in all and all in the Self.

[1 *Sense etc.*—It arises out of the sense of duality in which the true nature of the Self is unknown and other things are considered to be existing outside oneself and there is a desire to possess them.]

आस्थितः परमाद्वैतं मोक्षार्थेऽपि व्यवस्थितः ।

आश्चर्यं कामवशगो विकलः कैलिशिक्षया ॥ ६ ॥

परमाद्वैतं In supreme unity आस्थितः abiding मोक्षार्थे in the end of liberation व्यवस्थितः fixed अपि even (जनः man) कामवशगः subject to lust (सन् being) कैलिशिक्षया by the practice of amorous pastimes विकलः weakened (दृश्यते is seen इति this) आश्चर्यम् wonderful.

6. Strange that abiding in the supreme unity and intent on liberation, one should yet be subject to lust and be unsettled by the practice of amorous pastimes !

उद्भूतं ज्ञानदुर्मित्रमवधार्यातिदुर्वलः ।

आश्चर्यं काममाकाङ्क्षेत् कालमन्तमनुश्रितः ॥ ७ ॥

उद्भूतं Produced कामं lust ज्ञानदुर्मित्रं enemy of Knowledge अवधार्यात् knowing for certain अतिदुर्वलः extremely weak अन्तं last कालं time अनुश्रितः approaching (जनः man) कामं sensual enjoyment आकाङ्क्षेत् should desire (इति this) आश्चर्यम् strange.

7. It is strange that knowing lust to be an enemy of Knowledge, one who has grown extremely weak and reached one's last days, should yet be eager for sensual enjoyments.

इहामुत्र विरक्तस्य नित्यानित्यविवेकिनः ।

आश्चर्यं मोक्षकामस्य मोक्षादेव विभीषिका ॥ ८ ॥

इहामुत्र In this world and the next विरक्तस्य of one who is unattached नित्यानित्यविवेकिनः of one who discriminates the eternal from the transient मोक्षकामस्य of one who longs for emancipation मोक्षात् from emancipation एव even विभीषिका fear (भवति is इति this) आश्चर्यम् strange

8. It is strange that one who is unattached to the objects of this world and the next, who discriminates the eternal from the temporal and who longs for emancipation, should fear emancipation¹ itself.

[1 *Emancipation*—It may be understood as also death. One seeking spiritual emancipation should not fear death, for that also means release from the body, though maybe temporary.]

धीरस्तु भोज्यमानोऽपि पीड्यमानोऽपि सर्वदा ।

आत्मानं केवलं पश्यन् न तुष्यति न कुप्यति ॥ ६ ॥

धीरः The serene person तु but भोज्यमानः feted and feasted अपि even पीड्यमानः tormented अपि even सर्वदा ever केवलं absolute आत्मानं Self पश्यन् seeing न not तुष्यति is pleased न not कुप्यति is angry (च and).

9. But¹ feted and feasted or tormented, the serene² person ever sees the absolute Self and is thus neither gratified nor angry.

[1 *But*—From verse 1 to verse 8 of this chapter the anomalous conditions of the half-hearted Sâdhaka have been described. Ashtavakra has pointed out therein the self-contradictions of his life and practice, indicating that true Self-knowledge there was not yet.

From the 9th verse on, the mind and practice of a true Jnani are being pointed out.

² *Serene*—One whose mind is not agitated even when there are causes to make it so.]

चेष्टमानं शरीरं स्वं पश्यत्यन्यशरीरवत् ।

संस्तवे चापि निन्दायां कथं क्षुभ्येत् महाशयः ॥ १० ॥

महाशयः The high-souled one स्व' own शरीरं body अन्यशरीरवत् like another's body चेष्टमानं acting पश्यति sees (तस्मात् so सः he) संस्तवे in praise निन्दायां in blame च and अपि even कथं how क्षुभ्येत् should be disturbed.

10. The high-souled person witnesses his own body acting as if it were another's. As such, how¹ can he be disturbed by praise or blame?

[1 *How etc.*—Praise and blame have always reference to one's behaviour which is expressed through bodily actions. But if one finds one's bodily and mental actions to have no connection with oneself, one is not affected by praise or blame.

The Jnani finds that the mind and the body are parts of Prakriti, not of Purusha which he is.]

मायामात्रमिदं विश्वं पश्यन् विगतकौतुकः ।

अपि सन्निहिते मृत्यौ कथं त्रस्यति धीरधीः ॥ ११ ॥

इदं This विश्वं universe मायामात्रं mere illusion पश्यन् seeing विगतकौतुकः with curiosity gone धीरधीः one of steady mind मृत्यौ death सन्निहिते approaching (सति being) अपि even कथं how त्रस्यति fears.

11. Viewing this universe as mere illusion and losing¹ all interest therein, how can one of steady mind fear² even the approach of death?

[1 *Losing etc.*—One cannot have any interest in a non-existent thing.

² *Fear etc.*—The Self is eternal,—birthless, deathless. Births and deaths are really illusory phenomena. A knower of Self, therefore, has no reason to be afraid of the dissolution of the body, by which the Self is not affected in the least.]

(Continued.)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

In this Number

This month's instalment of the *Unpublished Letters of Swami Vivekananda* gives us a glimpse of the method the Swami followed in the building up of the Ramakrishna Order.—First service, then philosophy. . . . *A Dusky Philosopher from India* by BLANCHE PARTINGTON is taken from a very old copy of an American daily. An American disciple of Swami Vivekananda has affectionately preserved the clipping so long—the interview took place during the Swami's second visit to America—and has recently sent it to us through one of our Swamis in America, for publication in *Prabuddha Bharata*, for which we are grateful to her. Our readers will surely enjoy this new material. . . . Our article, *Ring Out the Old, Ring In the New*, is indeed venturesome when modern industrialism is being cursed all over the world as a demon. But we do not welcome it as it is at present. We want to supplement it by the worship of the *Virât*. . . . *The Diary of a Disciple* which we announced last month has for its first instalment some interesting anecdotes. We assure our readers that there will be enough solid materials in the subsequent instalments. . . . PRAMATHA NATH BOSE, B.Sc. (LONDON) contributes *India Hitherto a Nation* to the present issue. Mr. Bose is a new contributor to *Prabuddha Bharata*, but he may not be unknown to our readers. He is well-known for his thoughtful works, such as *Epochs of Civilization*, *A History of Hindu Civilization*, *The Illusions of New India*, *Survival of Hindu Civilization*, etc. Though well advanced in age, he is at present engaged in preparing a new work, *Swaraj, Cultural and Political*. The present article as well as those that will follow will form chapters of his new

book. . . . Swami Gnaneshwarananda who contributes *What is Ahimsa* is a monk of the Ramakrishna Order, now at the New York Vedanta Society. *Ahimsa* is engaging a good deal of thought in India as well as in the West. The Swami's clear enunciation of the principle may help us in truly understanding it, though the Mahatma's calf-killing may still remain unjustified. . . . Since the publication of an article on Sri Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home at Madras in our last January issue, many inquiries have been made at the Home regarding its educational ideals. The present article, *Ideals in Education* by an OLD BOY, is in response to those inquiries. Readers will note the specialities of the Home. . . . *The Bauls and their Cult of Man* by KSHITIMOHAN SEN is completed in this issue. . . . Ananda discusses an important subject, conditions of renunciation, in the present instalment of his *Practice of Religion*. We often receive intimations of eager desire to renounce. Those who are serious, may profitably peruse the present article. . . . In *Is Hinduism Doomed?* HARI CHARAN MUKERJI, M.A. has dwelt on some lives issue of Hinduism. Mr. Mukerji is a professor of the Midnapore College, Midnapore, Bengal. . . . *Synthesis of Ideals* by SISTER NIVEDITA is a sparkling little article pointing out the direction in which India's attempts at building up the new life should lie. Not merely the passive virtues, but also the heroic qualities have to be developed. . . . The present instalment of *Ashtavakra Samhita* by SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA is a home-thrust to the pseudo-spiritual. The great sage caustically points out the divergences between their practice and profession, and asserts that true spirituality is simple and quite in accordance with recognised principles.

The modern *Avatâras* and Messiahs beware!

The Claims of the Eternal

How far should we allow the Time-spirit to guide and mould our life and ideals? Is the Time-spirit always a sure and safe guide? This question arises in connection with the modern tendency of looking upon all ideals and institutions as mere creatures of time and ephemeral, to be rejected with the dawning of a new age as worthless and of no use. There is so much truth in this assumption that the error that lurks in it is easily overlooked. This oversight means often a great mischief.

We are daily becoming more and more slaves of time and forgetting our allegiance to the Eternal. We believe more in the verdict of history than in the promptings of our inner nature. We are learning to smother the voice of the Eternal in our heart. We are losing faith in the eternal verities. Everything is moving, there is no fixity. Experience is all, there is nothing transcendental. We admit that a correct determination of our duties and ideals is possible only from a full and complete knowledge of reality. Yet we do not insist on that perfect knowledge. We are satisfied with history.

We say: By studying the history of reality, we can know the nature of reality. If a person refuses to disclose his character to us, we can fairly ascertain it by inquiring into his past. Does the history of man show what is the reality regarding him? Let us study his beginning as a savage, nay, even as an animal. Let us see how he progressed and reached his present stage. This will instruct us as to his present and future and tell us of the ideals which he is to follow.

As we have remarked, there is much truth in this. But it is a half-truth and as such, dangerous. It is true that man is a creature of time. With the advance of time, things are changing. Condi-

tions are changing in spite of men. Just as men have no hold on the change of seasons,—they can only adapt themselves to it,—even so change of conditions in human history and the world is beyond human control. Men can only keep pace with them, remodel their habits and institutions and give new expressions to their aspirations.

But if we have to render homage to time, we have also to bow before the Eternal. The Eternal also has its claims upon us. In yielding to the Time-spirit, we are very apt to forget our allegiance to Eternity. A complete surrender to time is impossible and disastrous to civilised, especially spiritual, nations. The fact is, every race, in course of its progress, reaches a stage in which it comes face to face with the eternal verities. Spiritual laws and truths reveal themselves to them. These truths do not belong to any particular time or clime, they are for all times and climes, unchanging, eternal. Till these become apparent, our progress is easily along the streams of time,—our ideals and institutions change with the change of outer conditions. But when the spiritual truths become known, human history enters quite a new state of development. Its ways have to change; and new methods have to be adopted in meeting the claims of time. For, now a further duty has devolved on the community. Not only should it accommodate itself to the external conditions, but it must also try to make the spiritual truths more and more real in the communal life and spiritualise all its functions and institutions. The spiritual truths can on no account be sacrificed to the demands of time. Henceforth our history is more a realisation of the spiritual truths in larger and larger measures in the life of the community than obedience to the claims of changing circumstances. Our institutions and ideals must be faithful above all to the Spirit and only secondly to time.

This little fact has to be clearly

borne in mind by all impatient reformers. The forms may be changed. But the new forms must maintain the continuity of the spiritual life and be always faithful to the Eternal Spirit. The forms may be changed only to the extent that they do not alter or deny the Spirit. No institutions, political, economical, social, cultural or religious, can avail a spiritually advanced nation like India if they prove hostile in ever so slight a measure to its spiritual ideals. Either those institutions must be abolished or the nation will die.

A Reply

We have received a few letters from our readers in connection with our notes on the *khaddar* programme of Mahatma Gandhi, some supporting us, others mildly protesting, others again going to the extent of abuse. No serious arguments appear to have been put forward by our critics. Almost none of them support the *khaddar* policy as the permanent or main economic policy of India. They tacitly admit that the real industrial policy of India should be more or less of the modern Western type. Still they have reasons for supporting the *khaddar* policy. (1) One is that spinning and weaving are meant only as a supplementary occupation for cultivators who are compelled to remain idle through half the year. There cannot be any doubt, they argue, that these add, however little, to their meagre income. Why should we then object to this programme? We have our reasons. These are twofold.

(a) Our country is passing through revolutionary socio-economic and political changes. Old systems are crumbling down or have crumbled down. We have to build up systems, social, industrial and political, which will have to serve the purpose, not of one year, one decade or one century, but of several centuries at the least. We must keep this important fact ever in view. *Whatever we do now must be as a step towards the building up of those per-*

manent systems. We must not conceive a programme in relation to such fundamentals as society or economy, which will be good only for a time and meet only special circumstances. Our present programme of work must be a fraction of that larger programme which is designed to build up our socio-economic life in a permanent form. Is the *khaddar* programme that? We think not. The new economic system is not merely outer forms. It is also a new mentality, new habits and a new outlook. The *khaddar* policy is creating, as a matter of fact, quite opposite mentality, habits and outlook. If our ultimate aim is to construct a permanent system of modern industrialism in India, we are bound to admit that the policy of decentralisation underlying the *khaddar* movement, with its implied habits of action and mind, will not prove a help, but rather a hindrance.

One has suggested that the policy of decentralisation is meant only in regard to cloth-production. In other respects, big-scale machine-driven industry may be organised. Why this exception in regard to the manufacture of cloth? If people once learn the use of modern machineries, they will inevitably use them in the manufacture of cloth also. The introduction of modern industrialism will bring about revolutionary changes in our modes of life and domestic and social structures. These changes will make hand-spinning and hand-weaving largely unnecessary and impracticable. The socio-economic system of a people is a united whole, based on kindred principles. Two opposite principles cannot exist at the same time among the same people.

(b) But let us suppose that the *khaddar* policy is not antagonistic to modern industrial habits and outlook. Still, we do not understand why the subsidiary occupation should be necessarily a handicraft and spinning and weaving for all persons. Why this uniformity? Why not urge people to choose various occupations according to

individual tastes and opportunities and use modern machines? In South India electricity will be available even in villages within a few years. Why not introduce electric machineries in those villages, and not for the production of cloth only, but also of many other things according to the nature of raw materials available and the demands of markets? Do we realise what a stunting and slavery of mind uniformity of occupation means? If the same energy and resources as are being spent in popularising *charka* and *khaddar*, were devoted to developing the industrial life according to the above plan, real, permanent progress would have been achieved, not requiring to be scrapped or superseded in future, but leading to and constructing the permanent industrial system.

The *khaddar* policy presupposes that our masses will always have a meagre income from agriculture and that it would always require to be supplemented. Spinning and weaving can admittedly yield only a limited income. Is that our vision of the future of our people?—The meagre income from agriculture supplemented by the meagre-income from *charka* and *khaddar*? The masses must not be more prosperous? Unless they take to more lucrative means, they cannot earn sufficient wealth. They must be shown and taught those means. New avenues of earning must be opened before them. But if that is done, what will be the fate of the *khaddar* programme? We cannot try both ways. If the *khaddar* programme is meant only as a temporary measure, why this huge expenditure of energy for a temporary measure? Do we realise what a tremendous amount of man and money-power will have to be spent before the *khaddar* programme can be fully carried out? And all these, knowing that we shall have to build up a new system very soon! It is true that spinning can be organised sooner than machine-driven industry. But this advantage is more

apparent than real. Better we suffer a few years more, if in the mean time we can build up a permanent system.

(2) Another reason why *khaddar* should be supported, as put forward by our critics, is that foreign cloth must be boycotted if we are to gain political freedom, and that it is impossible to do so except through the production of *khaddar*. We must state very clearly that we do not believe in devising fanciful economic schemes to meet temporary political demands. The economics of a country has its own laws of being and function. These cannot be interfered with without ultimate ruin to the country. Politics and economics can help each other only to the extent that their essentials are not affected. In India the industrial and economic life has to be carefully reconstructed in conformity with the national genius and the prevailing conditions of India and the world and with an eye to the future. Political warfare will require new weapons every few years, to-day *khaddar*, tomorrow mill-cloth, next day Japanese cloth and so on. But such fluctuations should never be allowed to affect our economic programme in any essential way, even if political freedom is delayed a little thereby. It must grow essentially in its own way.

We are told that until we have political freedom, we cannot build up our industries. Though it is true to a certain extent, it is not wholly so. Let us look back at the history of the last twenty-five years in India. Have we not progressed? How has that progress been possible? How has the existence of 270 cloth-mills been possible in India at present? They are working in spite of the British Government. The industrial progress of a subject nation is always difficult, especially in this age. That means that we must have more patience and our struggle must be keener. If *khaddar* can be organised, even under foreign rule, as a successful competitor of foreign

products, large-scale industry also can be.

It may be that a little spinning and weaving will be quite compatible with large-scale industrialism. But a nation-wide spinning business, never. Our main arguments are, therefore, these: The *khaddar* policy cannot be the permanent industrial policy of India. Even its temporary propagation is not desirable, because the mentality and habits that it will produce are opposed to those necessary for large-scale industrialism, and because it does not constitute a step towards the realisation of the permanent system. Though spinning and weaving may help the masses temporarily, modern industrialism which we have to organise in India will soon nullify these measures and the masses will have to be taught new ideas and methods of work; the present expenditure of energy and money on that account will, therefore, be largely wasted (not wholly though, for it is teaching people self-

help and necessity of self-exertion). If, however, we want to give the cultivators a subsidiary occupation even now, it need not be spinning and weaving in all cases; it may be different with different people and it may be plied with modern machineries bought individually or co-operatively. The true programme, according to us, is therefore the gradual introduction of large-scale industrialism into the country. Where there is a will, there is a way. If we are convinced of its necessity, we shall find ample scope and opportunities of going ahead with the movement even now.

Our present arguments do not concern those who believe in the policy of decentralisation and handicraft, typified by the *khaddar* programme, as the permanent industrial and economic policy of India. We have already indicated why we do not consider it correct and adequate.

REVIEW

CHARVAKA-SHASHTI (INDIAN MATERIALISM). By Dakshinaranjan Shastri, M.A. The Book Company, Ltd., College Square, Calcutta. VIII+94+53+22 pp.

The author has taken great trouble and shown a spirit of research by collecting sixty *slokas* from *Naishadha Charitam*, *Sarva Darshana Samgraha*, *Vidyamodatarangini*, and *Saddarshana Samuchchaya* to represent the doctrine of Charvaka or Indian Materialism. He has given an explanation of these *slokas* in the light of their commentaries, discussed the origin and influence of the system in the Introduction, and collected a number of Brahmanical and Buddhistic quotations bearing on this doctrine in the Appendix.

In a country like India which has been subject to many foreign invasions and which has undergone many social and cultural revolutions, it is very difficult, if not impossible to recover a lost 'article of faith' by a mere Library Reserch.

Indian materialism corresponds mostly to the hedonistic teachings of Epicurus and Aristippus of Greece and partly to the writings of Comte, Hobbes, Bentham, Mill, Spencer and Sidgwick. Traditionally Brihaspati is the teacher and his disciple Charvaka, the preacher of this doctrine. Historical research also supports this statement, though it cannot be said which Brihaspati is the founder of the system. Brihaspati like Vyasa appears to be many, or it might have been a title meaning an expert. This Brihaspati may be the preceptor of gods, or a Rishi of Rig Veda, or a writer on Polity. Materialist Brihaspati was a *Sutrakara* and his work is lost. The author has tried to give us an idea of these *sutras* from the exposition of *Lokayatamata* that is found in the *Purva Paksha* of many Sanskrit works. In the absence of the original work, this is no doubt the only possible alternative; but it can be safely said that the doctrine in its true light cannot be recovered; for in the hands of the opponents or satirists it has been more a caricature than a true repre-

sentation specially when the trend of Indian thought is hostile to it.

Charvaka-shashti propounds the following doctrine. The original principles of creation are four—earth, water, fire and air. These four in a certain proportion bring life and life evolves intellect. Soul is not something apart from body. Perception is the only source of knowledge, even inference cannot stand. To see is to believe. Religion is supposed to be a means by which fools are deceived by rogues. Caste distinction is rejected and equality is preached. Pleasure is the *summum bonum* of life and all have equal claim to it. The only supreme being is the earthly monarch. Liberation is either absolute independence or dissolution of body. There is nothing beyond this earth, so eat, drink and be merry.

The *Charvaka* system is very old and its great influence with all the *Nastika Darshanas* like Buddhism and Jainism clearly indicates that the system is not so bad as it is represented. *Lokayatas* are dead against ignorance, orthodoxy and hypocrisy. A *Lokayata* does not like an angry man of the type of Durbashah to instruct on calmness, or a sinner to pursue his dark career on the strength of the Ganges, or a Brahmin to look down upon a *Chandala*, or to do good to animals only and not to their own people by making sacrifices. It can be strongly asserted that Charvakism was a protest against irreligion in the name of religion and superstitious vagaries. It was unfortunate that the followers went to the other extreme.

In giving the origin of Indian materialism the author states that in the Vedic age the Aryans were healthy and victorious, they could enjoy whatever they liked without being checked by any barrier, physical, social or moral. Then they established the *Lokayata* system, the end of which was the full enjoyment of the senses. We cannot support this view; for (1) in the Vedic age the Aryans were not merely a bundle of senses only, they believed in forces natural and supernatural; (2) Materialism though observed in lower strata of life in every country, is preached no where as a doctrine of philosophy, unless as a reaction against some perverted ideas or practices; and (3) the stanzas collected by the author clearly contradict his own theory by their polemical tendencies.

Though the materialism of Brihaspati has

never been accepted, nor can be accepted *in toto* in India, it no doubt, represents an aspect of Indian culture which had and still has a far-reaching effect in determining many social and political reforms. Professor Shastri, instead of feeling too shy of Charvaka (for we are sure that he is not a follower of the school) would do well to bring out in fuller details in the form of a system the views of *Lokayatas*, which, we hope, will be of great use in solving many burning problems of the day.

The printing and get-up of the book is bad.

FIRST STEPS ON THE PATH. By Geoffrey Hodson. The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Price Board Rs. 1-8.

The book aims at helping those who want to build spiritual life, and contains many practical suggestions which we appreciate. But there are many things in the book which will be quite unintelligible to persons outside the pale of Theosophy. As for instance, the following lines occur in pages 96 and 97: "Two of the Masters, who are closely connected with the Theosophical Society, live in Tibet; one of Them, the Master Morya, is described as a tall Indian belonging to the Rajputs . . . ; He is said to be dark in colour, extremely handsome in appearance, gracious and dignified.

"His 'brother in occult research' the Master Kuthumi, has taken a body from Kashmir. He is fairer than the Master Morya and is said to show forth the glorious beauty of the ideal Christ. The Master Jesus was already a disciple when He gave up His body to the Lord Maitreya at the founding of the Christian religion. He has since achieved Adeptship, and is now in charge of that religion. He lives in a Syrian body in the mountains of Lebanon.

"The Master, the Prince Rakoozi, the great Hungarian Adept, is in charge of the evolution of Europe. He lives at present in Central Europe."

We frankly confess we cannot follow the passage.

SHRI RAMAGITA. By Muntazim Bahadur Mukund Wamanrao Burway, B.A. Published by the author, 12 Imil Bazar, Indore City. 174+XLIII+16 pp. Price Cloth Rs. 3, Paper-bound Rs. 2-8.

The object of the publication of the present treatise, as set forth in the preface

by the author himself, is (a) to disseminate the transcendental metaphysics of the Vedanta philosophy, (b) to attempt to remove several misconceptions, misunderstandings and wrong views which are imposed upon the subject of Vedanta and the potent Dharma it inculcates, and (c) to appeal to all the sections of the Hindu community to submerge the sectarian prejudices and to bring about a unity and solidarity of this ancient community, which is weakened by internal as well as external forces. With this object in view he gives a very lengthy introduction which forms the bulk of the book. The Vedanta philosophy, he asserts, is the common platform on which humanity can meet without any prospect of dispute and difference. He amplifies the discussion by adducing tangible instances, thereby showing how the Vedanta philosophy can be a solace, a balm to humanity in the West as well as in the East. He deals with the various aspects of this philosophy and tries to show that the world civilisation must be based upon its principles, otherwise the present deplorable condition of humanity will not improve. He has incorporated a good many quotations from many writers, reviews and authors in corroboration of the views advanced by him. But in spite of all sincerity and good motive that prompted the author to embody so many things in the Introduction, we are afraid it has become too long and rather a little incompatible with the book itself. With the text of Shri Ramagita there are Marathi verses of Waman Pandit, and Hindi and English translations by the author. There are seven small appendices also at the end. Shri Ramagita, as is well known, is replete with the teachings of Advaita Vedanta beautifully set forth. We

hope the perusal of the Gita will be profitable. The get-up and printing are good.

THE SAINT DURGACHARAN NAG. *Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras.* 170 pp. Price Re. 1.

The present volume is the second edition of the book. It originally appeared in Bengali some years back. It was written by a devotee who moved with the saint most intimately in the latter part of his life. The saint was a householder disciple of Sri Ramakrishna. The whole life-story, especially that after his meeting with Sri Ramakrishna, reads almost like a legend; and many incidents of his life could hardly be given credence to if their authenticity would not have been vouched for by living witnesses. The life of the saint was so marvellous that even a casual reader of the book cannot but be struck with awe and wonderment at him. Let us introduce the life of this great saint with the ever-memorable words of Swami Vivekananda: "I have travelled far in different parts of the globe, but nowhere could I meet a great soul like Nag Mahashaya" (by which name he was commonly called). Indeed, the facts of the saint's life, chiefly lived as it was in chosen obscurity and utter humility of the soul, are sure to highly impress the reader with the extraordinary enduring power of mind and the absolute negation of the ego, and above all, the supreme sovereignty of the soul over the flesh, so fully attained by him. Such a life is surely rare. We ask everyone, especially every householder, to pore over this book which is bound to be of immense benefit and interest. The printing and get-up are excellent and much more improved than in the first edition.

NEWS AND REPORTS

R. K. Ashrama, Dissong Shella, Khasi Hills

Swami Prabhananda, an indefatigable and energetic young worker of the R. K. Mission, and his co-workers have been doing yeoman's service to the people of the Khasi Hills for the last five years. It is indeed surprising and painful that through the influence and propaganda of the Christian Missionaries about forty thousands (one-sixth of the whole population) of the Khasis have entered into the Christian fold, adopting and

professing everything alien as good. The rest also, being divorced from Hindu culture and civilisation for a considerable period, have been greatly degraded. All of them require to be brought back to the consciousness that they are Hindus in culture and civilisation, that they are the inheritors of the legacy of the glorious traditions of the past, and that it is on them that the making of the future India depends to a large extent.

With these objects in view the above

Ashrama has been established, of which a report of work from March, 1926 to February, 1928 is to our hand. The work already done is surely remarkable and bespeaks great prospects in the future.

The work of the Ashrama falls under three heads—Educational, Charitable and Missionary. (I) Educational: The Ashrama workers conduct and manage the following schools—(i) The Shella M. E. School. (ii) Three L. P. Schools in the Shella village proper. The number of students in these four schools rose from 60 in 1926 to 90 in 1928. (iii) A newly started U. P. School (to be soon developed into an M. E. School) which has 75 students on the roll. (iv) Two Night Schools at Mawlong with 40 adults on the roll. (v) A newly started Day and Night School at Nongwar having 25 students by day and 10 by night. Besides these, two Boarding Houses have recently been opened, one at the Ashrama and the other at Sunamganj, Sylhet Dt., for accommodating students from the remote Khasi states. There are 12 and 1 students in the two Boarding Houses respectively. The boy reading at the Sunamganj H. E. School receives necessary help from the Ashrama. To further the cause of the Ashrama another benevolent gentleman is providing a Khasi boy with free board and lodging.

(II) Charitable: Attached to the Ashrama there is a Dispensary from which Homeopathic and Biochemic medicines are given free to the poor people. During the years under review the number of cases treated came up to 2158.

(III) Missionary: (i) Classes and Discourses—The Ashrama workers conduct classes and weekly discourses at different places on the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda religious literature, Gita and other scriptures in Khasi. The Hari Sabha (weekly religious assembly) had 104 sittings in two years. Average weekly attendance was 50 to 60 men and women. (ii) Festivals—The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda, and the religious festivals such as Rathajatra, Jhulan, Doljatra, Kalipuja, etc. were duly celebrated at the Ashrama. Great enthusiasm prevailed on these occasions. (iii) Magic Lantern Lecture Tour—Extensive tours were undertaken especially through the southern part of the district which borders upon the Sylhet side and has direct connection with it. Lectures were given in Khasi on Gouranga,

Prahlad, Malaria, General Sanitation, India's Place in the World, etc. (iv) Library—The Ashrama Library which contains particularly the R. K. Math publications and other general scriptures has 25 volumes added to it within these two years. The total number of books is at present 200. (iv) Publication—The Ashrama has taken up the publication of religious literature etc. in Khasi.

Sources of Income: The annual subsidy of Rs. 500 from the Shella State helps to a great extent to meet the recurring expenditure of the Shella M. E. School. Nearly Rs. 1000 is required to meet the annual expense of the said school. The newly started Mawlong School is financed by the local Khasi Friends. They donate Rs. 500 a year as pay for two Bengali teachers. A still more recently started L. P. School at Nongwar is also partially financed by the local Khasis with a varying sum of Rs. 250—Rs. 350 a year.

Receipts and Expenditure: During the years under review the total receipts (including a debt of Rs. 87-10-6) with the previous year's balance were Rs. 1554-8-9 and the total expenditure was Rs. 1473-8-6, leaving a balance of Rs. 81-0-3.

Immediate Needs: The Ashrama at present stands in need of the following. (a) A few self-sacrificing and sincere young workers who will be ready to devote their life to the sacred cause of rendering physical, intellectual and spiritual service unto the hill people of Assam, irrespective of caste and creed. (b) A Permanent Fund (i) to finance partially any centre wherever necessary, (ii) to raise the status of any of the established schools to that of a H. E. School, for which at least Rs. 1,000 a year is required, (iii) to start 5 more M. E. Schools in five different convenient places, especially in places where the local people will meet at least half of the recurring expenditure, average expenditure for each school not exceeding Rs. 500 a year, and (iv) to finance the publication of religious books in Khasi.

Any contribution however small will be thankfully received and acknowledged by *Swami Prabhananda, Ramakrishna Ashrama, Shella, P.O. Laitkynsew, Khasi Hills, Assam.*

Vedanta Centre, Providence, U. S. A.

The Vedanta Centre at Providence, R. I., U. S. A., was started by Swami Akhilananda (who had gone to America about the middle

of 1926) on the 9th September last with a few public lectures in a Hall of one of the principal hotels of the city. This was the first time that a teacher of Vedanta had been there, and considering the interest that has already been evoked, the prospects seem to be quite hopeful. The Swami has been attracting large audiences in his lectures and classes, between 125 and 150. Providence is a university town; some professors and students of the university also attend his classes.

At present the Swami has engaged a separate Hall for himself, in which he delivers a lecture on every Sunday and holds classes on the Gita and Patanjali's Yoga-Sutra and teaches meditation every Tuesday and Friday.

The birth day anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was duly celebrated at the Centre on the 3rd February last. Swami Gnaneswarananda of the New York Vedanta Society also attended. He is an expert musician; and the celebration began with the Swami's Indian music, vocal and instrumental. The altar and the platform were tastefully decorated with flowers, leaves and palms. The two Swamis spoke and also a Christian Minister, Mr. F. A. Wilmot, who is the Religious Editor of two local dailies and who had seen and heard Swami Vivekananda at Boston. Mr. Wilmot is very helpful to Swami Akhilananda and often writes about his activities in his dailies. The celebration lasted for two hours. The Hall was crowded to overflowing and great enthusiasm was evinced by the audience, many of whom insisted on having more of Indian music, so charmed they were, which, therefore, had to be continued till eleven at night.

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was also duly celebrated on the 13th and 17th March. Swami Bodhananda of New York attended on the latter day, and he and Swami Akhilananda spoke on the Great Master.

R. K. Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal

The Sevashrama, as an institution of organised charity, has been for the last 26 years carrying on its work of service to thousands of pilgrims from different parts of India and the people of the locality and surrounding villages when they fall ill and keenly feel the want of medical aid and a friendly hand more than ever.

The total number of *indoor patients* admitted was 781, and the daily average

attendance, 20.64. Altogether 46,852 patients of whom 25,715 were repeated numbers and 21,137 new cases, were treated and relieved at the *Outdoor Dispensary*. The daily average number was 128.36. Besides medical aid 178 poor patients were supplied with diet and necessary clothings. A *Free Night School* has been maintained by the institution to impart primary education to the children of the so-called depressed classes. A local teacher has been engaged to teach them the three R's in their own vernaculars. There were 34 boys on the roll during the year.

During the last Kumbha Mela at Hardwar 136 cases were treated as in-patients, 3,869 cases as out-patients at the Sevashrama, and there were 1,557 patients treated at the Outdoor Dispensaries temporarily started by the institution at different places during the *Mela*.

The present urgent needs of the Sevashrama are: 1. Workers' Quarters. 2. A building for the Night School. 3. Rest House for the Relatives of the Pilgrim Indoor Patients. 4. Permanent Endowment Fund, and Funds for the General Maintenance of the Sevashrama.

It is hoped that the generous public will kindly respond to the appeal on behalf of the suffering humanity and send in their kind contributions, no matter however small, towards any of the aforesaid causes, which will be thankfully received and acknowledged by *Swami Kalyanananda, Hony. Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal P.O. (Dist. Saharanpur), U. P.*

R. K. Mission Sevashrama, Rangoon

The seventh annual report of the above Sevashrama for the year 1927 is a brilliant record of the most useful and noble work done by way of restoring the poor sick to health and happiness and work. During the year under review the total attendance of patients at the Sevashrama was 1,13,507. All these patients did not belong exclusively to the city of Rangoon, a considerable number of them coming from the suburbs and from some remote districts of Burma. This goes to show the popularity and usefulness of the institution and the necessity of a further development of its resources in the future. The number of patients admitted into the Indoor department during the year was 1,616. The aggregate of the daily totals of attendance came up to 21,876; and the average daily attendance was 60. At the Out-patients' department the total number of attendance came up to 91,631 including men,

women and children. The year opened with a balance of Rs. 543-15-0. In the year under review the sum of Rs. 30,617-3-3 was received as subscriptions, donations, etc. and the sum of Rs. 1,350-0-0 was secured by loan. Thus the total amount on account including the opening balance was Rs. 32,511-2-3 only. We understand that the loan as shown above became an unavoidable necessity, though there was yet a heavy outstanding loan of Rs. 3,500. We are glad to see, however, that this whole amount was paid off in course of the year. The total amount incurred by expenditure during the year, including repayment of loan, was Rs. 29,547-12-3 only. Thus the year closed with a credit balance of Rs. 2,963-6-0.

We congratulate the management of the Sevashrama on their noble work of serving the humanity and wish them greater usefulness in future.

R. K. Mission Students' Home, Calcutta

The Ramakrishna Mission has been conducting this Home specially for poor and deserving youths going up for higher education in the Calcutta University. They are supplied free of cost with everything they require. This Home is run on the lines of a Brahmacharya Ashrama co-ordinating the ancient ideals of education with the modern, under the guidance of a few Hindu Sannyasins. The Home completed the tenth year of its useful career in 1928. It was during this year that the magnificent gift of 20 *bighas* of land at Gouripur near Dum Dum Cant. together with a donation of Rs. 4000 by Mr. R. M. Chatterjee of Calcutta made it possible for the management to make preliminary arrangements for developing there the vocational wing of the Students' Home. Strenuous efforts were made to develop it into a small farm. It was fenced all round with barbed wire, a dwelling house together with several other sheds for workers, servants, cows, office and go-down were

erected, a tube-well was sunk, the land was cleared and brought under cultivation, and a very humble start was given to dairy-work. This may prove to be a training ground of the students in the elements of farming, dairy-work and some profitable home-industries. The total number of students on the roll was 22 at the end of the year. 7 students sat for University examinations during the year and all except one came out successful. One of the third-year students stood first in the Adya examination of Vedanta. Regular classes were held thrice every week for the exposition of the Upanishads, Gita and Ramakrishna Vivekananda literature. There were altogether 125 sittings during the year. Several Utsabs including Kalipuja and Saraswatipuja were celebrated. A monthly manuscript magazine was conducted by the students. Saturday classes were held when the students met to discuss socio-religious topics and read papers and extracts on various subjects. All household duties except cooking were managed by the students. A tailoring class was held by an honorary expert. The general health of the students continued to be fairly good. The total receipts during the year in the general fund together with previous year's balance came to Rs. 10,268-10-6 and total disbursement amounted to Rs. 6,438-6-6. There was a sum of Rs. 16,002-6-2 in the Building Fund at the end of the year.

Modern university life is associated with foreign culture which is not wholly compatible with Indian ideals. The present institution therefore will serve as a model and bring about reforms in other hostels, so that every hostel may become a seat of spiritual and cultural training. We hope the public will unsparingly help and make it a full-fledged institution so that it may further extend its usefulness. All contributions to be sent to *Secy., Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, 7 Halder Lane, Calcutta* or *President, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, Bengal.*

OBITUARY

Swami Kamalananda, who was in charge of the Mayavati Charitable Dispensary for some years, passed away on the 14th May last. He joined the order while very young and before coming to Mayavati, worked in the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Benares. His ungrudging service to the patients and anxious care to cure them were singularly striking. Two years back while attending a pthisis case, he caught the infection of that fell disease, to which he ultimately succumbed. May his unselfish services find their fitting reward from Him, who was the sole inspiration of his life.