

Drabuddha Bharata

OR AWAKENED INDIA

* * * *

JULY, 1929

“The longest night seems to be passing away, the sorest troubles seem to be coming to an end at last, the seeming corpse appears to be awakening and a voice is coming to us. Like a breeze from the Himalayas, it is bringing life into the almost dead bones and muscles, the lethargy is passing away, and only the blind cannot see, or the perverted will not see, that she is awakening, this motherland of ours, from her deep long sleep None can resist her any more; never she is going to sleep any more; no outward powers can hold her back any more; for the infinite giant is rising to her feet.”—Swami Vivekananda.

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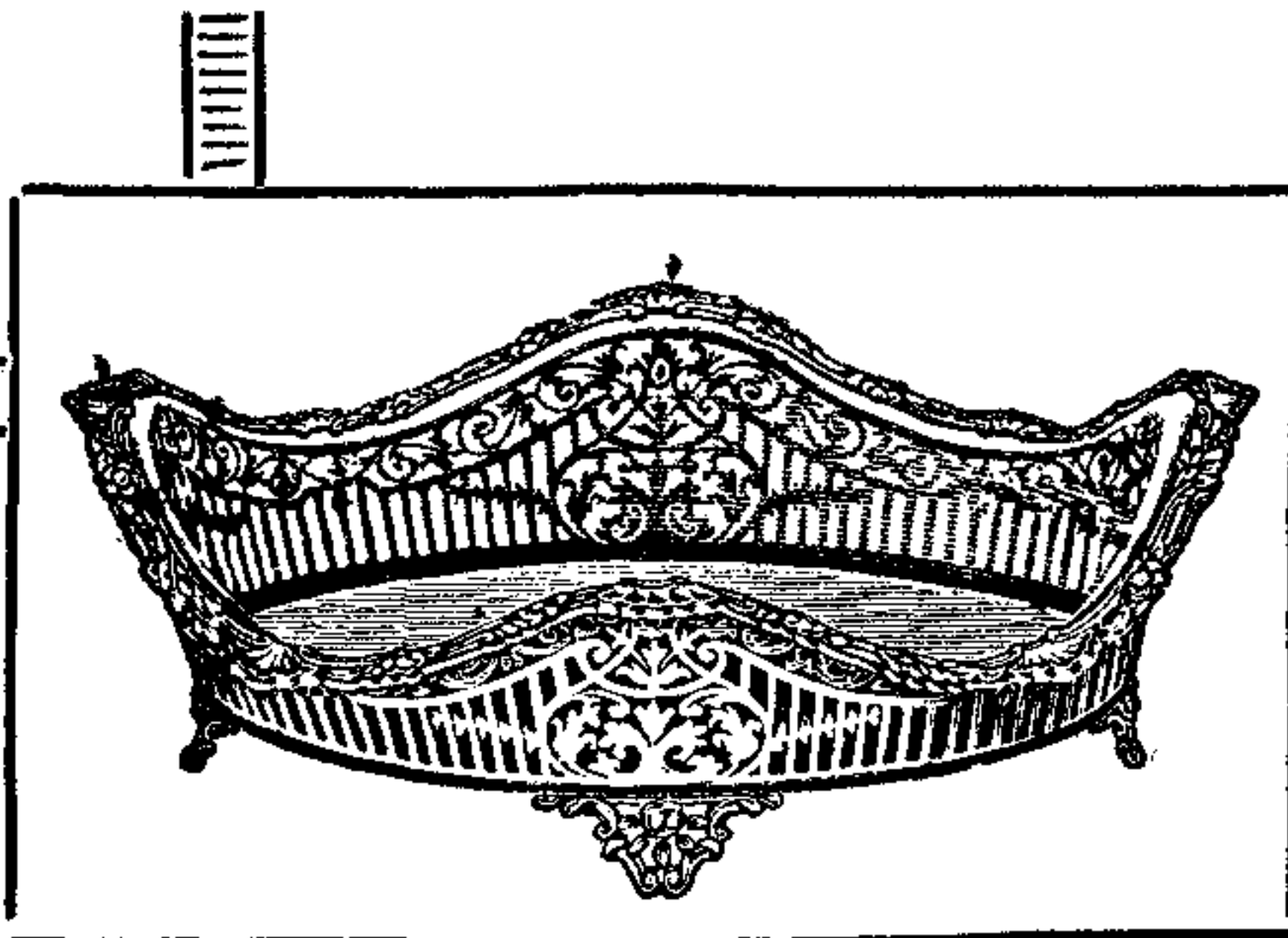
PRABUDDHA BHARATA

JULY, 1929

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Notice for change of address should reach us before the 20th of the previous month.—Manager, P. B.



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Prabuddha Bharata

JULY, 1929

Volume XXXIV



Number 7.

“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

XII*

(To a Madrassi Disciple)

541 Dearborn Ave.,
Chicago,
29th June, 1894.

. . . . On the whole the Americans are a million times nobler than the Hindus, and I can work more good here than in the country of the ingrate and the heartless. . . . The number of T—s in all America is only 625 by the last census. Mixing up with them will smash me in a minute than help me in any way. . . . The Madras people have done for me more than I deserved and more than was in their power. . . . America is the best field in the world to carry on any idea, so I do not think of leaving America soon. And why?—Here I have food and drink and clothes, and everybody so kind, and all this for a few good words!! Why should I give up such a noble noble nation to go to the land of brutes and the ingrates and the brainless boobies held in the eternal thraldom of superstition, merciless, pitiless wretches? . . .

XIII

(To an American Disciple)

Almora,
3rd June, 1897.

You need not be so much afraid about me. My body has been full of all sorts of complaints again and again and phoenix-like I have been reviving. It is the vigorous frame that helps recovery in my case, yet it is that too much

* See “In this Number,” *Notes and Comments*.

vigour that brings on the disease. In everything I am extreme, even in my physical health, either I am like an iron bull or I am low down in the valley of death.

This disease brought about by hard work has nearly disappeared with rest. At Darjeeling it entirely disappeared. As you see I am now in Almora. I am all right now except for a bit of dyspepsia for which I am trying hard "Christian Science". I got myself round with mental treatment at Darjeeling. Taking lot of exercise, climbing up mountains, hard riding, eating and sleeping are about all my occupations now. I feel much stronger and better, the next time you see me I would be an athlete.

How are you? What are you doing? How things are going on with you and Mrs. F? Are you getting your bank account fatted bit by bit? *You must do that.* Do it for me. If I am much worn out, I will strike work for good and come to America and you will have to give me food and shelter. Will you? I was born for the life of a scholar, retired, quiet, poring over my books, but the Mother dispensed otherwise. But the tendency is there.

XIV

(To an English Friend)

Almora,
4th July, 1897.

Although I am still in the Himalayas, and shall be here for at least a month more, I started the work in Calcutta before I came, and they write progress every week.

Just now I am very busy with the famine, and except for training a number of young men for future work, have not been able to put more energy into the teaching work. The 'feeding work' is absorbing all my energy and means. Although we can work only on a very small scale as yet, the effect is marvellous. For the first time since the days of Buddha, Brahmin boys are found nursing by the bedside of cholera-stricken pariahs.

In India, lectures and teaching cannot do any good. What we want is Dynamic Religion. And that, "God willing," as the Muhammadans say, I am determined to show.

LEARN AND CONQUER !

BY SISTER NIVEDITA

We are a nation of students. The whole East is full of students. No figure in the streets of an Asiatic city, whether the country be India, Persia, or China,—is so representative as that of the student. No power is so pervasive as the schoolmaster's might make itself, if maintained in harmony with the general aspiration. Why this prominence of the learner? What is the explanation? Does it point to a national immaturity? If so, let us face the fact. There is no advantage to be gained, by shutting our eyes to the position of affairs; on the contrary clear thought is itself the starting point of a good fight with crudity and ignorance.

We must remember that the very words are foreign, in which this question is being discussed. We are, in fact, measuring ourselves and the maturity of our culture against a modern and Western standard. So measured, we are decidedly immature. There are many practical situations in life, where, beside the ease and mastery of the European, we feel ourselves mere children. Is this immaturity, then, an absolute, or only a relative truth? Is it perhaps true that all the people of the world are more or less immature? We cannot get the whole material advantage, out of a given situation as easily as the European can. But no one who has ever engaged in serious conversation with Europeans can doubt that there are many subjects on which they are, beside us, extremely childish. In the field of religious and philosophical speculation, they find it difficult to generalise, and propositions that are obvious to us will puzzle them severely. The same is true of the psychology of social relations. In the culture of the family, Europeans are curiously lacking. That whole idea of play, that shines through all our domestic intercourse, and lubricates all the friction of intimacy, appears to be unborn amongst them. Here they are as immature as we are in their field. Those strong faces, with their closed lips and air of instinctive mastery, notify us of nothing genial and easy, in the nature behind. Similarly, in us, the grave refined type of old men indicates no large public experience. All the lineaments have been carved, in the one case, by contacts with the larger world, the world of struggle and complexities, of clashing interests, and grim affairs ; and in the other, by quiet experience of love and suffering, by the thought of God, and by the garnered wisdom of the home. Either European or Hindu, on his own ground, will appear unassailable ; judged by the opposite standard, seem

unripe, crude, but half cultured and childish in his powers.

Unfortunately for us, however, the world is being remade, at this moment, by European culture. Its assimilation is the means and the test of success. With regard to it we are mere students. Then we are all students. It may be that when our lesson is learnt, there will be a compensating one for Europe to learn. That is not our business. Our business is to learn our own. Is it the foreign idea that we have to accept? Not exactly. The foreign idea, as it stands, would merely give us moral indigestion. We should not become a nation of moral dyspeptics. But we have to find, in our own stock of ideas, that one which enables us to meet the foreign nation on its own terms. The Englishman loves England, with a wonderful and often beautiful love. What we have to learn from this, is not to share his love for England. That would be the discipleship of monkeys, mere imitation. We have to learn to meet his love for England with an equal, deeper, more tender and far more intelligent love for India. As he professes to make his country and his people the centre of every activity, every thought, so we have really to make our people and our country the centre of our own. He has unity of national intention. We must realise our own national intention, and find an equal unity in it. *Swadharma*—“Better for a man is his own duty, however badly done, than the duty of another, though that be easy.”

All power is in the human mind. We can master anything simply by giving our attention to it. Even the ideals of the West, the ideals of the new age, are within our grasp, if we study them, if we recognise their necessity, and proceed to work them out. It is natural, however, that under the circumstances, feeling as we do, that the study of our own circumstances, and of the new ideals that are

to initiate a new age, is the one duty that devolves upon us, it is natural that education should seem to us the supreme ground of battle for our national rights. . . .

Education is our one overwhelming want, in this hour of the nation's history. Knowledge we must have. And knowledge we are determined to have. An immense force has been called into being, by the organisation of schools and colleges. But once evoked, such forces must be fed and developed along sound lines. It is at their peril that mortals attempt to stand in the path of avalanche or the cannon-

ball. Is it imagined that mind-energy is less dangerous than material? Only the bravest or the grossest will attempt to thwart or baffle an awakened communal consciousness. The bravest, because he may offer himself as a sacrifice. The grossest, because he does not believe that mind is a force, like any other, and rules the world; does not believe that a poor weapon in the hands of Napoleon Bonaparte is more deadly than the best, when used by a coward or a fool; cannot understand, till it has turned and rent him, the perils of the great force called into being, and then subjected to the crushing weight of suppression.

A DIAGNOSIS

BY THE EDITOR

I

We were glad to see some time ago the editor of *the Indian Social Reformer*, Bombay, admitting that "there is no doubt that a dead-set is being made against Hinduism." He wrote:

"Since the beginning of the present century, a new school of missionaries has given up the method of frontal attack on Hinduism as defeating its own purpose. Instead, it professed to see a great deal of spiritual aspiration in Hinduism which, however, could be realised only through Christianity. This school had a certain vogue for a time owing to its appearance of impartiality, but it has now spent itself. We seem now to have come back to the first place of the attack on Hinduism. Miss Katherine Mayo resuscitated Abbe Dubois who had long passed into oblivion. She has been followed by other writers who have denounced Hinduism as the parent of all evil. Miss Mayo herself has tried her hand again with the "Slaves of the Gods" but, owing to the changed feeling between the British and Americans rather than to any reason connected with the merits

of the book, the very same papers which hailed her "Mother India" with delirious praise, have condemned her second attempt as hysterical, over-wrought and fanatically prejudiced against the Hindus. Poor Miss Mayo! There is no doubt, however, that dead-set is being made against Hinduism. Part of it is political, the British in India and through them the British in Britain having persuaded themselves that Hindus as a class are the most clamant advocates of self-government. Non-Brahmin Caste Hindus and the Depressed Classes in South India are exempted from this indictment. Elsewhere, the whole Hindu community is regarded as being disaffected and this is ascribed to the opposition of Hindu orthodoxy to the emancipating consequences of British rule. Behind this feeling, however, there is a deeper feeling that Hinduism now remains the only effective opponent of the basic principle of present-day Western Civilisation. Buddhist countries like Japan and China, and Moslem countries like Turkey and Persia, have accepted Western Civilisation at least as

a matter of expediency. India alone refuses to do so, and the impelling force here is that of Hinduism. The triumph of the West will be complete when Hinduism lowers its flag and capitulates to the gospel of the so-called "standard of life." "

We are glad that this fact is being gradually recognised in India. We ourselves sounded a note of warning against this sinister aggression in our article, "The War of Ideals," in January, 1928. It is important that we become conscious of our danger so that we may not be taken unawares. This aggression is both conscious and unconscious. Every philosophy of life has a tendency to become aggressive. It impels its votaries to invade the domains of other philosophies. The modern secularism cannot behave otherwise. It is spreading all over the world. Spiritual views of life, such as that of India, are being assailed ruthlessly, and Katherine Mayo is not the only assailant. Of late America has become a convenient field for propaganda against Hinduism. For obvious political reasons, the value of American opinion is considered great. It is, therefore, to the interest of India's enemies that the mind of America should be prejudiced against India.

We reproduce elsewhere an article on India from *American Weekly*. The very title of the article indicates the spirit in which it is written. It is possible that our readers will wonder why we have reproduced it. The foregoing observations will partly explain the reason. We have in the past quoted articles from foreign papers in praise of India. But our duty is not merely to apprise our readers of the appreciations of India. We must also tell them how India is loathed and castigated in foreign lands. We must not expect only adulations. We must accustom ourselves also to the foulest abuse. We must awake from our lotus-eaters' dream to the sense of realities. We must know how we are being estimated by others interestedly or disinterestedly. The

sovereign remedy against such malicious propaganda as the reproduced article is an effective counter-propaganda by able and honourable cultural ambassadors from India. We have long shirked this duty. Swami Vivekananda repeatedly asked us to go to the different countries of the world and spread the unique message of India. India has scarcely heeded to his advice. It is not a superficial lying propaganda that India is to do in the foreign countries, or anything sensational. But a truthful, substantial preaching work, maybe slow but steady, backed by proper knowledge and ability and actuated by the best motives of love and service. It should be a work of necessary self-defence, but more of service. This India has not yet done adequately.

II

We have a habit of simulating injured innocence whenever foreigners criticise us. We grow loudly indignant. But we do not do what is exactly required of us by the situation. Our purpose in this article is not merely to unmask the evil designs of our calumniators. In fact it is not our main purpose. We know we can point out as many motes and beams, if not more, in our critics' eyes as they seem to see in ours. The hollowness of Western pretensions to moral and cultural superiority has been proved again and again. If India is inferior in some respects, she is superior in others. We have shown in many of our articles the greatness of Indian culture. The present number of *Prabuddha Bharata* itself contains an article testifying to India's spiritual greatness by no less a person than Romain Rolland. But our duty does not end with setting forth India's glory only. We must also point out her drawbacks. It is idle to deny that we have many defects. No amount of argument can explain away the fact that we Hindus have been slaves for nearly 1000 years, that we are extremely poor and physically decrepit, that we lack

the fulness of life and mental vigour, and we are low, very low in many respects. How do we explain these? What is the cause of our present degradation? No, we are not perfect. There are undoubtedly many things in us, which have laid us low and kept us down. Merely singing our spiritual glories is not enough. It is true that if we dwell too much on our weaknesses, it will make us only weaker. But if we are already conscious of the soundness of our fundamentals, proper attention to the details will make us strong. We have all along sought to revive the faith of our countrymen in the spiritual ideals of India. We have tried to demonstrate the unique value and absolute necessity of our ideals. We have repeatedly shown how we are to reconstruct our life on the spiritual basis. We hope our readers are sufficiently well-established in the ideal. Now it is time they pay attention to the realities also and face them like strong bold persons. That is why we have specially reprinted the article from *American Weekly*, and produced a terrible letter of Swami Vivekananda, the first of the present month's instalment. Let us face the indictments and see if there is any truth in them. There is no shame or humiliation in that. We can boldly challenge the world to point out another culture or civilisation which is as noble as the Indian. But still we have our faults. And it is our plain duty to examine them carefully, and find their causes and remedy.

Foreign criticism, even the most unsympathetic and ungenerous, has some value for us, especially in the present age when there is a greater and greater commingling of the races and cultures of the world. There may be many national habits and forms which will perhaps ill agree with the world-federation towards which all are slowly but surely proceeding. These will have to be pruned off. National forms and ideals will have to be remodelled and reinterpreted after the pattern of world-

unity. Every race and nation must prepare itself for this sacrifice, India not excepted. But even apart from the demands of world-unity, India requires to be changed a great deal in the details of her life. Who can deny, for example, that there is appalling ignorance and superstition behind the kidnapping scare that is raised from time to time in India resulting sometimes even in riot and bloodshed? There *are* many primitive forms of worship prevalent in India now, which ill suit the modern age. The position of women in India has undoubtedly to be greatly improved. There *are* many odd practices among the laity and the religious, which scarcely add to the dignity of India. We are lazy, we are dispirited. We often talk non-sense in the name of religion. We have much of which we ought to be ashamed.

Our reformers have repeatedly told us where our defects lie. They have emphasised the reform of our education. They have asked for more and more of vocational and industrial education and sought to make education conform to our national genius. They have wanted us to become physically healthy and strong and mentally efficient. They have urged the emancipation of women and their proper education. They have sought to abolish the caste system and introduce intercaste, interracial and interprovincial marriage. They have striven to reform the existing religions and free them of what they thought to be their debasing features. Yet progress has been slow and inadequate. There seems to be an incurable lethargy in the mass mind which is scarcely responsive to stimulations from outside. The outside world does not seem to affect it. It seems impervious to all instructions. Our reformers have failed. And why? Because, as we think, they have not gone deep enough in their diagnosis of India's malady. All these defects that we note on the surface are really the expressions of and due to something more fundamental. The remedy

must be applied deep down there. What is wanted is a new quickening of life like the warm flowery spring after the bleak winter. At a single touch of the magic wand of the spring, the dead world wakes into a vigorous new life. Can we release such a spring season in the heart of India? This new power is the only remedy. Mending the surface is only secondary. Let us search for the source of the life of India and see what has clogged the flow of its waters.

III

Let us consider our social conditions. One peculiar characteristic that we note is our passive attitude towards society. Why is there such a tremendous cultural difference between the higher and the lower classes in Hindu society? The apparent explanation is that the lower classes—forming by the way the vast majority—have not been given proper education and opportunities. This is a charge which Hinduism will perhaps try to answer by saying that in other countries also the masses have not fared better. But does Hinduism consider itself on the same plane of cultural development as other countries? Did not Hinduism possess long ago what is now considered the modern outlook? We say that our philosophy is the fulfilment of modern knowledge and aspirations. If that is so, how is it that we did not act in the modern democratic way towards the masses in the past ages? Why did we not spread education among them sufficiently to bring them to the level of the higher classes? India cannot answer this charge.

The methods of Hindu social development are somewhat peculiar. The different castes and sub-castes are mostly autonomous provinces of Hindu society. They live and grow according to their own laws. Very little is superimposed on them from the outside. They often retain their old customs, traditions and modes of worship. What do races gain

by entering the fold of Hinduism and becoming its caste? The very first gain is the example of higher life and culture in the higher, especially the Brahmin, castes. Each caste is imbued with the idea of approximating to the *Brâhmana* ideal. This is a great gain. The *Brahmana* ideal generally influences their life's ideal, their daily life, domestic and social relations, their religious ideas. But this influence is mostly indirect. The second gain is that they get access to the higher philosophy and religion. It is true they do not generally have the opportunity of studying Hindu scriptures in the original. But the truths contained in them become their property through the vernacular literatures and oral preaching in various forms. They take to new forms of worship and often reinterpret their old forms in the terms of the higher philosophy. This way their social views and habits also undergo change. Thirdly, in some special times when there are spiritual upheavals, many of the lower castes are elevated at once to higher social positions through their allegiance to the dominant religious schools. Fourthly, constant communication with the higher castes cannot but have a beneficial effect on the lower castes. The Hindu method of social development, it should be noted, is specially careful not to injure the integrity of any caste. The influence is always indirect; the change is expected to be from within. It is essentially constructive,—scarcely destructive. Another feature is that this influence is expected to produce rather an inner change than superficial polish. In this respect, the methods of the Christian missionaries may be well contrasted with the Hindu methods. A Christian convert from a low caste very soon acquires an outside refinement: he dresses well; his body is cleaner; he learns reading and writing; and he is more smart. But there it often ends. Is he more moral? Is his social integrity superior? No. It is a fact that culture takes a long time

to soak in. It is well-known that the modernisation of aboriginal classes has often led to their demoralization. Hinduism, therefore, has always sought above all to develop a higher moral and religious consciousness in the lower classes. And it cannot be denied that no other nation has behaved with undeveloped races better than the Hindus. But we are not here comparing Hindu achievements with those of others. We are trying to find out why Hinduism has not done better, why Hinduism has not so exerted itself as to make India perfect in every respect, leaving no loop-holes for the foreign critics to point their finger of scorn at us?

No doubt Hinduism has done wonderfully. But its services to the lower classes have been indirect and meagre. Could not the higher classes do more for the lower classes without affecting their racial integrity and unbalancing their mind by too rapid reforms? They had centuries and centuries to do this. They did not. Why? *Because Hinduism, especially Paurānika Hinduism, has a tendency to emphasise passivity and subjectivity to an inordinate degree.* The responsibility is with the Hindus' present philosophy of life. This philosophy does not much encourage direct and objective effort.

Why have the Hindus been politically subject for the last thousand years? It is often said that Indian unity is as old as the Vedas. But why did not this unity operate when enemies were at the gate? We have more often than not succumbed to foreign invaders. We have not shown sufficient political acumen in our treatment with the foreigners. A comparison of the Mughal India with contemporary Europe is very instructive politically. We have not developed sufficient political sense. We have comparatively lacked manly and fighting qualities. It is not that we were less bold and strong than our adversaries. But we did not apply our courage and strength in an objectively fruitful way. Here also our passive philosophy was at

the root. During the Pathan rule, Bengal witnessed a mighty spiritual upheaval in the religion of Chaitanya. But it did not energise the people to throw off Muhammadan rule. Moslem rule continued uninterrupted. The religious people of those days were not sham. They were really spiritual. A great spiritual enthusiasm filled the people of Bengal and Orissa mainly through the ministry of Chaitanya and his followers. They sought and found the fulfilment of their life in a sphere where political subjection did not trouble. This passive attitude towards the common realities of life made it possible for the Muhammadans and then the English to dominate the land and its material powers and resources. We cannot exculpate religion, at least not in India, by saying that religion is concerned with the supramundane alone and not with worldly prosperity. For in India religion has been made the very basis of motif of the entire collective life. If it fails to achieve social, economical or political well-being, it can be legitimately charged with failure of duty.

Why again are we economically so degraded now? It is true that in the olden days people were prosperous. But did not the sea-borne trade pass almost wholly out of the hands of the Hindus? We as it were shut ourselves within our shells and sweetened our life more with the mental quality of non-attachment and contentment than with the acquisition of material wealth. When the old economic system broke down under the aggressions of European commerce, did we feel the imminent catastrophe and take energetic measures? No. We simply slept on. We continued our old ways mechanically, till we are now almost at death's door. Our economic life was based on the doctrine of *Karma Yoga* which evaluated work not by its outward volume and effect, but by the motive with which it was done. Work thus lost its objective relationships and became essentially a personal concern.

This is what happened in practice in the hands of the multitudes. Enough if the work procured a moderate living: one need not care to increase its volume; let one try only to purify one's own mind through it. Work became more and more subjective in nature and became contracted outwardly. Economic collapse was inevitable.

And the condition of our women, so endowed with noble qualities, often rising almost to the heights of God,—have we made them great and happy? The freedom and equality with men which they enjoyed in the Vedic days, where are they now? We have stunted their growth. The *Pauranika* ideal of *Sati-dharma*, with its emphasis only on the spiritual aspect of the relations of men and women, by which women were asked to spiritualise all their domestic relations, though productive of wonderful results in many ways, has signally failed to make them efficient, and have circumscribed the scope of their activity and atrophied some aspects of their personality.

Thus to whatever side of our life we turn, we find at bottom a particular outlook on life, which is really responsible for our defects and degradation. This is the essential cause. The visible are the symptoms and expressions of the invisible spiritual outlook. Our strength, the tendency to spiritualise, is itself the cause of our degradation also, because we have not properly and fully understood and applied it.

IV

The aim of a Hindu is to realise a state where there is no world with its multifarious interests, but only Divinity. This goal is not determined arbitrarily. Higher experience as well as metaphysical enquiry have revealed that the only true reality is God and that the reality of even the world is God. So long as we deny this truth in our life and action, we are deluded and unfulfilled and we suffer innumerable agonies and the pains of births and deaths. So the

Hindu wants to break the dream, to destroy the delusion and abide in the ineffable vision of God. This fact is the very basis of the Hindu's life and activity. But until this vision is gained, what are we to do? Shall we surrender ourselves to the charms of the world, the temptations of the mind and the flesh? No. We must spiritualise all our thoughts and emotions, motives and desires and experiences. There is God already in the heart of everything. The various objects of perception, with which our life, our desires, hopes, aspirations and actions are bound up now, are nothing but God. If that is so, why not think everything as God and feel and hope as for God? This is spiritualisation. When the process is complete, only God remains. Of course to facilitate this process of spiritualisation, there are various methods prescribed, called *Yoga*. We practise them and eventually realise ourselves and the world as Divine, eternal, ever blissful and immortal.

It will be seen that the process of spiritualisation and the methods of *Yoga* require above all a change of heart, a change of the angle of vision: we do not change the outside so much as the inside. It is the mind that has created the manifold vision of the universe and it is the mind again, that can destroy it. So we insist above all on the discipline of the mind. We say that the world of objects does not matter much. If I can control my mind, I can realise heaven even in the depths of hell. The better use of energy is to control and mould the mind, and not to dominate the external world. The world is like the dog's curly tail, you can never straighten it however hard you try. That does not mean that we are to forego all outward activity and cease to do anything in the world. The mind of most of us is such that it cannot catch even a glimpse of the Eternal behind the phenomena. It is so full of desires that it cannot rest content without action. So most men and women will and do act. But what

we should note in this connection is that the greater emphasis of the Hindu mind is on the curtailment of external preoccupations either in thought and action, and on the disciplining of the mind.

Who can deny that the Hindu has chosen the better path? No man or nation ever became really great except through mental discipline and allegiance to a spiritual idea. Our spiritual life is infinitely greater than our mental or physical self. To realise the spiritual self is to truly realise oneself. So the Hindus have chosen better. And if the Hindus so control and model their collective life as to facilitate this realisation, who can legitimately blame them? But there is one consideration. We must not forget that in making this superior choice, we have also risked a great deal. If we fail to spiritualise ourselves at least to some extent, we are neither here nor there, we become barren, ineffective, half-dead. One cannot deny that by concentrating on the spiritual, we do neglect the material. It is false to think that gain in spirituality automatically leads to material prosperity also. It does not, unless we make proper efforts for material gains. Our spiritual quest makes us neglect the objective aspect of life to a considerable degree. If we succeed in rising to spiritual heights, our material loss is more than compensated for. We realise the higher glory,—the loss of earthly glory does not affect us. But when the higher glory is not attained and the lower achievements are also neglected, where do we stand? Extreme degradation, both internal and external, is then our lot. The history of India testifies to this. We become extremely weak and contemptible. Squalor and stagnation become manifest in every sphere of our life. We lose all power of resistance. Spiritualisation is a great thing. It is like climbing a steep mountain. If we can reach the heights, heavenly glories crown our head. But if we fall, we are maimed and broken.

Those who do not aspire so high, have not to suffer so much as ourselves. Their fall does not hurt them.

It will now be apparent why we consider our philosophy of life itself as primarily responsible for our present degradation. *We are too subjective.* There is a subjectivity which is another name for higher objectivity. Then the subject realises itself not as the individual body and mind, but as the Self which pervades the entire universe and is the being of all beings. When that consciousness is attained, man feels the joys and sorrows of others as his own, and his heart-beats are attuned to the life-throbs of the entire universe. His life becomes an act of unending love and service to the world. There does not exist even the least tinge of selfishness in him. This grand subjectivity is the goal. But till this is attained, there is a subjectivity which is puny and selfish. It is shut up within its own concerns and interests. It is despicable. We regret to say that this kind of subjectivity is much in evidence among the Hindus, when the spiritual impulse to rise to the level of the higher subjectivity is lacking in the nation. The predominance of this lower subjectivity makes individuals to become too self-centred and neglect collective responsibilities, leaving them to be manipulated by the forces of customs and conventions and drifted by circumstances. The objectivity of the common people of other nations is much more healthy than this. For there is no stagnation there, no selfishness and dullness of life. *The lower subjectivity is the main cause of our present degradation.* It is this which prevents us from uniting in the nation's cause and quickly renovate ourselves.

Take the case of the caste system. We are each too self-centred. We do not seek much to bring about objective changes. We say: "It is the inner life that matters. What if one is born Brahmin or Pariah? The outward life and occupation do not matter. If a

Pariah can purify his life, he is greater than a Brahmin." Quite true. But there it ends. How many can rise superior to his environments? There are now and then a few saints born among the lower classes, but the vast majority? They continue in the same condition from generation to generation. Their crude habits, traditions and beliefs have continued unchanged. We have not succeeded in removing their superstitions and giving them higher religions even in course of millenniums, whereas the West has within two centuries cleared all superstitions right away. We harp on our philosophy, but we are oblivious that this philosophy does not help the overwhelming majority of the people. If we had realised the higher subjectivity, our unity with the lower castes would have made us feel for them, as it did our saints. But lacking that consciousness, we have neglected them for ages. Ordinary people have done little to remove the disabilities of the lower classes. We are shut up within our shells. We are not properly alive to the outer conditions. The more the pressure from the outside, the deeper we burrow our way into the interior of our selfish being. This lower subjectivity it is that has made our society a byword of contempt.

This is the reason again why we could never stand united against our enemies. We let them come and assail us. We could not, or rather did not, resist. Foreigners have often found us very easy victims. We have often proved ourselves fools in our dealings with our enemies. And why? Because we have always neglected the objective world more or less. We have lacked necessary knowledge. When foreigners came, we only raised more walls around us and cut ourselves off from them by newly invented customs and conventions. We saved ourselves by contraction and not by expansion. It is true we have often assimilated the foreigners afterwards. But in the meanwhile, we have been ground down to the dust.

All vitality has been sapped out of us. This process cannot succeed for long. The process of assimilation takes at least a century. But within that century the nation loses a great part of its vitality. If several such assimilations become necessary, the nation would be nowhere. And that is exactly what has happened. The strains of assimilation in the pre-Muhammadan era and the ravages of the savage hordes preceding it, left India extremely exhausted, so that when the Muhammadans came, we fell easily before them and did not succeed in either fighting or assimilating them. And when the Westerners came, we proved still more ineffective. And now our condition is precarious. This game of allowing foreigners to come and grind us and then assimilating them, cannot be played infinitely. Slowly the nation is devitalised and there is complete prostration. Our subjective outlook has brought us to such a pass.

And what about our women? Is not their present helpless condition also exactly due to this? We say it is the mind, the spiritual vision, that matters. Necessarily we have not given proper attention to the objective development of our women. With the change of circumstances women's sphere became gradually circumscribed within the zenana. But we did not try to fight and alter the circumstances in order to widen their sphere. Why? Because we found that our main purpose was not hampered by this limitation. We said it is the mind that matters; and our women spiritualised their life consisting almost entirely of their domestic duties and relations. For their spiritual fulfilment, this was enough. And in this respect, wonderful results have been achieved. But by atrophying their intellectual being, efficiency and objective freedom, we have crippled our own life. They may sweeten the home life, but they cannot inspire the collective life. The revolutionary changes of the circumstances in the present age

have almost entirely cut our women off the current of life.

V

This then is the supreme cause of Hindu apathy,—his lower subjective outlook. This is impeding the flow of vitality. Hindus must acquire the objective outlook also. They must come to grips with the realities and manage them as other nations do. They must reform their society, build up their economic life, organise industries, achieve political freedom, grow in knowledge and power and become healthy in the ordinary, natural way. Let us not expect miracles. Let us not befool ourselves with the thought that in some mysterious *Yogic* way all these will be accomplished without our labour. We shall have to grind our way on. Do we thereby mean that we are to give up the subjective outlook? *Never*. This is our very basis and foundation. And this is not arbitrarily chosen. All will have to acquire it if they want to comprehend the totality of existence and model life in order to realise the ultimate vision. This is the only way. The spiritual realities cannot be perceived unless the mind is withdrawn from the objective world and made to thread its way through the intricacies of the subjective life to that high level where the subject and the object commingle into one. But while retaining this outlook, we must guard ourselves against the dangers of the lower subjective outlook. We must combine the higher subjectivity with the natural objective vision for the majority of men. We must not forget that unless the bulk of our people are made as clever and efficient as the best of other nations, we shall be nowhere. Our dangers are not all over. Even if we survive the present crisis, the possibility of aggression from outside is not gone. We have

yet to reckon with the Russians and the Chinese. We must gain objective vitality, and utmost skill and efficiency in the ordinary affairs of life. We must get rid of our weakness as early as we can, and must guard ourselves against any more foreign aggressions. And that is not all. We must not also forget that the higher subjective life is not for all. If we want to impose it on all indiscriminately and do not provide for objective fulfilment for the majority, we shall only stultify them and eventually kill them, as we have almost done by now.

Is it possible to combine the subjective and the objective outlook? Yes, it is. We once had this harmony. The *Pauranika* age has for various reasons destroyed it and overstressed the subjective aspect. We have to regain this harmony. This harmony cannot be regained consciously or piecemeal. It has to be a spontaneous growth from within. For it is a mode of consciousness and not a discrete thought. A new vision must grow within the very soul of the nation. The primary impulse must indeed be a miracle. The ancient spiritual wisdom of India must make yet another revelation to us. It must be vouchsafed to us, it must be born within our soul. And unless it is born there, outside reform will avail little. There must be a spiritual regeneration embodying the desired harmony and not merely a contribution of thought. Who will bring about that regeneration? Who shall be the Exemplar? Space forbids us to answer these questions here. But whoever will study the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda, shall easily find the answers. For when the Swami says "Renounce!" does he not also mean "Conquer!"? He has indeed made the subjective vision the supreme motive of the highest objective conquests and the most worshipful service.

THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE

16TH JUNE, 1918.

It was 8 p.m. at the Ramakrishna Math at Bhubaneswar. The Math building was not yet complete. A monk of the Ramakrishna Order and the Disciple were conversing with each other. The Disciple said:

“The Lord is playing nicely indeed! He has shut us up in the cage of mind and body, and has kept the key of the door in His own hand. To Him it is all play, but to us it is sheer disaster and there is no escape. Once Hari Maharaj (Swami Turiyananda) told me that he said to Sri Ramakrishna: ‘Sir, though the old lady* wants to play, it is no concern of mine. Why should I play? I won’t.’ The Master was annoyed to hear this. He said: ‘Never speak in this way. She will do whatever She wishes. You cannot move a single step without Her will. You have to join in Her play. But take refuge in Her and pray to Her that She may wind up Her game.’ ”

Monk: “I have heard a different version of the story. The ‘old lady’ does not like that any should sit quiet by her. She wishes that all should join in the play. She loves those who play best and sometimes, highly gratified, she takes hold of one or another of them and takes him out of the play. The expert player, again, is not afraid of play and is not eager to end it. Even when he finishes his part, he resumes it again and continues merrily on so that the play may not stop. . . . Oh, what nice things Hari Maharaj used to say at Almora! It has been our lot only to hear them but not to realise any of them.”

Disciple: “Yes, it is in such solitary places, and during illness that men speak out the deepest things of

their heart. Please tell me a little about him.”

Monk: “He was very young when he first visited the Master. On Sundays there used to be crowds of visitors to the Master. He, therefore, would go to him on week-days. Once when he had gone to the Master after a long absence, the Master said to him: ‘Hallo, I am told that you are studying Vedanta at home. What does it contain if not the truth that Brahman alone is true and the world false?’ Hari Maharaj told me that the Master’s words impressed him deeply. Scales seemed to fall off from his eyes and he felt that that indeed was the theme of all Vedanta.

“Of his mode of life in those days, he said: ‘Ever since I was about twelve years old, I used to wake up at midnight. I would sit on my bed and recite the entire Gita once, which would take about ninety minutes. I would then go to the Ganges for bath. It was my habit to cook my own food. And in every condition, whether sitting or walking, I would meditate on the truth that God alone was true and the world false. I would test myself to see how far I had realised the truth. One winter night, I was bathing in the Ganges and dwelling in my mind on the truth. It was quite dark and there was none in the ghat. A while after, I saw something like a bundle of straw floating up towards me. I soon perceived that it was not straw but a big crocodile, and at once ran up to the bank. My heart began to thum. But next moment I thought ‘Is this my Vedanta?’ and jumped again into the water. The heart continued to palpitate and I felt that though I had jumped into the water, it was not from

* The reference is to a Bengali sport in which one becomes the “old lady” and sits in the centre and another tries to catch the remaining players who evade him and seek to touch the “old lady.” Whoever so touches the “old lady,” wins.

the consciousness that all was Brahman, but from sheer obstinacy.'

"The whole daily life of Hari Maharaj is almost mechanically adjusted; the different functions follow one after another with mechanical precision. He rises as usual when it is still night. He washes himself and then sits in meditation. He then takes a short stroll and afterwards reads. How studious he is! Even when he was so seriously ill, he could not forego his books. He becomes deeply absorbed in his study. He has to be reminded again and again before he gets up for his bath. While he rubs himself with oil, he recapitulates to his attendants what he has studied. He said once: 'Whatever Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) read, he related to us at dinner or on other occasions. This helped not only him in remembering the subjects better, but also us in learning new things.' Hari Maharaj keeps his things in their right places. When he returns from his evening walk, he places his shoes in their exact places and correct positions. In this connection he once said: 'The Master one day said to me at Dakshineswar: "They had their picnic at *Panchavati*. Just go and see if they have left anything behind. If so, bring it here." I found an umbrella and a knife. I returned to the Master's room and was about to place the knife on a shelf when he said: "Where are you putting it? Not there, but under the small cot. This is its proper place. You must keep a thing in its right place. You are keeping it in a place of your choice. But suppose I want it in the dark at night. Shall I then search for it all over the room, or call for you to tell me where you have kept it?"'

"Hari Maharaj said: 'Do you think you serve me? It is no service. You act as you like and cause annoyance to him whom you serve. To serve truly, you must forget yourself entirely. While at Swamiji's request

I was going to America, I once asked Sister Nivedita about the manners and customs I should adopt there. She took a knife by the blade, advancing the handle towards me and said: "Swami, if you are to hand anything to any one, you are to do it this way, that's all." That is to say, one must take upon oneself all difficulties and dangers and give others the advantages. This is service. One day in America, I was preparing some Indian dishes for some devotees, when some of the lady-devotees came offering to help me. I said: "You have not come to help, but to trouble me." They understood.' Hari Maharaj is right. We cannot serve truly.

"If we ever said to Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda) that he loved us dearly, he would say: 'Have I really loved you? No. If I had, I could bind you for ever to me. Oh, how deeply the Master loved us! We do not bear even one-hundredth of that love towards you. When I would fall asleep while fanning him at night, he would take me inside his mosquito-net and make me sleep on his bed. When I would remonstrate with him saying that it would be sacrilegious for me to use his bed, he would say: "Outside mosquitos will bite you. I shall wake you up when necessary."'

"Our parents had not loved us so deeply as Baburam Maharaj did. Parents' love is tainted with selfishness."

Disciple: "I do not believe that parents cannot love so deeply. They also love very deeply. But it is true their love is mixed with selfishness."

Monk: "While I was living with Hari Maharaj at Kankhal, G. also was practising *tapasyá* there. When the Burdwan district was suddenly flooded, and our Mission headquarters sent wires to every one to come to join in the relief work, G. went to Hari Maharaj and said: 'I am practising *tapasya* here. If I go, won't it be a loss?'

Hari Maharaj replied: 'What is the use of *tapasya*? Do you think you will get hold of God once for all through *tapasya*? Give up such thoughts. There is no such thing as acquiring God. You must plod on all your life. At last things may become favourable and you may enjoy a little of God's bliss.' These words of Hari Maharaj struck us dumb with surprise."

RAMAKRISHNA : HIS CREDO*

BY ROMAIN ROLLAND

[*To my Eastern Readers* : I must beg my Indian readers to view with indulgence the mistakes which I have made. In spite of all the enthusiasm I have brought to my task, it is impossible for a man of the West to interpret men of Asia with their thousand years' experience of thought, for his interpretations will be for the most part erroneous. The only thing which I can certify is my sincerity which has led me in a pious attempt to enter into all forms of life.

At the same time I must confess that I have not abdicated an iota of my free judgment as a man of the West. I respect the faith of all and very often I love it. But I never subscribe to it. Ramakrishna is near to my heart, because I see in him a man, and not an "Incarnation" as he appears to his disciples. In accordance with the *Vedântists*, in order to admit that the Divine dwells within the soul, and that the soul dwells in everything—that *Âtman* is *Brahman*, I do not need to enclose God within the bounds of a privileged man: that is (although it knows it not) a form of nationalism of spirit, and I cannot accept it. I see "God" in all that exists. I see Him as completely in the least fragment as in the whole cosmos. There is no difference of essence. And power is universally infinite; that which lies hidden in an atom could, if one only knew it, make a whole world leap forth. The only difference is that it is more or less concentrated in the heart of a conscience, in an ego, or in a unit of energy, an ion. The very greatest man is only a clearer reflection of the sun which gleams in each drop of dew.

That is why I can never make those sacred gulfs, so pleasing to the devout, between the heroes of the soul and the thousands of their obscure companions of the past and the present. And neither more nor less than I isolate Christ or Buddha, do I isolate Ramakrishna and Vivekananda from the great army of the Spirit on the march in their own time. I shall try in the course of this book to do justice to those genial personalities who during the last century, have sprung up in reawakened India, reviving the ancient energies of their country, and bringing about a spring-time of thought within her borders. Each one did creative work and each one collected round him a band of faithful souls who formed themselves into a church and unconsciously looked upon that church as the temple of the one or of the greatest God.

Far from their divisions I refuse to see the dust of battle; at this distance, the hedges between the fields melt into an immense expanse. I can only see the same river, a majestic "*chemin qui marche*" (road which marches), in the words of our Pascal. And it is because no man so fully as Ramakrishna not

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only conceived, but realised in himself the total unity of this river of God, open to all rivers and all streams, that I have given him my love ; and I have drawn from him a little of his sacred water to slake the great thirst of the world.

But I shall not stop leaning at the edge of the river. I shall continue my march with the stream right to the sea. Leaving behind at each winding of the river, where death has cried "Halt!" to one of our leaders, the kneeling company of the faithful, I shall accompany the stream. And I shall render it homage from the source to the estuary. Holy is the source, holy is the course, holy is the estuary. And we shall receive with the river tributaries small and great, and the Ocean itself—the whole moving mass of the living God.—R.R.]

I

I shall begin my story as if it were a fable. But the extraordinary thing about this ancient legend, apparently belonging to the realm of mythology, is that it is an account of men living yesterday, our neighbours in "the century" and that people alive to-day have seen them with their own eyes. I have received glowing witness at their hands. I have talked with certain among them who were the companions of this mystic being—of the Man-God—and I can vouch for their loyalty. These eyewitnesses are not the simple fishermen of the Gospel story ; some of them are great thinkers, learned in European thought and disciplined in its strict school. Nevertheless they speak as men of three thousand years ago.

The wise men of the twentieth century are no longer foolish enough to imagine that it is possible for scientific reason to live side by side with the visionary spirit of ancient times—(and in one brain)—as in the Greek age, when gods and goddesses shared the bed and the board of mortals, or the age of Galilee, when against the pale summer sky the heavenly winged messenger was seen bringing the Annunciation to a Virgin, who bowed meekly before the gift. And indeed the richness of this world, which they do not know how to enjoy, is a real miracle. The majority of European thinkers shut themselves up on their own particular floor of the house of

mankind ; and although this floor may be stored with libraries containing the history of the other floors inhabited in the past, the rest of the house seems to them to be uninhabited, and they never hear from the floors above or below them the footsteps of their neighbours. In the concert of the world the orchestra is made up of all the centuries past and present, and they play at the same time ; but each one has his eyes fixed upon his own stand and on the conductor's baton ; he hears nothing but his own instrument.

But we may listen to the whole splendid harmony of the present, wherein the past dreams and the future aspirations of all races and all ages are blended. For those who have ears to hear every second contains the song of humanity from the first born to the last to die, unfolding like jasmine round the chariot wheels of the ages. And there is no need to decipher papyrus in order to discover the road traversed by the thoughts of men. The thoughts of a thousand years are all around us. Nothing can deaden them. Listen ! but listen with your ears. Let books be silent ! They talk too much. . . .

If there is one place on the face of the earth where the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest days when man began to ponder the problems of existence, it is India. Her unique privilege, as Barth* has shown with great clearness, has been that of a great elder brother, whose

* A. Barth : The Religions of India, 1879.

spiritual development, an autonomous flower growing continuously throughout the long life of a people far exceeding the span of Methuselah, has never been interrupted. For more than thirty centuries the tree of Vision with all its thousand branches and their millions of twigs has sprung from that torrid land, the burning womb of the gods. It renews itself untiringly, showing no signs of decay; all kinds of fruit ripen upon its boughs at the same time; side by side are found all kinds of gods from the most savage to the highest—to the formless God, the Unnamable, the Boundless One . . . Always the same tree.

And the substance and the thought of its intertwined branches, through which runs the same sap, have been so closely knit together, that from root to topmost twig the whole tree is vibrant, like the mast of the great ship of the Earth, and sings one great symphony, composed of the thousand voices and the thousand faiths of mankind. Its polyphony, though discordant and confused at first to unaccustomed ears, discovers to the trained ear its secret hierarchy and great hidden plan. Again, those who have once heard it can no longer be satisfied with the rude and artificial order imposed amid desolation by Western reason and its faith or faiths, all equally tyrannical and mutually contradictory. What doth it profit a man to reign over a world for the most part enslaved, debased or destroyed? Better to reign over life, comprehended, revered and embraced as one great whole, in which he must know how to co-ordinate its opposing forces in an exact equilibrium.

This is the supreme knowledge we can learn from universal souls, and it is some beautiful examples of such souls that I wish to depict. The secret of their mystery and their serenity is that of the "lilies of the field, arrayed in glory, who toil not, neither do they spin." They weave the clothes for

those who go naked. They have spun the thread of Ariadne to guide us through the mazes of the labyrinth. We have only to hold the length of their thread in our hands to find the right path, the path, which rises from the vast morasses of the soul inhabited by primitive gods stuck fast in the mire, to the peaks crowned by the outspread wings of heaven—*Τὶράν αἰθήρ** the intangible Spirit.

II

The ageloug history of the spirit of India is the history of a numberless throng of souls, marching over to the conquest of ultimate Reality. All the great peoples of the world, wittingly or unwittingly, have the same fundamental aim; they belong to the conquerors, who age after age go up to the assault of the Reality, of which they form a part. It lures them on, so that they strive, they climb, sometimes they fall out exhausted, then recovering breath, they mount undaunted until they have conquered or been vanquished. But each one does not see the same face of Reality. It is like a great fortified city, beleaguered on different sides by different armies who are not in alliance. Each army possesses its own tactics and engines of war with which to solve its own problems of attack and assault. Our Western races go up against the bastions, the outer defences. They wish to overcome the physical forces of Nature, so that with her laws in their own hands they may fashion weapons for the subjection of the inner city, until the whole fortress has capitulated.

India proceeds on a different plan. She goes straight to the very centre, to the unseen General Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief; for the Reality she seeks is transcendental. But let us beware lest we put Western "realism" in antithesis to Indian "idealism". Indians are essentially realists in that they are not easily contented with abstractions, and that they

* Empedocles, "the titan Æther."

attain their ideal by the self-chosen methods of enjoyment and sensual possession. They must see, hear, taste and touch all ideas. Both in the richness of their sensuality and in the extraordinary power of imagination and visualised intuition they are far in advance of the West.* How then can we reject their evidence in the name of Western reason? Reason in our eyes is an impersonal and objective path, open to all men. But is it really objective? To what degree is it true in particular instances? Has it no personal limitations? Further it must be emphasised that the "realisations" of the Hindu mind, which seem to us ultra-subjective, do not appear so in India, where they are the logical outcome of scientific methods tested throughout the centuries by strict experiment duly recorded. Each great religious visionary shows his disciples the way leading infallibly to the same visions. Surely both methods, the Eastern and the Western, lend themselves to an almost equal measure of scientific doubt and provisional trust? The truly scientific mind of to-day recognises that a common and general mistake, if it be sincere, is a relative truth. If the vision is false, the important thing is to discover wherein lies its falsity and then to allow its premises to lead us to the higher reality lying beyond it.

The common belief of India, whether clearly defined or vaguely felt, is that nothing exists save in and by means of the Universal Spirit, *Brahman*, the one and indivisible. The diverse images of all things within the universe had their birth in Him, and the reality of the universe is derived from the same Universal Spirit, whose conception it is. Individual spirits, we who form an integral and organic part of the Cosmic Spirit, have realised that the universe

is multiform and changing, and we attribute an independent reality to it so long as we have not attained to the knowledge of the one *Brahman*. We are bewildered by *Mâyâ*, Illusion, which, being outside creation and time, we take to be the permanent reality, whereas it is nothing but a ceaseless stream of passing images, springing from the invisible source of the one Reality.

Hence we must escape from this stream of Illusion rolling all around us, and as a trout ascends a river, leaping over all barriers and up the waterfalls, so we must go back to the source. Such is our cruel fate, but it leads to salvation. *Sâdhanâ* is the name given to this painful, though heroic and magnificent struggle. The *Sâdhakas* are those who wage the contest. Their small legion from age to age is recruited from among the fearless souls; for they have to submit to a system of application and rough discipline, which has been tested through the centuries. They may choose one of two paths or weapons, both alike requiring long and constant practice—the way of "Not this, not this!", which may be called the way of knowledge by radical negation or the weapon of *Jnâna*; or the way of "This, this!", which may be called the way of knowledge by progressive affirmation or the weapon of *Bhakti*. The first relies on intellectual knowledge and has consistently rejected anything lying outside its range, proceeding on its way with intense resolution and eyes fixed on the supreme goal. The second is the way of love, whereby the Love of the Well-Beloved (whose form changes as it becomes more pure) gradually leads to the renunciation of everything else. *Jnâna* is the way of the Absolute, the impersonal God. *Bhakti* is the way of the personal God: at least its pilgrims linger long

* In making this statement I am far from suggesting that Indian thinkers have no capacity for intellectual concentration upon the Absolute. But even the "Formless" of the Advaita Vedanta comes to a certain extent within the embrace of their burning intuition. Even if the "Formless" is freed from all attributes and from vision, can it be assumed that it does not acquire a kind of mysterious touch? Has not its very revelation something of the character of a lightning contact?

upon it before they join the pilgrims of *jnâna*.

III

Said Ramakrishna :

“When I think of the Supreme Being as inactive, neither creating, nor preserving, nor destroying, I call Him *Brahman* or *Purusha*, the impersonal God. When I think of Him as active, creating, preserving, destroying, I call Him *Shakti*, or *Mâyâ*, or *Prakriti*, the personal God. But the distinction between them does not mean a difference. The personal and the impersonal are the same Being, such as milk and its whiteness, or the diamond and its lustre, the serpent and its ziz-zag motion. One cannot think of one without the other. The Divine Mother and *Brahman* are one.”

This great thought was no new one. The spirit of India had been nourished upon it for centuries, during which it had been moulded, worked up and rolled out by *Vedântic* philosophy. It had been the subject of endless discussion between the two great *Vedântic* schools,—the school of Sankara, the pure *Advaita* school, and the school of Ramanuja, the school of *Vishistâdvaita* or “modified” monism. The first, or absolute non-dualist, considers the universe as unreal, and the Absolute as the only reality ; the second, or relatively non-dualist, also recognises *Brahman* as the only reality, but gives to the world of appearances, to individual souls, the value of modifications or modes, which are not illusory, but radiant with the attributes of *Brahman*, such as Thought, Energy, the dissemination of living multiplicity.

These two schools tolerate each other ; but the extremists of the first look with scornful indulgence upon the second, as having made a transitory compromise, adapted to human weakness—a stick to lean upon during the tottering ascent. The crucial point has always been the definition of “phenomenal” Illusion, the essence of *Mâyâ*.

Was it to be considered relative or absolute? Sankara himself did not define *Mâyâ*. He said that Illusion existed, and that the aim of *Advaita* philosophy was to annihilate it. On the other hand, the object of “qualified” or modified *Advaitists*, such as Ramanuja, was somehow to make use of it in the evolution of the individual soul.

What was the exact position of Ramakrishna between the two schools? The warm plasticity of his nature inclined him to the conciliatory solution of Ramanuja, but the intensity of his faith made him subscribe to the most extreme conception of the Absolute. His genius discovered the most vivid expressions, and the most ingenious parables to affirm the impossibility, not only of explaining it, but even of approaching it through the understanding. He came to impart a contact almost physical with the “Being without attributes”, with the Sun of whom Sankara said, when replying to the objection that the purely intellectual Absolute was an impossibility without the objects of the intelligence, “the sun shines even without objects to illumine.” But there was a difference in the language used by Ramakrishna, who had too catholic a vision to be able to pass by these “objects to illumine”, even when he denied their existence. He said of his Sun that it shone alike upon the evil and upon the good—that it was the light of a lamp whereby one man might read the Holy Writings, while another might use it to forge human writing—that it was the sugar mountain which the ants, when replete, imagined that they had carried away, whereas they had only nibbled a few crumbs—that it was the sea, at whose edge a salt doll leant to measure the depth ; but from the second that its foot touched the water, it began to melt, it was lost and vanished. “The Being without attributes” means something that we cannot grasp. It eludes us. But that does not mean that we do not exist. He illumines our efforts,

our ignorance, our wisdom, our good and evil deeds—we nibble at His shell—a point of fusion exists at which He takes us again into His great mouth and absorbs us—but before that point is reached, where is the salt doll? Where do the ants come from? And as for the reader under the lamp, saintly hermit or forger, where is his home, the object read and his eyesight?

Ramakrishna said that even the Divinely revealed Holy Scriptures have been all more or less polluted, because they have come through human mouths. But is even the pollution real? (For it presupposes the purity, *Brahman*). Where are the lips and the teeth that have tasted some portions of Divine food?

In fact Ramakrishna distinguishes two distinct planes and stages of vision: that under the sign of *Mâyâ*, which creates the reality of the “differentiated” universe, and the supervision of perfect contemplation (*Samâdhi*), wherein one contact with the Infinite is enough to cause the illusion of all “differentiated” egos, our own and others, to disappear immediately.

But Ramakrishna expressly maintains that it is absurd to pretend that the world is unreal, so long as we form part of it, and, receive from it, through the preservation of our separate egos, the unquenchable conviction (perhaps hidden within our lanterns) of its reality even the saint who descends from *Samâdhi* (ecstasy) onto the plane of everyday life, is obliged to return to the envelope of his “differentiated” ego, however attenuated and purified. He is flung back into the world of relativity. “So far as his ego is relatively real to him, this world will also be real, and the Absolute will be relatively unreal. He sees *Mâyâ* as the real; but when his ego has been purified, he sees the whole world of phenomena as the manifold manifestation of the Absolute for the senses.”

And *Mâyâ* appears in its real guise—at once true and false, knowledge and

ignorance, (*Vidyâ* and *Avidyâ*), that which leads to God, and that which does not lead to God. *Therefore she is.*

And his assertion has the personal value of a St. Thomas the Apostle, who has seen and touched, when he bears witness to these *Vijnânis*, these men of super-knowledge, who possessed the privilege of “realising” in this life the personal and impersonal God—for he was one of them himself.

They have seen God, both outwardly and inwardly. He has revealed Himself to them. The personal God has said to them, “I am the Absolute. I am the origin of ‘differentiation.’” In the essence of Divine Energy, radiating from the Absolute, they have seen the principle differentiating the supreme *Âtman* and the universe, possessed alike by the absolute God and by *Mâyâ*. *Mâyâ*, *Shakti*, *Prakriti*, Nature, is not illusion. To purified eyes She is the manifestation of the supreme *Âtman*, the august sower of living souls and of the universe.

Then Ramakrishna intoned the Cantic of the Divine Mother:

“Yes, my Divine Mother is none other than the Absolute. She is at the same time One and Multiple My Divine Mother says: ‘I am the Mother of the Universe, I am the *Brahman* of the *Vedânta*, I am the *Âtman* of the *Upanishads*. . . . It is I, *Brahman*, who has made this Differentiation. . . . Good and bad works obey Me. There is without doubt the Law of *Karma*. But it is I who am the law-giver. It is I who make and unmake laws. I order all *Karma*, good and bad Come to Me! Either through Love (*Bhakti*), through Knowledge (*Jnâna*) or through Action (*Karma*) leading to God. I will lead you over this world, the Ocean of all work. . . . And I will give you the knowledge of the Absolute, as well, if you wish. You cannot get away from or out of Me. Even those who have realised the Absolute in the

Samādhi, come back to Me through My will. . . .’

“My Divine Mother is the Primordial Divine Energy. She is everywhere. She is at the same time the interior and the exterior of phenomenal things. She has given birth to the world. And the world carries Her in its heart. She is the Spider; and the world is the web She has spun. The Spider draws out the thread from Herself, and then twists it round Herself. My Mother is at the same time the container and the contained . . . She is the shell. She is the almond.”

The elements of this ardent Credo are printed deep in the ancient sources of India. Ramakrishna and his followers never claimed that their doctrines were new.* The Master’s genius was of another order: He roused the Gods dormant in thought from lethargy, and made them incarnate; he woke the springs in “the sleeping wood,”† and warmed them with the fire of his magic personality. The Credo is his own in its accent and transport, in its rhythm and melody, in its song of passionate love.

Listen attentively to it, for it is a magnificent song, illimitable and yet harmonious, not confined within the space of any poetic measure, and yet falling by itself into an ordered beauty and delight! Adoration of the Absolute is united without effort to the burning love of *Mâyā*. Let us keep in our ears its cry of love until we measure its breadth later by listening to Vivekananda. That great fighter, when caught in the toils of *Mâyā*, struggled to break them, and he and She were in

a state of constant war, a state completely alien to Ramakrishna. He was at war with nothing. Rather he loved his enemy as a lover. And nothing could resist his charm. His enemy came to love him. *Mâyā* enfolded him in Her arms. Their lips met. Armide had found her Renaud.‡ The Circe, who bewitched the crowd of other suitors, became for him the Ariadne, who led Theseus by the hand through the mazes of the labyrinth. Illusion, the all-powerful, who hoods the eyes of the falcon, unhooded his, and threw him from her wrist into the free open spaces of the air. *Mâyā* is the Mother,§ “who reveals Herself to Her children through the various forms of Her splendour and Divine Incarnations.” She moulds the sheath of the ego with Her love and the fire of Her heart, until it becomes no more than “a thing which has length but no breadth,” a line, a point, which melts finally under the magic fingers of this refiner into *Brahman*.

So praised be the fingers and the water! Praised be the face and the veil! Everything is God. God is in everything. He is in the shadow as well as in the light. Inspired by the English “Mortalists” of the XVIIth century, Hugo said, “the sun is only the shadow of God.” Ramakrishna would have said that the shadow is also His light.

But it is because in common with all true Indian thinkers, he believes nothing that he has not first “realised” in his entire being, that his thought has the breath of life. The “Conception” of the idea regains with him its plain and

* On the contrary their tendency was to deny originality even when they were the creators. The great religious spirits of modern India, and, I believe, of all countries, have this in common—that their power lies in the assurance that *their* truth is a very ancient one, an eternal verity, *the* Verity. Dayananda, the inflexible founder of the Arya Samaj, was always indignant if new ideas were attributed to him.

† Allusion to the title of the well-known fairy tale, “The Sleeping Beauty.” (The title in French is *La Belle en Bois Dormant*, which literally translated means The Beauty in the Sleeping Wood.—*Translator’s Note*.)

‡ Allusion to the characters in Torquato Tassor’s poem, *Jerusalem Unbound*.

§ Or the eldest sister. For elsewhere Ramakrishna said to Keshab Chandra Sen, “*Mâyā* is the created of the Divine Mother, as forming part of Her plan of the universe.” The Mother plays with the world. The world is Her toy. “She lets slip the flying kite of the soul, held by the cord of Illusion.” (October, 1882).

carnal meaning. To believe is to grasp, to grasp is to take into oneself the ripening fruit.

When a Ramakrishna has once known the grasp of such truths, they do not remain within him as ideas. They quicken into life, into the seeds of life, and fertilised by his Credo, they flourish and come to fruition in an orchard of "realisations," no longer

abstract and isolated, but clearly defined, with a practical bearing on daily life, for they nourish the hunger of men. The Divine flesh, the substance of the universe, once tasted, is to be found again, the same, at all tables and all religions. In it he partakes of the food of immortality in a Lord's Supper, not of twelve apostles, but of all starving souls—of the universe itself.

INDIA'S CULTURAL SWARAJ

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

I

From what has been said in the last article, it will be seen, that the cultural bond of Indian nationhood was much stronger than the political. And when Westerners and Westernised Indians talk of calling forth Indian nationhood they have this fact in view, because they attach inordinate importance to politics and consider the political to be the main, if not the sole, bond of nationhood. The Swaraj¹ which India enjoyed was primarily cultural. As we shall see hereafter, with real village self-government, the people were more or less independent of the central government. Ever since India attained the ethical, the highest, stage of civilization,¹ her empire extended nearly all over Asia, but it was the empire of culture with peace and altruism as its basic principles, won and maintained not by physical but by psychic force. The cultural contrast between India and the West was pointed out to Alexander the Great by the ascetic Dandin:

"We honour God, love man, neglect gold and contemn death; you, on the other hand, fear death, honour gold, hate man, and contemn God. Your mind is filled with vast desires and insatiable avarice and a diabolical thirst

for Empire. You are made much like other men, and yet you would obtain by force whatever mankind possesses."

The Indo-Aryans have conferred enormous benefits upon large masses of people in India and outside India, in Tibet, Ceylon, Burma, China, Indo-China, Japan and Malay Archipelago and Central America, not by conquering or annexing their territories or exploiting them materially, but by settling among them and exerting the irresistible influence of intellectual and spiritual superiority. The system of Laotsze, the greatest philosopher China has produced, corresponds so closely to Vedantism that he is supposed by some to have drawn his inspiration from India, unless, indeed, as some suppose, he was an Indian by birth. "Siam received," says Mr. Cobaton, "its first civilization from the Brahmins of India, and then from the merchants from the Malabar and the Coromondal coast . . . There are still extant noteworthy archæological witnesses of this primitive Hinduisation of Siam in the monuments of its former capitals. . . . The former and present religions of Siam (Brahmanism and Buddhism), its sacred language, its civil institutions, its writing, its arts and its literature came from India." "The oldest foreign loan words in Malay

¹ The writer has dealt with the various stages of Civilization in his "Epochs of Civilization."

are Sanskrit, including words for religious, moral and intellectual ideas, with some astronomical, mathematical and botanical terms, a court vocabulary and a large number of everyday words. In their pantheon the greater gods are Hindu while the lesser gods are Malay. Their cosmology is also Hindu.'²

The Mexican idea of the four ages or Yugas resembles that of the Buddhists, as does also that of the nine stages of heaven and hell. The Toltec tradition of the mysterious Quetzalcoatl, who is described as a fair man with "noble features, long black hair, and full beard, dressed in flowing robes" and as a "saintly ruler," probably refers to a Buddhist missionary. He is said to have dwelt twenty years among the Toltecs (one of the most ancient of the civilized races of Central America), and taught them to "follow his austere and ascetic life, to hate all violence and war, to sacrifice no men or beasts on the altars, but to give mild offerings of bread and flowers and perfumes." Such a mild doctrine could not in the earlier centuries of the Christian era have come from any other quarter than Eastern Asia. Legend tells stories of the mysterious visitor teaching the Toltecs "picture-writing and the calendar, and also the artistic work of the silversmith for which Cholula was long famed."

In the West, the Buddhist missionaries of Asoka carried the message of peace and universal amity to Syria, Egypt, Macedonia and Epirus; and there are erudite scholars who have traced the influence of Buddhism on the early development of Christianity.

The medical science of the West was strongly influenced by that of the Hindus. Numerous drugs of Indian origin are noticed by the Greeks. It is even supposed by some that Hippocrates borrowed from the Hindus. Charaka, the oldest Hindu writer on medical subjects whose works have come down to us, is referred to by Serapion, one of the

earliest of the Arab physicians, as well as by Avicenna and Rahzes. A variety of treatises on medical science were translated from the Sanskrit into Arabic and Persian, and two Hindu physicians, Mankeh and Saleh, the former of whom translated a special Sanskrit treatise on poison into Persian, held appointments as body physicians to Harun-ul-Rashid. The Saracens introduced the Indian method of arithmetic and the Indian algebra and chemistry into Europe.

From a very remote period, India has been divided into a number of small principalities. Megasthenes counted 118 and Hiouen Tshang 76. The Kings who were most powerful exacted submission from weaker princes, but such submission was in the majority of cases merely nominal. Even in the case of conquest, it is enjoined in the *Manu-samhita*, that "immediate security is to be assured to all by proclamation. The religion and laws of the country are to be respected and as soon as time has been allowed for ascertaining that the conquered people are to be trusted, a prince of the royal family of the conquered country is to be placed on the throne who should hold his kingdom as a dependency." That this law was not a mere camouflage is proved by the fact that the majority of the Kings of India have been either Hinduised aborigines or low caste Hindus. The Brahmans, the highest caste, never, as a class, sought material aggrandisement. Government, trade, in short every occupation calculated to further material interests, they left to the lower classes. What they sought to restrict within the two highest classes, and especially within their own class, was spiritual and intellectual advancement which is of much more abiding value to a nation and to humanity than material aggrandisement. And under their wise guidance India maintained cultural Swaraj which made her prosperous despite numerous political revolutions.

² Dr. Kalidas Nag, "Greater India Society Bulletin No. 1."

II

As the writer has shown in his "National Education and Modern Progress," the primary object of high education in India was ethical and spiritual culture. It was carried down to the mass of the people by vernacular translations of works like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, popular dramatic entertainments, etc. That ethical culture in Ancient India was not confined to literature and inscriptions, but was to a large extent realised by the people in their lives, is testified to by intelligent foreigners (Greeks and Chinese) who sojourned in India long enough to be able to form a correct estimate of its condition.³ Coming to more recent times, Idrisi in his Geography (written in the 11th century A.D.) says: "The Indians are naturally inclined to justice and never depart from it in their action. Their good faith, honesty and fidelity to their engagements are well-known, and they are so famous for these qualities that people flock to their country from every side." Marco Polo (13th century) observed: "You must know that these Brahmins are the best merchants in the world and the most truthful, they would not tell a lie for anything on earth." Abul Fazl, the accomplished author of the *Ain-i-Akbari* (16th century), notes: "The Hindus are admirers of truth and unbounded fidelity in all dealings."

During the earlier part of the British Rule, Col. Sleeman assures us that "falsehood or lying between members of the same village is almost unknown." He adds, "I have had before me hundreds of cases in which a man's property, liberty and life have depended upon his telling a lie, and he has refused to tell it."

Warren Hastings spoke of the modern Hindus as "gentle, benevolent, more susceptible of gratitude for kindness shown them than prompted to vengeance for wrongs inflicted, and as

exempt from the worst propensities of human passion as any people upon the face of the earth; they are faithful, and affectionate in service and submissive to legal authority. . . The precepts of their religion are wonderfully fitted to promote the best ends of society, its peace and good order."

Bishop Heber spoke of them as "decidedly by nature, a mild, pleasing, and intelligent race; sober, parsimonious and, when an object is held out to them, most industrious and persevering," and as "constitutionally kind-hearted, industrious, sober, and peaceable."

Abbe Du Bois speaking of the Hindus says, "They will never suffer the needy who have implored their charity to go unassisted. . . What the European possesses, he keeps for himself. What the Hindu possesses, he is always disposed to share with those who have nothing. In fact, it might be said that a wealthy Hindu considers himself as the depository or distributor, rather than the proprietor of his fortunes, so greatly prone is he to acts of charity and benevolence."

Any one who has mixed with our people, especially away from large cities, would, I think, agree with me when I say, that they are still to a large extent pervaded by the Hindu ideals of self-abnegation and benevolence, and that there is still much less of animality in them than in the corresponding classes in the West. The number of criminals, especially of female criminals, in proportion to the total population in India is much less than in the highly civilized countries of the West. I was touring in the Central Provinces during the great famine of 1898-99 and was greatly struck by the patient resignation with which they bore the dire calamity and the benevolent spirit in which they helped one another. There were no riots, no increase in crimes to speak of. There is more poverty here than in the West, and more ignorance judged by

³ Vide "Epochs of Civilization," pp. 187-191.

the standard of literacy, but there is much less of squalor and brutality, much less of degradation and misery. Our community still produces men of the *sattvika* type, though their number is much smaller than before, and they still exert considerable influence upon the other classes. They rarely, if ever, appear in newspaper; what they do is done in silence and secrecy. While touring in the Rewah State in the nineties of the last century, I was surprised to find that the Gonds of an extensive tract in that state, who, like most other aboriginal tribes, are generally addicted to intoxicating drinks, had given up drinking; and on inquiry, I found out the reason to be the fiat of a *Yogi* who had visited the state some time before me.

"His order had gone forth from village to village, and the Gonds without question had become total abstainers. No crusade against intemperance could have produced such a wonderful and wide-spread result. There are no doubt charlatans among the *Yogis* who live upon the credulity of ignorant people. But there cannot be the shadow of a doubt, that there are also genuine men among them, men who devote their lives to spiritual culture in a manner inconceivable to the European."

In regard to the honesty of our people, Sir John Hewet (now Lord Meston), when he was Lieutenant Governor of the United Provinces, said in an interview which he gave to a press representative:

"In another way the famine (1908, United Provinces) provided an encouraging experience by testifying to the sturdy honesty and self-reliance of the cultivating classes. The Government then advanced nearly a million and a half sterling to cultivators for temporary purposes, in addition to large loans for wells and other permanent additions to irrigation. Practically the whole of this large sum was repaid with the

exception of a sum of rather more than £50,000 which had to be remitted owing to the famine being followed by bad seasons in a few small tracts. In one district four thousand individuals took advances for a particular purpose connected with irrigation, and only two were found to have devoted their money to a purpose other than that for which it was intended. The manner in which the people recovered from the disaster that had fallen on them and the punctuality with which the agricultural body repaid their advances seem to me to be the most hopeful augury for the future. I venture to doubt indeed whether *such an experience would be possible in any country but India.*" (The italics are mine).

III

In regard to intellectual culture, philosophy, the science of language, mathematics, the medical sciences, etc., were carried to a high pitch of development.⁴ When Moslem rule was established over a large part of India, Sanskrit science and Sanskrit general literature suffered to a large extent owing to the disappearance of a good number of Hindu courts which patronised them. The last great name the former could boast of was that of Bhascaracharya who wrote his masterpiece, *Siddhanta Siromani*, about the middle of the twelfth century. The last great names in the field of general Sanskrit literature were those of Magha, Sriharsha and Jayadeva, all of whom flourished before the close of the twelfth century. The few courts of Hindu kings, such as that of Vijaynagar in Southern India, which escaped the grasp of the Mahomedans, still fostered Sanskrit learning; it was also kept up at such places as Benares and Nadia. But during the five centuries and a half of Moslem supremacy Sanskrit literature can boast of only a few commentators, such as Sayanacharya of Vijay-

⁴ Vide "Epochs of Civilization," pp. 135—157 and 193—202.

nagar, and Raghunandan of Nadia, and Sanskrit science, of only one astronomer, Raja Jay Singh of Jaipur.

But the loss to Sanskrit literature was more than made up by the gain to the vernacular literatures. It was chiefly the influence of Mahomedanism with its doctrine of the brotherhood of man that produced that succession of earnest reformers who shed such lustre on India from the fourteenth century to the sixteenth. Ramananda, Kabir, Nanak, and Chaitanya were certainly influenced by the tenets of Mahomedanism. They all preached the unity of the Godhead; they all protested against caste. They had their disciples not only among the lowest classes of the Hindus, but also among Mahomedans.

The impetus, which the reformers gave, directly and indirectly, to the progress of the vernacular literatures, was very great. In Northern India the teachings of Kabir and Chaitanya were embodied by their followers in voluminous works, which enriched them. They preached to the people in the languages of the people. Their adoption of the vernaculars as their literary languages was a protest against the exclusiveness of the orthodox Brahmans. The books written in Sanskrit were not understood by the mass of the people: they were not meant for the people. Now the people had books written in their vernaculars, books which, if they

could not read themselves, they could at least understand if read to them. It was about the time of the Mahomedan conquest that the Indian vernaculars, the Hindi, the Bengali, the Uriya, and the Marathi, began to be developed. This development was not the direct work of the Mahomedan occupation. Long before that time, even centuries before the Christian era, the mass of the Hindus spoke in Aryan dialects, which were called Prakrits. Vararuchi, the earliest Prakrit grammarian, enumerates four classes of these in the sixth century A. D.—Mahárástri, Sauraseni, Mágadhi, and Paisáchi. The vernaculars of India were gradually evolved from these dialects. They must have been in process of evolution long before the Mahomedan conquest. But that the first great impulse to vernacular literatures was given by the Vaishnava Reformation which was carried on from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century by Ramananda, Kabir, Chaitanya and a number of other reformers, is shown by the facts that with the exception of some Hindi ballads in Rajputana, vernacular literatures have scarcely anything to show before the thirteenth century,⁵ and that the earliest writers were mostly Vaishnavas. In Northern India, besides the reformer Kabir, the two great Hindi writers previous to the eighteenth century were Sur Das, and Tulsi Das;⁶ and they were both earnest Vaishnavas.

⁵ The Tamil is excluded from this generalisation. Its development was earlier than that of the other vernaculars. The Tol-kappiyam, the oldest extant Tamil work, is believed to have been written a few centuries before the birth of Christ. It is still the greatest authority on Tamil grammar. "Whatever antiquity," says Caldwell, "may be attributed to the Tol-kappiyam, it must have been preceded by many centuries of literary culture. It lays down rules for different kinds of poetical compositions, which must have been deduced from examples furnished by the best authors whose works were then in existence . . . In endeavouring to trace the commencement of Tamil literature we are thus carried further and further back to an unknown period." "Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian Languages," 1875, pp. 127-128). "With the exception of a few works composed towards the end of the twelfth century, nearly all the Telugu works that are now extant appear to have been written in the fourteenth and subsequent centuries, after the establishment of the kingdom of Vijaynagara; and many of them were written in comparatively recent times." (Caldwell, *op. cit.* p. 123). The most ancient and esteemed grammar of classical Canarese, that by Kesava, was written about 1170 A. D. The oldest extant work in Malayalam is "Ramacharita," which was written about the thirteenth century A. D.

⁶ Sur Das flourished about the middle of the sixteenth century. "He and Tulsi Das," says Mr. Grierson, "are the two great stars in the firmament of Indian vernacular poetry. Tulsi was devoted to Ram (*ekanta Ram-sebak*) while Sur Das was devoted to Krishna (*ekanta Krishna-sebak*) and between them they are said to have exhausted all the possibilities of poetic art." (Journ. As. Soc. of Bengal pt. I for 1886, special number, p. 21.)

The earliest Bengali authors (fourteenth to the sixteenth century) were enthusiastic worshippers of Krishna, the most notable among them being Vidyapati and Chandidas. No Marathi writer of any note is known before the thirteenth century and the greatest poets of Maharashtra, Tukaram and Sridhar were Vaishnavas.⁷

There was a very wide-spread network of *Pathshalas* (primary schools) for elementary education. Being naturally evolved, it was well adapted to the social and economic condition of the people and to their requirements, and maintained by the community it encouraged self-help and self-reliance. Besides, being inexpensive, it was capable of very wide extension. Sir Thomas Munro had an investigation made into the state of indigenous education in the Madras Presidency. From the results of his inquiries it appears that, in that Presidency, about 1826, the number of schools amounted to 12,493, and the population to 12,850,941, so that there was one school to every thousand of the population, but as only a very few females are taught in schools, we may reckon one school to every 590 of the population.

IV

The fine arts were carried to a high stage of development as is evidenced by the Buddhist monasteries, chaityas, etc. of Bharhut and other places, the magnificent Hindu temples of Srirangam, Madura, Bhubanesvar, etc., and

the architectural marvels of Northern India like the Taj Mahal.

The Emperor Chandragupta had special departments of the state to superintend trade and mining and manufacturing industries. Travellers from Greece, Rome and China marvelled at the skill which the Indians displayed in them. Offerings were made to the gods in the costliest of plate; armour and arms richly decorated with gold and silver, and costly jewellery and dresses of the finest web adorned the persons of the higher classes; and gems, rich brocades, and muslins of the most delicate workmanship found their way from India to the markets of China, Persia, Egypt and Rome. There are references in the *Manusamhita* to vessels made not only of copper, iron, brass, pewter, tin and lead, but also of gold and silver. Household utensils made of leather, cane, horn, shells and ivory were not uncommon. From the frequent mention of gems and ornaments made of the precious metals as well as from the tax levied upon them, they seem to have been in no small demand. Perfumes, honey, iron, indigo, lac, medical substances, wax, sugar, spice, etc., formed some of the ordinary articles of trade. There are references not only to clothes made of cotton and jute but also to silk and woollen manufactures.

The Hindus made considerable advance in the chemical and metallurgical industries. Varahamihira, who flourished early in the sixth century

Tulsi Das flourished about the commencement of the seventeenth century. For his life see Grierson, *op. cit.* p. 12 *et seq.* and Growse's "Ramayana of Tulsi Das," Introduction. In Northern India, the Ramayana of Tulsi Das is "in everyone's hands, from the court to the college, and is read or heard and appreciated alike by every class of the Hindu community, whether high or low, rich or poor, young or old."

⁷ Tukaram died in 1649. He was an ardent worshipper of Vithoba (Vishnu) "He is," says Mr. Acworth, "the most original of all Marathi poets, and his work is remarkable for a high and sustained level of religious exaltation." Sridhar died in 1728. He rendered the Ramayana and the Mahabharata into Marathi. "There is no Marathi poet who equals Sridhar in the acceptance he obtains from all classes. In every town and village in the Deccan and Konkan, especially during the rains, the pious Maratha will be found enjoying with the family and friends, the recitation of the Pothi of Sridhar and enjoying it indeed. Except an occasional gentle laugh, or a sigh, or a tear, not a sound disturbs the rapt silence of the audience, unless when one of those passages of supreme pathos is reached, which affects the whole of listeners simultaneously with an outburst of emotion which drowns the voice of the reader." "Ballads of the Marathas" by H. A. Acworth, Introduction.

A.D., mentions several preparations of cements "strong as the thunderbolt," and of dyes, cosmetics and scents. He also refers to mechanical experts. India had already made three important discoveries, which for a long time secured her a foremost place in the commercial world—(1) the preparation of fast dyes; (2) the extraction of the principle of indigotin from the indigo plant, and (3) the tempering of steel by advanced metallurgical processes.⁸

Indian handicrafts did not suffer from the Mahomedan conquest. Not only did indigenous manufactures flourish under Mahomedan patronage, but many new industries were imported from beyond the confines of India, such as the carpet-weaving of Kurdistan and the glazed pottery of Ispahan. The material condition of the people under the Mogul Empire was, on the whole, one of ease and comfort.

Nicolo-di-Conti, who travelled about A.D. 1420, describes the banks of the Ganges as covered with cities and beautiful gardens. He ascended the Ganges till he came to what he calls a most famous and powerful city named Maurazia abounding in gold, silver and pearls. Baber, who came to India in the beginning of the sixteenth century, speaks of it as a rich and noble country, abounding in gold and silver and was astonished at the swarming population, and the innumerable workmen in every trade and profession. Sebastian Manrique, who travelled about 1612, mentions the magnificent cotton fabrics of Bengal exported to all the countries of the East. He describes Dacca, then the capital of Bengal, to be frequented by people of every nation and to contain

upwards of 200,000 souls. When that town came under British Government its population was also estimated at that figure. Manrique travelled from Lahore to Multan through a country abounding in wheat, rice, vegetables, and cotton. The villages, he tells us, are numerous and contain excellent inns. Tatta in Sind, where he stayed for a month, is described by him to be extremely rich. The country round was of exuberant abundance, particularly in wheat, rice, and cotton, in the manufacture of which at least two thousand looms were employed. Some silk was also produced, and also a beautiful species of leather, variegated with fringes and ornaments of silk. Mandeslo, a German, who travelled about 1638, found Broach to be a populous city, almost filled with weavers, who manufactured the finest cotton cloth in the province of Guzerat. On his way from Broach to Ahmedabad, he passed through Brodera, another large town of weavers and dyers. He was much struck with the splendour and beauty of Ahmedabad, the chief manufactures of which were those of silk and cotton. Cambay appeared to him a larger city than Surat, and carried on an extensive trade. He found Agra, then the capital of India, to be twice as large as Ispahan; a man in one day could not ride round the walls. The streets were handsome and spacious; some were vaulted above for the convenience of shopkeepers, who had their goods exposed there for sale.

Tavernier, who had repeatedly visited most parts of India, says that Shah Jehan reigned not so much as a King over his subjects, but rather as

⁸ The remarkable iron pillar near the Kutab Minar at Delhi may be given as an example of the admirable skill of the Hindus. It measures about 24 feet in length, and its diameter is 16 inches at the base and 12 inches at the capital. Its probable date is about the fifth century. "It opens our eyes," says Dr. Fergusson, "to an unsuspected state of affairs to find the Hindus at that age forging a bar of iron larger than any that have been forged even in Europe to a very late date, and not frequently even now. As we find them, however, a few centuries afterwards using bars as long as this in roofing the arch of the temple at Karnak, we must believe, that they were much more familiar with the use of this metal than they afterwards became. It is almost equally startling to find that after an exposure to wind and rain for fourteen centuries, it is unruined, and the capital and inscription are as clear and as sharp now as when put up fourteen centuries ago."

a father over his family and children. He commends the strictness of his civil government and speaks highly of the security enjoyed under it.

Pietro della Valle, who wrote about 1623, says :

“Hence, generally, all live much after a genteel way ; and they do it securely as well, because the king does not persecute his subjects with false accusations, nor deprive them of anything when he sees them live splendidly.”

Bernier, who resided for some time in India about the middle of the seventeenth century, writes deprecatingly of the wealth of the people. He admits, however, “that India is like an abyss, in which all the gold and silver of the world are swallowed up and lost ; such vast quantities are continually imported thither out of Europe, while none ever returns ;” and “that vast quantities of the precious metals are employed not only in earrings, noserings, bracelets of hands and feet, and other ornaments, but in embroidering and embellishing the clothes alike of the Omrahs and of the meanest soldiers.”

When Clive entered Murshidabad he wrote of it : “This city is as extensive, populous and rich as the city of London, with this difference that there are individuals in the first possessing infinitely greater property than in the last city.”

The transactions of the European trading companies gave great impetus to some of the industries of the seaboard provinces of India. The great silk industry of Bengal, which until a few years ago was in a highly flourishing condition, owed its expansion to the export trade created by the East India Company. The prosperity of the weaving industry of Dacca about the close of the eighteenth century may be best estimated from the fact that, in 1787, fifty lacs of rupees worth of cloths were entered at the Custom

House of that town for export to foreign countries.

The indigenous velvets and satins held their own against those imported from abroad. Besides such produce as indigo, spices and sugar, India exported to Europe manufactured cotton and silk. These manufactures must have given employment to numerous artisans. The following are the component parts of the amount of sales by the East India Company in England, reduced to an annual average, in the seventeen years ending 1808-9.⁹

Piece goods	...	£1,539,478
Organzine silk	...	£13,443
Pepper	...	£195,461
Saltpetre	...	£180,066
Spices	...	£112,596
Sugar, Indigo	...	£272,442
Coffee	...	£6,624

Muslins and calicoes used to be manufactured in various parts of India, especially in Bengal and the northern part of the coast of Coromandal. Dacca was the chief seat of the muslin manufactures. The Northern Circars and the neighbourhood of Musulipatam were the most distinguished for chintzes, calicoes and gingham.

V

In regard to the general prosperity under Cultural Swaraj, Abul Fazl says in the *Ain-i-Akberi* :

“The whole extent of this vast empire is unequalled for the excellence of its waters, salubrity of air, mildness of climate and the temperate constitutions of the natives. Every part is cultivated and full of inhabitants, so that you cannot travel the distance of a Cos (two miles) without seeing towns, and villages, and meeting with good water. Even in the depth of winter, the earth and trees are covered with verdure ; and in the rainy season, which in many parts of Hindustan commences in June, and continues till September, the air is so delightfully

⁹ H. Murray's "Discoveries and Travels," Vol. II, p. 375.

pleasant, that it gives youthful vigour to old age."

The only exception to this general statement noticed by the writer is Bengal. But even there considerable improvement would appear to have been effected during Abul Fazl's time. He says that "for a long time past the air of Bengal had been unhealthy at the leaving off of the rains, afflicting both man and cattle ; but under the auspices of his present Majesty this calamity has ceased."

That until lately the people of the United Provinces and the Punjab enjoyed good health is a well-known fact. Allahabad, Agra, Delhi and Lahore were looked upon as sanitarium. Even Bengal was, on the whole, not so fever-stricken, as a large part of it has been since the middle of the last century. "The Dutch Admiral Stavorinus in his Memoirs," says Dr. Bentley, "gives a list of the diseases prevalent in the neighbourhood of Hooghly, but whilst alluding to dysentery and other tropical disorders, he makes no mention of fever or ague. In Valentia's 'Travels' there is no mention of Murshidabad or Berhampore being specifically unhealthy, and some of the

early records speak of this part as having once possessed a reputation for salubriousness."¹⁰ Towns like Hooghly, Bandel, Chinsura, Baraset, Krishnagar, Burdwan, Midnapur, Pabna, Malda and Birbhum, now hotbeds of malaria, were until about the middle of the last century considered as sanitarium. That despite political revolutions, India was able to maintain her Cultural Swaraj during the earlier years of British Rule is testified to by various writers. Sir Thomas Munro, notwithstanding his natural Western bias, declared emphatically that "If a good system of agriculture, unrivalled manufacturing skill, a capacity to produce whatever can contribute to either convenience or luxury, schools established in every village for teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, the general practice of hospitality and charity amongst each other, and above all a treatment of the female sex full of confidence, respect, and delicacy are among the signs which denote a civilised people—then the Hindus are not inferior to the nations of Europe, and if civilization is to become an article of trade between England and India, I am convinced that England will gain by the import cargo."

PRACTICE OF RELIGION

BY ANANDA

IS RENUNCIATION NECESSARY?

At this point, it would be profitable to discuss the necessity of renunciation. Many fight shy of renunciation. Various arguments are put forward to prove its uselessness and even harmfulness. In our previous article, we have shown that the stock arguments against celibacy are mostly stupid and meaningless. Celibacy is the very basis of spiritual power. Without it any great progress in spirituality is impossible. And without renunciation true celibacy is almost impracticable.

Is renunciation necessary for progress in spiritual life? All religions and genuine religious teachers agree that without mental renunciation, God-realisation or Divine love is impossible to attain. They are all particular about this point. Of course, we hear now and then of crusades against renunciation by some of the modern teachers,—they are invariably all pseudo-sensualists. They may be great in other respects. We have a habit of considering a great man great in *all respects*. If there is

¹⁰ "Report on Malaria in Bengal," part I, p. 28.

a great poet, we at once dub him a saint. If there is a great intellectual, we at once consider him a *Rishi*. And whatever they say on any subject, we accept as gospel truth. We forget that a man may be great in many respects, and yet he may be a veritable baby in religion. Religion is not spinning ideas. It is assiduous practice and *realisation*. There are moderns posing as teachers, who belittle renunciation, because they themselves are still in the grip of desires. But all genuine teachers, past and present, are unanimous on the need for at least inner renunciation. They all agree that the knowledge of the Not-self or the phenomenal world and attachment to it are the very antithesis of Divine knowledge and Divine love. The two are not on the same plane, one does not lead to the other. We must give up all consciousness of and desire for earthly things in order to know God and attain Him. So long as we have the slightest desire for anything other than God, we cannot have Him.

We are often misled by our desires. They do not always appear in their real garb. They sometimes assume holy attires and lead us to believe them to be spiritual. There are many subtle desires in the mind, of which we know nothing now. After the present gross desires have been eradicated, the subtle ones will emerge. Only *Sādhakas*, those who have renounced the objects of gross desire, can know them. Two are the greatest and basic enemies of spirituality,—*Kāma* (lust) and *Kānchana* (gold). These passions can and do take variegated forms. One must always analyse one's motives of thought and action. Even desire for service, apparently so noble, may sometimes be nothing but a veiled form of lust and passion for possession. We have, therefore, to be watchful every moment of our life.

Apart from these dangers of delusion, there is also danger from false philosophy. The modern age is pre-

dominantly materialistic. Materialism also has its finer forms. There is a materialism which is frank and open. It says that there is no God, no soul, no hereafter ; that one is no more than the body ; therefore, eat, drink and be merry. This kind of materialism has no longer much hold on men. But there is a subtle materialism which says that God alone is not enough, there must also be the universe beside Him. To know God alone is, according to the votaries of this creed, imperfection,—perfection is to know the universe along with God. And they advance many subtle arguments in support of their thesis. If reason and the teachings of other great teachers do not support them, they have no hesitation in calling them ignorant. We have known persons calling in question the knowledge of even the great Sankara! They say that there is a plane of mind where reason does not prevail. Things happen there, which we cannot evaluate by reason. There Self and Not-self co-exist, God and the world are inter-linked ; and that is the highest state. This statement is easily misleading. It is true that God is beyond reason and that we cannot reach the superconscious plane through reason. But from this it does not follow that things on that high plane are irrational. Swami Vivekananda clearly stated that though the superconscious cannot be attained through reason, *it is not against reason*. All great teachers have upheld this view.

We can easily find out how erroneous the views of this school of thought are. All admit that the mind is limited and that Brahman is beyond mind. So long as the mind remains, the "knowledge" of Brahman is impossible. We have to go beyond it. Where there is no mind, how can there be a world there? Without the mind, the world cannot exist, for it is not an independent existence. Its existence is dependent on its knower. Perhaps the pseudo-materialists will say : "That may all seem true from the logical view-

point. But Reality is alogical. It does not abide by the laws of logic. So your arguments do not apply to it. We can know Brahman and the world at the same time." Reality may be above logic, but not our mind and knowledge. And it is after all *we* who are to know God. We cannot transcend our own nature. And our nature to its last limit is such that it cannot dwell on this alogical ground. In perfect reason alone is its stability, it cannot subsume contradictory principles at the same time ;—there is no rest for it till it has reached unalloyed unity. Repeated experience of *Sadhakas* and *Siddhas* has confirmed this fact.

What is spirituality? It is the complete cessation of *vruttis*. The universe, subjectively speaking, is nothing but an aggregate of *vruttis*. Spiritual progress consists in reducing the number of these *vruttis*, till the *vrutti* relating to God alone remains in the mind. We reach this state through concentration and meditation. We reduce the *vruttis* one by one. We concentrate the mind on a single object of meditation. Other *vruttis* gradually die away and only the God-*vrutti* remains. This is not, however, the culmination. We have to take a step further. The last *vrutti* also has to be destroyed. When that is done, Brahman alone remains. Mind dies. What remains none can tell. The Upanishad declares that from there words with mind turn back without reaching. Here also we find that God and the world cannot co-exist. For to know the world we must have the world-*vrutti* in the mind. But the moment the world-*vrutti* will arise in the mind, the God-*vrutti* will vanish. For the God-*vrutti* cannot arise in the mind till the entire mind has become one. Only the entire mind, unruffled by any other *vrutti*, can reflect the reality of God. The fact is, the opposition between Brahman and the world cannot be overcome by any means. There is a mysterious gulf between them, which is unbridgable. This new philosophy of the

alliance of God and the world should, therefore, be looked upon with suspicion. It is better and safer to be on the side of reason and the host of ancient and modern sages than on that of unreason and the crypto-materialists.

Why are they so eager to link God with the world? Because they have a secret, maybe unconscious, desire for the world. Their renunciation is not complete. Their mind is not yet fully ready for God. Hence this eager attempt at refuting the *Mâyāvâda* and proving the eternity of the world. Time will show how false this philosophy is. It has not come out of actual spiritual experience and is little better than intellectual nonsense.

So renunciation is necessary. All teachers, therefore, emphasise at least mental renunciation. We must so train the mind that it may give up its tendency outwards and its attachment to worldly things, and may learn to dwell constantly on God. Wherever we may be, in whatever condition, we must learn to be non-attached to all other things than God. Distractions will come in the name of national service, of service of man, of kindness and pity, of intellectual ideals. He who wants God must rise above all these. These are all excellent things, and must be attended to by those who are still attached to the world. These will help them. But those who have felt in their heart of hearts that God alone is real, must forget all except God and devote their entire mind and energy to His realisation alone. The modern mind is apt to judge even God-realisation by its effect on society, nation and humanity. This is obviously a wrong attitude and is due to the prevalent materialism. The reverse is the truth : we must judge everything by its capacity to give us God-realisation.

We have considered in this article the necessity of mental renunciation only. The need of formal and external renunciation we hope to discuss in our next article.

NEW REVELATIONS OF BARBAROUS CUSTOMS IN BENIGHTED INDIA*

[FROM *American Weekly*].

Many new facts have recently been brought to light confirming and explaining the almost unbelievably degraded existence of the Indian races which Katherine Mayo revealed to an astonished world in her famous book, "Mother India."

News dispatches from various parts of India since the first of the year confirm the most distressing revelations made by many writers on the situation in benighted India.

At the Coimbatore Sessions of the court the British judge listened to the case of father and son, named Mari and Aran, natives of Velampalayam, who were accused of killing a five-year old Barbar boy. Their religion demands the sacrifice of a first-born child to propitiate a deity called Karupurayasami. So, during a busy evening in the harvest season, when all the villagers were occupied in the fields, the unfortunate boy was enticed to the house of the accused, where a small idol, specially made, was installed. The father and son performed the ritual, and the body of the little one was buried, but later on was disinterred and sunk in the village pond, where a searching party found the remains. Both of the accused admitted their guilt.

In the city of Baroda, the kidnapping of children for sacrifice started riots last month. Hindus attacked Mahomedans, and the disturbance grew in area and intensity until the local police were reinforced by British troops and armored cars, and already one hundred and thirty-seven have been killed and more than a thousand natives reported wounded.

A few weeks ago a dispatch from Calcutta reported the spectacle of an un-

kempt Indian, with numerous things hanging from his neck and body, and with a brass bell around his neck, travelling about the streets on all-fours, imitating the "moo" of a cow. This absurd beggar explained that he was doing penance for having killed a cow, and he was spending seven years of atonement for his sin.

And it is from this most backward country in the world that "wise men," the Swamis, Mahatmas, Yogis and Fakirs come to give lectures to idle American women, and teach them their superior philosophy of life.

It was hard to understand why the native women, the most pitiful and abused of their sex on the face of the earth, resist all attempts to rescue them from purdah (prison-like seclusion) and from suttee (burning widows alive). As often as any were led out of their wretched state they seemed determined to rush back to it, as horses run back to a burning stable. These and other apparent insanities and stupidities are explained in "Understanding India," by Gertrude Marvin Williams, recently published by Coward McCann, and by Miss Mayo's article in the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, "Kindly Flames," and also by other authorities who are studying the subject.

Miserable though the short life of the average male native of India is, with his earnings of less than seven cents a day, always hungry to the verge of starvation, diseased, without plumbing, lights, underwear, towels, dishes, chairs or any furniture except a bed in his mud hut, illiterate, filthy, vermin-ridden and forced to drink sewage-flavored water, robbing the field mouse of its little hoard of buried grain, stolen

* See "In this Number," *Notes and Comments*.

from the fields of the princes, nevertheless he lives the life of a king compared to that of the Indian woman. From the cradle to the grave she envies him.

To be born a woman in that land of calamity is the worst calamity of all. As soon as she is old enough to understand anything she learns that a woman is something inferior and contemptible. Not only is she doomed to be the slave of her future husband when she is half grown, but before he leads her into captivity she must be the uncomplaining doormat of the males of her own family.

All over India little girls of the poorer classes can be seen staggering around carrying their older brothers, who are sometimes so much bigger that their feet drag on the ground. These big brothers are not cripples, but just superior beings by virtue of sex, which gives them the right to eat first, enter doors first and have the first and best of everything in that land of eternal want.

After marriage she expects, and is not often disappointed, to be treated like a dog by her husband, who may be an aged man, to whom she is sent as a child. She then enjoys the rest of her life in purdah, which means behind curtains, where no masculine eye can see her. For economy and convenience she is confined in an inside room, almost without light or ventilation, causing five times as many women as men to die of tuberculosis. Still she has little cause to complain of an early death.

However, one beautiful hope of escape is held out to her—not in this world of course, but in another, and that explains her curiously stubborn attitude. If a girl follows each and every shameful rule laid down in the Hindu scriptures for subordinating herself to all male relations, especially her husband, who may have the divine right to walk on her, she may go to Paradise when she dies. But she must do even that properly—no throwing herself down the well.

Paradise by itself would be a poor reward, hardly worth working for, if

something really worth while did not follow.

The Hindu's somewhat peculiar Paradise, like his earthly existence, is run entirely for the benefit of the superior male. For the woman Heaven is just an eternity of playing the same old doormat.

The inspired gentlemen who invented that faith had to hand out something better to interest the poor soul, so while they were about it, they promised her the greatest boon she could have imagined—that in some future incarnation she might become a man.

It is that hope and promise which knocks out all attempts to help the Indian woman to improve her earthly lot. The unhappy creature reasons that to be a woman is such a hopeless and degraded fate that it is not worth improving. She wants to escape from that low estate and become a man.

If she pulls aside the stifling curtain known as the "purdah," appears in public unveiled, or otherwise tries to be the equal of the male, she throws away all chance of redeeming herself from a woman into a man. Should her husband die before her, even though he is old and she a mere child, everyone takes it as proof that she has been a somewhat unwilling doormat for his sacred feet. However, she can square herself with the sneering relatives of both families and with the powers above by committing suttee, or, as it is now spelled sati.

Even if she does not have much faith in Paradise or reincarnation, there are other and quite practical reasons which might make an American widow under similar circumstances feel that she might as well climb up beside her husband's remains and tell the priest to apply the torch. If she decides to survive, her head is shaved, such personal ornaments and other belongings as she may have are stripped from her and she becomes not only the slave of the men, but of the women, which is the very bottom of degradation—a slave of slaves.

There is one alternative. The family of her late husband may elect, by paying a small sum, to place her in one of the convents run for this purpose. In that case she is locked for life in a tiny cell and fed one meal a day. As it is nobody's business to see how the outcast gets along, and as the convent won't show a profit if its inmates are unduly long-lived, she is not likely to be overfed. There is no law to prevent a widow from running away at her husband's death. But also there is nobody who would receive her and no place to go but the street. Since the British put a stop to widow burning an increasing number of women have done this.

Not all Indian women adhere to purdah—veiled seclusion—to the extent of only leaving their suffocating seclusion to sit veiled outside the temple, getting only such whiffs of the odor of sanctity as may be wafted to their nostrils from within. Many of the wives in the tiny villages wear no veils or much other clothing when they help plough the exhausted soil with the same sort of crooked stick that Pharaoh's peasants used.

But when there is a village assembly or ceremony they veil themselves with great care, not so much for the sake of their husbands as to show some pretense to the caste from which they have somewhat backslid. It would hardly be fair to expect such facial modesty from the women of the lowest or "untouchable" caste, who are considered inferior to the animals, especially the cow, which is sacred. However, even these lowest of all forms of human life make some attempts at observing purdah. The worst feature of woman's life in India is that there are 12,000 widows today less than five years old.

Although the Hindu population is divided into four main castes, these are sub-divided until there are 2,300 sub-castes. This alone makes the seemingly simple life of the native more complicated than any civilized man's. Unless he is at the extreme top or

bottom of the social scale, he is constantly faced with the problem of whether it is his duty to abase himself before each person he meets or to high-hat him, and to what degree.

Sixty million people, about one-fifth of the population, belong to these "untouchables," forbidden to send their children to public schools, to enter the temples or even walk on the roads that pass the temples. Their work is limited to scavenging and one or two other wretched tasks, but, worst of all, they must not even go near the village tanks.

In many villages these pools, filled by the freshets, are the only supply of water for drinking, cooking and washing. The natives also cheerfully bathe in the tanks. To bathe in their drinking water, however, is more revolting to read about than to see. The tanks are so stagnant, foul and covered with green scum that these perennial mosquito-breeders could hardly be made more repulsive by bathing or anything else. Anyway, they are the only bathtubs there are, and no soapy taste is left in the water, because there is no soap. Streams are used for sewage, drinking, bathing and every other purpose.

The laundry problem, without soap and with so little water, might seem difficult. It is not. All but the very few rich, imitators of the "materialistic" West, know nothing about stockings, underwear, towels, sheets, handkerchiefs or other washables which bother the "materialistic" housewives of the West. No wonder the poets speak of the "perfumed East." The real mystery of the "mysterious East" is how to get along without any of the comforts or decencies of life.

The children go naked until their sixth year, even though married, and the men usually wear only a loin cloth. When a man dresses up he wraps himself in four yards of cotton cloth. A woman's sari, ten yards of cotton, is her complete wardrobe, draped about her so that it forms a waist, skirt and even a shawl over her head, in which to hide

her face from masculine eyes. There are no buttons and no sewing to be done. When a woman's sari or a man's dhoti is washed it is soaked in water and wrung into a club-like shape, with which the washer pounds it on a stone. That's supposed to loosen the dirt.

It would certainly loosen buttons if there were any. When the foreigner gives his laundry to a native to wash it usually comes back with every button missing on account of this rock-pounding process.

"In southern India, undiluted by alien invaders, even the shadow of an outcast is polluting," writes Mrs. Williams. "The shadow of an artisan at twenty-four feet, a farmer's shadow at forty-eight, a pariah's at sixty-four. They are sometimes required to wear a little bell to give warning of their approach and to stand back the required distance when they see a caste man. The "untouchables" themselves maintain more than twenty caste divisions. They are just as inflexible about intermarriage and interdining as their superiors.

Yet in the city crowds lepers rub elbows with others, unrebuked, as long as they are caste men. Gandhi, the native reformer, tried vainly to remove the curse from the "untouchables." Mrs. Williams quotes the following dialogue that occurred when he addressed a meeting of the outcastes at Dhasi:

"I am bound to see to it," he told them, "that you get enough clean water to drink and to bathe and to wash in. But will you give up eating carrion? It is such a filthy habit, and as long as you cannot give it up I may continue to touch you, but I cannot hope to succeed with the orthodox Brahmins."

Their spokesman replied: "If we are expected to dispose of dead cattle you may not expect us to abstain from carrion."

Gandhi told them that Brahmins who owned tanneries in large cities do not use carrion.

"That may be, but with us, the habit follows the profession," was the pariah's answer.

Gandhi persisted: "Is carrion delicious?"

"No, not at all."

"Well, I had thought it was. If it is not, and I can assure you of enough bread, milk and vegetables, would you give up carrion?"

There was a pause. Then the old spokesman said slowly: "I am afraid no. We must take counsel and then reply to you. It is an old habit and will persist in spite of you and us. Where is the use of giving a promise if we are to break it the day after you leave us?"

Yet many people think that England, by passing a few laws and "giving India her liberty," could transform such a race into a bright, prosperous, happy nation. In spite of the world's most abject poverty, India contains vast riches. For five years past India has absorbed forty per cent of the world's gold production and thirty per cent of its silver, and in 1919 is estimated to have taken one-third of the silver output. Over \$5,000,000,000 worth of the precious metals is lying idle in that starving country.

Most of it is held by the princes, whose wealth is proverbial, but a considerable amount trickles down among the lowly. When an American gets his hands on more money than he intends to spend at once he puts it in the bank or some form of security. Even if this does not pay him interest, it goes into some industry which pays wages from which he or other workers benefit.

The Indian, with his genius for doing the stupid thing, either buries his little hoard of gold pieces in the dirt floor of his hut or beats it into bangles to go around his wrist, where it remains useless to himself or anyone else until it is spent or stolen. The Prince does the same thing on a grander scale, strutting about aglitter with jewels and around his swarthy neck rope after rope of pearls. India wails that the world

should advance it the necessary capital to start the industries which would lift its starving millions out of destitution, yet it has not the sense to use that five billion dollars' worth of liquid capital lying idle.

Next to the packs of starving dogs that range the city streets, the most notable sight in India is its multitude of beggars. They line the approaches to the temples, mutilated children, men and women that are merely naked skeletons, holding babies covered with sores and flies, lepers with faces partly eaten away and exhibiting stumps of limbs. The last census, according to Mrs. Williams, showed only 857,537 beggars, but that was because it did not take in the main army—the holy beggars.

If the gods reward a Hindu by letting him reach the unusual age of 40, it is quite customary for him to turn his affairs over to his oldest son and set forth on a lifelong pilgrimage to Benares and all the other holy cities. However, he does not buy a ticket and carry traveller's checks. He has a soul above vulgar money matters. He simply saunters off down the road, without a penny in his pocket, wearing a yellow robe to show that he is holy. But he is still holier if he goes stark naked. The starving population owes this holy pilgrim a living and he collects it. There are five million of these pious parasites.

"I saw sannyasis and fakirs everywhere," writes the authoress of "Understanding India," "at conventions, in the bazaars, plodding through the dust of the Grand Trunk Road. The more extreme type goes entirely naked or wears the minimum of a rag about his waist. He lets his hair grow long, winds rope through it to make it look more dishevelled, and piles it on his head in a bushy, tangled mop. He daubs his face and body with filth and ashes of cow dung, which give him a ghastly pallor. He is our modern Saint Simon Stylites. He performs spectacular penances, holding an arm extended until it stiffens in that position, swing-

ing over a hot fire, sitting on a bed of spikes.

"He does this for his own salvation, and sometimes, no doubt, is sincere. Those I saw, sitting in naked rows in public places, impressed me as exhibitionists, pretending to ignore the gaping crowds, but, in reality, very conscious of us, and getting intense satisfaction from being stared at. Their eyes have a glittering leer from the use of drugs.

"They not only contribute nothing, but are a continuous drain upon their country. India's average income of \$25 a year is about the minimum subsistence level. It seems probable that the cost of these holy men, averaging together the thin ones who really fast and the fat ones who obviously do not, would not be less than that amount. These parasites must cost not less than \$124,000,000 a year."

Beginning originally with the cow, one after another all the animals have achieved some degree of sanctity and ought not to be killed. This silliness has spread now to cover even the insects. Jain monks wear gauze over their mouths for fear they might swallow a gnat and hurt it and they sweep the ground before their feet to prevent stepping on some bug or ant. When a dog's leg gets cut off by a railroad train, it is allowed to hobble around and starve on three legs. Nobody would dream of putting it out of its misery.

One of the surest ways for a Hindu to reach Paradise is to die holding a cow's tail. If he is wealthy, it is a good idea to add to this meritorious act by also endowing a goshala, a sort of old ladies' home for cows. But these institutions usually become merely places for the animals to starve to death in.

Pacifist, defeatist and retreatist though he is, there is still enough of the original two-fisted human being in the poor Hindu so that he is inclined to kill a few animals, holy or not, especially the tiger and cobra.

In other parts of the world the big animals are rapidly being exterminated,

but in India the warfare between man and man-killers is a curious exception.

Tigers in India are almost as good at killing human beings as men are at killing tigers. Statistics released recently by the Indian Government show that during 1927 1,033 persons were killed by tigers, while only 1,368 tigers succumbed to human rifles and traps, making very nearly one man killed for each tiger similarly disposed of. Against other wild animals India's record of self-protection is better. Wolves, for example, killed 465 humans and humans killed 2,439 wolves, a ratio of about five wolves to one man.

Leopards killed 218 humans and 4,390 of the leopards died by human hands, making over twenty leopards to one human being. Bears killed 78 human beings and man's efforts disposed of 2,739 bears, making thirty-five bears for every human sacrifice. The relative peacefulness of India's largest animal, the elephant, is indicated by the report of only 56 human deaths for which those animals were responsible, in spite of the large number of elephants in captivity and used as work animals or for riding. One hundred and thirty-six people were killed in India in 1927 by crocodiles and 85 by wild boars, the latter animals once deadly almost all over the world, but now virtually exterminated in nearly every other country. The most dangerous animals in India are still the snakes, although man is proving dangerous to them also. During 1927 19,069 people died by snake bite and 57,116 snakes died at the hand of man; a ratio of about three snakes disposed of for every human death.

Out of the general squalor and misery of this people, that averages to live less than 23 years, rise the stately palaces of the princes and also the largest temples in the world, bigger by far than St. Peter's in Rome or St. Paul's in London. Some of the palaces have staffs of 10,000 servants, which is not so expensive as it sounds because the best native servant works for \$5 to \$10 a month,

even for the extravagant European, and feeds himself. But the mighty army of the priesthood and those that wait on them is vast and expensive and all they give in return is a religion that forbids the Hindu to advance.

Drug addiction is so general that the British have found no way to begin to curb it. They regulate the sale, limiting the amount to any person to 188 grains of opium per day. Even that huge dose can be increased by simply going to a second store. Six and three-quarters grains cost only two cents, and mothers who work in the cotton mills give it to their babies to keep them quiet.

Education is one of the saddest features of all. A school teacher is paid 27 cents a day and would seem to be hardly worth that.

"The North Pole is the coldest spot on earth and explorers discover it by carrying a thermometer. When the thermometer reaches the lowest point, that is the North Pole."

The above was written by an Indian schoolmaster as the correct answer to an examination question. What must his pupils' knowledge be? There are in India 229,000,000 illiterates and only 18,600,000 who can read and write. Colleges have recently sprung up, hopefully turning out educated natives. But there are no jobs for educated natives because that five billion locked up in gold and silver is not used to start industries.

Among other things with which the British must wrestle is slavery. In upper Burma, near the Assam border, are jungles from which semi-wild people are still taken as slaves and occasionally, in the Naga hills, used for human sacrifice in religious festivals. The British are trying to stop it by buying all slaves at \$30 a head and setting them free to go hungry with the rest of the population.

Though the colleges teach their graduates nothing that can be turned to financial account the prisons seem to

do better. Here the convicts learn from each other, how to become servants, preferably to visiting Europeans or Americans. They continue to steal as they serve, but in such moderation that it is endurable and they are not arrested unless they take too much at a time. From the jails they go straight to the employment agencies, which consider their sentence as a sort of recommendation, not of character exactly but of training.

Sometimes the marriage ceremony is performed while the bride is still a baby in arms and then she does not leave her father's roof until she is at least partly grown up. . . .

The Hindu answers the world's criticism of his backwardness by asking to be let alone to consider higher things such as his spirit. But the rest of the world dare not let him remain in his filthy, plumbingless state because he breeds pestilences which spread to other parts of the world. In the last ten years, 3,750,000 have died in India of cholera. It is raging now in Bombay with 2,000 deaths in the latest report. There are over a million lepers at large. Between 1901 and 1911, 6,500,000 died of the bubonic plague. The 1918-1919 influenza epidemic came out of India after killing 8,500,000 there. Dysentery, typhoid, typhus and most every other

communicable disease is rampant in India all the time, a perpetual nightmare to the health authorities of christendom.

So the world insists that India wake up and clean up, that it stop having more children than the land can feed, that diseases are to be gotten rid of by scientific sanitation, not religious ceremonies and that women must be treated a little more like human beings.

In 1921 there were 27,000,000 Indian widows, one widow in every five women and 12,000 of these widows were less than five years old. Most widows would still like to commit suttee to escape their dreadful life. The one moving picture scene that always arouses great applause in India is that of a widow burning herself to death beside her husband's remains.

But the Hindu has had a certain amount of revenge for foreign interference. He has sent his Swamis, especially to America, to preach and teach American women how to live the "higher life." And American women have paid to hear these "educators" from a nation 92 per cent illiterate, 3,000 years behind the times. They look with awe at the Swami's turban, little realizing that it is a sort of fool's cap, symbolic of the dunce among nations.

ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

By SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

निःस्पृहं मानसं यस्य नैराश्येऽपि महात्मनः ।

तस्यात्मज्ञानतृप्तस्य तुलना केन जायते ॥ १२ ॥

यस्य Whose नैराश्येऽपि in disappointment अपि even मानसं mind निःस्पृहं free from desire महात्मनः of great-souled आत्मज्ञानतृप्तस्य of him who is satisfied with Self-knowledge तस्य his केन with whom तुलना comparison जायते can be.

12. With whom can we compare that great-souled one, contented with the knowledge of Self, who is desireless¹ even in disappointment?

[1 *Desireless etc.*—Even in disappointment the ordinary man cannot give us his desire. On the other hand, he often sticks faster to it. Such, however, is not the case with the man of realisation. He cannot really have any disappointment, because he has no desire.

But even when there are causes for disappointment (for he also engages in action and may sometimes fail), he remains unaffected,—he does not stick to his desires and suffer.]

स्वभावादेव जानानो दृश्यमेतन्न किञ्चन ।

इदं ग्राह्यमिदं त्याज्यं स किं पश्यति धीरधीः ॥ १३ ॥

एतत् This दृश्यं object of perception स्वभावात् in its nature एव verily न not किञ्चन anything (इति this) जानानः knowing धीरधीः steady-minded सः that (जनः man) इदं this ग्राह्यं acceptable इदं this त्याज्यं rejectable (इति this) किं why पश्यति sees.

13. Why should that steady-minded one who knows the Object¹ to be in its very nature nothing², consider this to be accepted and that to be rejected?

[1 *Object*—the internal and external universe.

2 *Nothing*—in an absolute sense. The Self alone is existent. Everything else is really non-existent and is but an illusory superimposition on the Self. Hence the wise become unattached to the objects of the world and neither hanker after nor shun them.]

अन्तस्त्यक्तकषायस्य निर्द्वन्द्वस्य निराशिषः ।

यद्दृच्छयागतो भोगो न दुःखाय न तुष्टये ॥ १४ ॥

अन्तस्त्यक्तकषायस्य Of one who has given up worldly attachment from the mind निर्द्वन्द्वस्य of one who is beyond the pair of opposites निराशिषः of one who is free from desire यद्दृच्छयागतः coming as a matter of course भोगः enjoyment दुःखाय for pain न not (भवति is) तुष्टये for pleasure (अ and) न not (भवति is).

14. He who has given up worldly attachment from his mind, who is beyond the pairs¹ of opposites, and who is free from desire,—to him any enjoyment² coming as a matter of course does not cause either pleasure or pain.

[1 *Pairs etc.*—such as, happiness and misery, heat and cold, etc.

2 *Enjoyment*—object of enjoyment. All our pleasures or pains arise from the attainment or non-attainment of the objects to which we are attached. But they cannot produce any pleasurable or painful sensations if we have neither attraction nor repulsion for them, and allow them to come as a matter of course.]

CHAPTER IV

GLORIFICATION OF SELF-REALISATION

अष्टावक्र उवाच ।

हन्तात्मज्ञस्य धीरस्य खेलतो भोगलीलया ।

न हि संसारवाहीकैर्मूढैः सह समानता ॥ १ ॥

अष्टावक्रः Ashtavakra उवाच said :

हन्त Oh भोगलीलया with the game of enjoyment खेलतः playing धीरस्य of the calm आत्मज्ञस्य of the knower of Self मूढैः deluded संसारवाहीकैः the oxen of the world सह with समानता equality or similarity न not हि surely (अस्ति is).

Ashtavakra said :

1. Oh, the sober-minded knower of Self who¹ plays the game of enjoyment, has no similarity to the deluded beasts² of the world.

[1 *Who etc.*—Because the enjoyment of the world is like play to a man of realisation who is unattached to it, and is not affected by it.

2 *Beasts etc.*—men attached to the world and buffeted by its joys and miseries. They cannot look upon the world as a play.]

यत्पदं प्रेप्सवो दीनाः शक्राद्याः सर्वदेवताः ।

अहो तत्र स्थितो योगी न हर्षमुपगच्छति ॥ २ ॥

अहो Oh शक्राद्याः beginning with Indra सर्वदेवताः all gods यत्पदं which position प्रेप्सवो hankering after दीनाः unhappy (वर्तन्ते become) तत्र there स्थितः abiding योगी Yogi हर्षे elation न not उपगच्छति attains.

2. Oh, the Yogi does¹ not feel elated abiding in that position² which Indra and all other gods hanker after and become unhappy.³

[¹ Does etc.—Because he feels that to be only natural to himself. We feel elated only when anything unaccustomed, yet much coveted, happens to us. But Satchidananda is our very being and is nothing unaccustomed to the knower of Self.

² Position—The Absolute Existence—Bliss Supreme.

³ Unhappy—Because they cannot attain It.]

तज्ज्ञस्य पुण्यपापाभ्यां स्पर्शो ह्यन्तर्न जायते ।

न ह्याकाशस्य धूमेन दृश्यमानापि सङ्गतिः ॥ ३ ॥

तज्ज्ञस्य Of one who has known That अन्तः inside पुण्यपापाभ्यां with virtue and vice स्पर्शः touch न not जायते is हि as आकाशस्य of the sky धूमेन with smoke सङ्गतिः contact दृश्यमाना appearing अपि even न not (जायते exists).

3. The heart of one who has known That is not touched by virtue and vice, as the sky is not touched with smoke, even though it appears to do so.

आत्मैवेदं जगत्सर्वं ज्ञातं येन महात्मना ।

यदृच्छया वर्तमानं तं निषेद्धुं क्षमेत कः ॥ ४ ॥

येन By which महात्मना by the great-souled one इदं this सर्वं all जगत् universe आत्मा Self एव alone (इति this) ज्ञातं is known तं him यदृच्छया according as he likes वर्तमानं remaining कः who निषेद्धुं to prohibit क्षमेत can.

4. Who can prohibit that great-souled one who has known this entire universe to be the Self alone, from¹ living as he pleases?

[¹ From etc.—The man of Supreme Realisation is beyond all customs and traditions. He does not care for nor can he act up to the prescribed laws of conduct. For these all are formulated as suited to ignorant minds. That, however, does not mean moral anarchy. For it is said in the scriptures that the man of realisation does not stoop to evil actions, as all evil propensities (*samskāras*) are annihilated before the highest state of realisation is reached.]

आब्रह्मस्तम्बपर्यन्ते भूतग्रामे चतुर्विधे ।

विज्ञस्यैव हि सामर्थ्यमिच्छानिच्छाविवर्जने ॥ ५ ॥

आब्रह्मस्तम्बपर्यन्ते From Brahmā down to the clump of grass चतुर्विधे of four kinds भूतग्रामे in all things विज्ञस्य of the wise one एव alone हि surely इच्छानिच्छाविवर्जने in renouncing desire and aversion सामर्थ्यं strength (भवति is).

5. Of the four¹ kinds of created things from Brahmā down to the clump of grass, it² is the wise one alone who is capable of renouncing desire and aversion.

[¹ Four etc.—namely, *Jarāyuja* (born from uterus), *Andaja* (born from egg), *Svedaja* (generated by warm vapour or sweat) and *Udbhija* (sprouting up). Here it means the entire creation comprising also gods and other subtle beings.

² It etc.—As long as a man is ignorant of the true nature of himself and the universe, he must have desires and aversions. Certain things he will consider good and desirable

and others opposite. But one who has known himself and the world as Brahman, sees only one and has therefore no special likes or dislikes. He takes things playfully. He may seem attached to one thing one moment, but the next moment he may totally forget it.]

आत्मानमद्वयं कश्चिज्जानाति जगदीश्वरं ।

यद्वेत्ति तत् स कुर्वते न भयं तस्य कुत्रचित् ॥ ६ ॥

कश्चित् Scarcely one आत्मानं self अद्वयं non-dual जगदीश्वरं lord of the universe जानाति knows सः he यत् which वेत्ति knows तत् that कुर्वते does तस्य his कुत्रचित् anywhere भयं fear न not (चक्षि is).

6. Rare is the man who knows himself as one without a second as well as the lord of the universe. He does what he knows¹ and has² no fear from any quarter.

[1 *Knows*—considers worth doing. A knower of Self has no duty, as ordinary men have, compelled by environments and their own limitations.

2 *Has etc.*—Because he sees nothing outside himself.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

In this Number

The present number may, in a sense, be called the India number, so prominently India figures in it. We expect our readers to exercise penetrating judgment in understanding the Indian articles contained in it. And perhaps we should warn our Western readers that not all of these are meant for them. . . . A foreign reader may easily misunderstand the first of the *Unpublished Letters of Swami Vivekananda* as printed in this issue. It is a severe condemnation of India. But if we do not remember the Swami's passionate and worshipful regard for her, we shall mistake his meaning. This letter only shows that he was fully conscious of the defects—after all superficial and matters of detail—of his great motherland (it is a rebuke of love rather than condemnation) and wanted to remedy them. The remedy that he proposed will be found in the third letter of the present instalment. It is *Dynamic Religion*. . . . Our article, *A Diagnosis*, is written chiefly for the Indian readers. We have not attempted a detailed examination of the charges that foreigners generally bring against India. We should not be understood to have

accepted them as true. We have taken a bird's-eye view of the weaknesses of India and sought to trace them to a basic cause. . . . We regret that a mistake crept into the date of the last month's instalment of *The Diary of a Disciple*.—It was not the year 1911, but 1918. . . . We have great pleasure in presenting our readers with the first article on Sri Ramakrishna, *Ramakrishna: His Credo*, by ROMAIN ROLLAND. It is extracted and translated from the original French Ms. Our readers were aware that M. Rolland was engaged in writing a book on Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. The first volume, that on Sri Ramakrishna, is ready and the original French edition will soon be published from Paris. M. Rolland has kindly granted us the exclusive right of publishing extracts from his book in the pages of *Prabuddha Bharata*. It would be presumptuous on our part to introduce M. Rolland to our readers, so esteemed and well-known is his name in every part of the world. Neither we nor our readers should expect that M. Rolland will represent his subject in the way the followers of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda do. As he himself says in the preface, his view-point is that of a

Westerner. And herein, in our opinion, lies the unique value of his work. . . . We do not know if we ought to have allowed *New Revelations of Barbarous Customs in Benighted India*, extracted from an American Weekly, to soil the pages of *Prabuddha Bharata*. The article possesses no special merit except that it is an exhaustive catalogue of all that are at present being maliciously propagated against India. Our purpose in publishing it, as we have mentioned in our article, is twofold: to show with what vindictive spirit India is being traduced in foreign countries, especially America; and to remind India that our objective passivity has caused some superstitions and evil customs to accumulate among us, which, though they have not made India on the whole worse than other nations except politically and economically, offer nevertheless opportunities to enemies to exploit them to our detriment. Our ideal is not to make India only *equal* to other nations, but much superior to them, perfect in every detail; and we have to that end pointed out the basic defect of our present outlook. We need not state that this malicious article is a strange medley of truths, half-truths and falsehoods, in which exceptional and isolated incidents have been often represented as common to the country and which shows a complete ignorance of the ways and ideals of India. The writer's characterisation of Indian women is particularly false. However much our women may be circumscribed in their scope and powers at present, they are yet by no means inferior to their sisters in other lands, and can, we believe, teach them many beautiful lessons in moral and spiritual qualities. We have not sought to answer the charges of the writer, because these have been answered ably by many writers, Indian and Western, before. Mr. P. N. Bose's article in the present issue is itself an able answer in some respects. We shall be satisfied if the perusal of this American article stimulates some of our

readers to do their duty by India,—outside by counter-propaganda and inside by improving the material conditions of the country.

The Problem of Death

To all thinking persons death has and should have a tremendous importance. On a correct determination of its nature, depends the course of our life. Is there a post-mortem existence? Or does death end all? If so, the whole life signifies nothing, it is an empty dream. Naturally, consciously or unconsciously, each of us has a certain attitude towards life and death. To most of us perhaps death means annihilation, though we may profess other views. The position of the materialists seems most strange. If there is nothing beyond death, what does it matter how we live our life? What does it matter if the world prospers or not? Has progress any meaning?

Mr. Bertrand Russel is a materialist. Yet he wants humanity to grow great and good. Of course he has his own ideas of greatness and goodness. And these he seems to determine by his inner judgment, though it is not clear how he finds out the correctness of those judgments. He believes in knowledge, he believes in democracy, he believes in living scientifically. Perhaps he thinks that thus men will be happiest. But he himself will admit that happiness is not always the criterion. To find the true meaning of life and reality is to find the true criterion. The greatest of questions is still unanswered,—if life has any meaning. And the answer cannot be had until the secret of death has been known.

The modern mind is seeking to build the entire life of man by avoiding these fundamental questions. The ultimate questions it does not want to answer. It is trying to propose a philosophy of life essentially on the basis of the sensible and knowable. That has been possible because man's

instincts are stronger than their reason and opinions. Instinct says that man must live,—it assumes the continuity of existence. Instinct prompts us not to rest satisfied with animal pleasures alone. Therefore man seeks knowledge, love, justice, goodness. Though it is the creed of a materialist not to assume anything, yet he assumes the truth of those instincts and hopes to build life on their basis. This is really a confession of failure.

In an article on Death which Mr. Russel lately contributed to *The Forum* (New York), he has similarly avoided the main issue. In that article it is not his purpose to unravel the mystery of death, but to propose the best means of conquering its fear and to suggest the most correct attitude towards it. There are various ways, he says, of attempting to cope with the fear of death. We may try to ignore it ; we may never mention it, but always attempt to turn our thoughts in another direction when we find ourselves dwelling on it. Or we may adopt the exactly opposite course and meditate continually on the brevity of human life, in the hope that familiarity will breed contempt. This was the course adopted by Charles V in his cloister after his abdication. There was a fellow of a Cambridge College, who even went so far as to sleep with his coffin in the room. There is a third course, which has been very widely adopted, and that is to persuade oneself and others that death is not death, but the gateway to a new and better life.

None of these, Mr. Russel thinks, are safe methods. Death is an emotionally interesting subject. To attempt to avoid thinking about emotionally interesting subjects is sure to be unsuccessful and to lead to various kinds of mental contortions.—Psychoanalysis has proved that. The second method is also equally harmful. It is morbid to always brood over death. This is a profitless subject of meditation, and it tends to diminish a man's interest in

other people and events, and it is only objective interests that can preserve mental health. Fear of death makes a man feel himself the slave of external forces, and from a slave mentality no good result can follow. The belief that death is a gateway to a better life ought, logically, to prevent men from feeling any fear of death. It does not in fact have this effect, except in a few rare instances. The reason for this apparent inconsistency is that religious belief, in most people, exists only in the region of conscious thought and has not succeeded in modifying unconscious mechanisms. If the fear of death is to be coped with successfully, it must be by some method which affects behaviour as a whole, not only that part of behaviour that is commonly called conscious thought.

What is the method then, that Mr. Russel suggests? We have to achieve three objects, he says, which are very difficult to combine. First, we must give the young people (Mr. Russel is considering the cases of children and adolescents specially) no feeling that death is a subject about which we do not wish to speak or to encourage them to think. Second, we must nevertheless so act as to prevent them, if we can, from thinking much or often on the matter of death. Third, we must not hope to create in any one a satisfactory attitude on the subject of death by means of conscious thought alone. To give effect to these various objects, we have to act as follows: In regard to the painful hazards of life, such as death, knowledge of them, on the part of children, should be neither avoided nor obtruded. Such knowledge should come when circumstances make it unavoidable. Painful things, when they have to be mentioned, should be related truthfully and unemotionally, except when a death occurs in the family, in which event it would be unnatural to conceal sorrow. The adults should display in their own conduct a certain gay courage, which the young will uncon-

ciously acquire from their example. In adolescence, large impersonal interests should be set before the young, and education should be so conducted as to give them the idea (by suggestion, not by explicit exhortation) of living for purposes outside themselves. They should be taught to endure misfortune, when it comes, by remembering that there are still things to live for. But they should not brood over possible misfortunes, even for the purpose of being prepared to meet them. One must say to oneself: "Well, yes, that might happen; but what of it?"

Mr. Russel's prescription is certainly useful. He has based it on the findings of modern psychology. It has been found that unwise handling of young minds often creates in them complexes and biases that prejudicially influence the entire course of life and behaviour. Most men and women suffer from these carelessnesses of their parents, teachers and guardians. If the latter are careful, they may spare the coming generations much suffering. But we confess we do not consider Mr. Russel's prescription adequate. It consists of two items. The first is to avoid forming complexes in the young minds. This is all right. The second is the initiation of young minds into impersonal interests. Here *impersonal* is the important factor. But are most persons so constituted as to be interested in impersonal projects? We do not think so. To have real impersonal interests, one must have a highly developed mind, unselfish and altruistic. Most men are egotistical, narrow and selfish. And even when they are interested in impersonal concerns, it takes the form of fanaticism or blind following. Such sort of disinterestedness avails little against the fear of death. One must be really taken out of one's ego. But how many can be done so by Mr Russel's process?

The fact is, Mr. Russel's attitude and prescription are typically materialistic. He simply avoids the main issue.

Death is too tremendous to be easily coped with. We must attack the main problem which is whether there is anything in us which survives death and if we can feel ourselves as only that and not as the perishable parts. At present we feel ourselves as body and mind, and these, at least the body, we perceive to be ever changing and know will perish in death. Can we withdraw our consciousness from the body and mind? If we can, we at once go beyond the range of death. *The conquest of death and fear of death lies in knowing and perceiving oneself not as body and mind, but as a being transcendent to them and to all change and destruction.* This experience is the essence of immortality, and not mere beliefs, religious or otherwise. Mr. Russel is quite right in saying that our entire behaviour, conscious and unconscious, must be modified. The experience of immortality must interpenetrate our entire being. He admits that in a few instances religious belief can effect this. Why does it not affect the majority? The fault does not lie with religion, but with the men who do not understand religion properly. Mr. Russel's experience is mainly of the Christians. Their idea of immortality, we confess, is of a poor sort.

Hindus do not look upon immortality as a mere article of faith, proved only by a resurrected Christ. We say we must practise and realise it even now. We must conquer death even in this body. And there is a way by which we can do it. It is the concentration of consciousness and withdrawing it from body and mind. Thus we go beyond all change and destruction. All Hindu religious practices are meant to accomplish this,—the transcendence of body and mind. That is why every Hindu is expected to sit in meditation, in calm and silence, at least twice a day, trying to realise himself as the Self beyond body and mind. It is true that the highest results are achieved only by a few. But a vast number also do get a

taste of their incorporeal being. This is the way to immortality and to the conquest of the fear of death. By such attempt at concentration, we go beyond the stage of mere belief to that of at least a vague, dim experience. Even such a slight experience is of great value. Even a little of it conquers great fear. One feels that one has risen above the jurisdiction of death and even if the body perishes, it matters little to one. This may be tried by many with more or less result. Hinduism is particular that this practice of concentration should be begun even in an early age, for then the mind is pure and plastic and receives impressions lasting through life.

Apart from the conquest of the fear of death, concentration of mind also makes the mind immune from unhealthy biases and complexes, and eradicates those which are already there. In fact the practice of concentration has a wonderful effect on both body and mind; and it yet stands above all modern methods of education, supreme in its correctness and efficacy.

Evolution and Reincarnation

A correspondent has put the following question to us:

“In the reincarnation of souls, I somehow lean to the belief that once a soul is born as man, it is always afterwards born as either man or something higher in the scale of evolution. Is my belief correct?”

In reply to this question we have to say that the theory of evolution does not warrant our correspondent's belief. It is true that the evolution of the physiological structure is accompanied by a corresponding mental evolution; and that the higher the evolution of body, the higher the development of mind. From this it may seem to follow that when a mind which has once inhabited a human body is reborn, it must have at least a human body. But the theory of *karma* and reincarnation does not say that in a particular birth

the *entire* mind becomes operative. If the entire mind were active in determining the form of the new body, it is possible the reborn man would not be subhuman in physical form. But the Hindu belief is that all *karmas* or *samskâras* do not operate at every time. Some only are active, others passively bide their time. And those which are active are not necessarily human always. We have many base desires unworthy even of animals. When these *vrittis* predominate and produce the body, that body must necessarily be subhuman, of animals or worms. There is no knowing when which *vrittis* will grow strong in us. Even in a saintly person, an evil passion may rage for some time. Of course the value of our previous human birth is not thereby lost. When the worse *vrittis* are worked off, our upward path becomes clearer and easier.

A common error that results from the uncritical acceptance of the theory of evolution is the conclusion that since in course of evolution lower animals have developed into higher, man can never again become a lower animal. The utmost that can be inferred is that the human *species* will grow into a superhuman species. [But is that true? Are there not also retrogressions? Evolution need not necessarily be progress. Evolution is only change, whether for better or for worse depends on the environments. In human history we find noble civilised races degraded into half savages.] It has no place for reincarnation. In so far as men are parts of the species, they continue to live on and grow in their progeny. But when they die, they go out of the earthy species; they have no longer anything to do with it. Their future is then determined by their predominant and active *karmas* and they may be born as either men or animals or worms. Then they enter into the evolving life of new species and partake in and influence them as long as they live. It is as it were many different moulds of life have been

created on earth with their graded spiritual values. Individuals cast themselves in them from life to life according to the nature of their prevailing *karmas*; they are not permanently related to any of them. The moulds—the species—may have interconnections with one another, one having developed from another. They have their separate lives, with their own laws of being and growth which are constituted at any given time by the individuals partaking in them. The theory of reincarnation thus presupposes two series of lives, of the species and the individuals, individuals not being permanently related to the species.

But is the theory of evolution after all true? Has it been incontestably proved? We still have our doubts.

America's Debt to India

We reproduce the following paragraphs from Mr. Ernest Wood's Introduction to his recently published book, *An Englishman Defends Mother India*. The quotation is sufficiently interesting to need any apology from us for its length.

"Does the average American know how great is the debt which America already owes to India? I do not mean in any merely spiritual way, but with respect to civilization and the practical character of American affairs. Let me show how India helped America in the last century.

"There are two things which strike the visitor to this land as characteristic. First, the American believes in the future, that is to say in the unlimited possibilities of human progress. This is idealism. It makes him always ready to try to improve Secondly, he is practical. This is common-sense idealism, and ideal common-sense. He may not have worked it out in theory, but in fact his acceptance of the world and its laws is a sort of tacit belief that God is not only in His heaven but in His world. He believes that the best can be got

out of life by honestly tilling that plot of land which has been given to him to till.

"Now, if we read the essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson we find that these are the two things which he propounded over and over again in different forms. He said that ploughing was prayer, and that there is no bar or wall in the soul where man, the effect, ceases and God, the cause, begins. Great numbers of young people listened to him and his thought affected many other speakers and writers; so he had much to do with the building of the nationality and character that we now call American. His belief in the great possibilities of man's future was the outcome of his transcendental outlook, and was expressed in such sayings as: "Everything is fluid to thought."

"Emerson was greatly assisted in these inspirations by his study of Hindu thought. It is related that on a certain occasion a party of young men came to the philosopher and desired to know how they might become learned. He told them to read good books for five hours every day. They asked, "What books?" His answer was: "Any good books that you like." But as they were about to depart he called them back and said, "But do not forget to read Hindu books." It is said also that in his last years he always carried a pocket edition of the *Bhagavad Gita* about with him.

"I have been in his library at Concord, and have seen there the early English translations of various Sanskrit books which were familiar to me. Having obtained the unusual privilege of staying there a little while, I took some of those books from the shelves and looked at the pages where he had put little bits of paper to mark the places of special interest to him, and there were to be seen many of the thoughts with which he was so much in tune.

"In this way America owes a debt to

India in connection with those very values most and for which the rest of qualities of character which America the world admires America."

REVIEW

KALKI OR THE FUTURE OF CIVILIZATION. By S. Radhakrishnan. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., Broadway House: 68—74, Carter Lane, London, E. C. 4. 96 pp. Price 2/6 net.

"Philosophy in the larger sense of the term is the unseen foundation on which the structure of a civilization rests." This sentence in the beginning of the third chapter of his book indicates the sense in which Prof. Radhakrishnan is a philosopher of the first rank. For in the small volume under review, he takes the entire Western civilization for his subject, studies its realities and ideals, considers its conflicts, confusions and aspirations and suggests reconstruction on spiritual foundations. The book is a small one; the delineation of the subject has necessarily been brief. But within the prescribed limit he has wonderfully succeeded in giving us a true inner and outer picture of the Western civilization and the goal towards which it is struggling. We say "Western civilization" advisedly, though the Professor speaks of "civilization" only. For, in our opinion, his study and observations do not apply in any real sense to conditions in the East or India.

Why has he named his book *Kalki*? Because he feels that the future of civilization depends greatly on a spiritual upheaval and the present conditions are such that such an upheaval can be easily expected. "The author of a Hindu text *Vishnu Purana* asks us to take thought and expect the advent of the next Avatar, Kalki, when society reaches a stage where property alone confers rank, wealth becomes the only source of virtue, passion the sole bond of union between husband and wife, falsehood the source of success in life, sex the only means of enjoyment, and outer trappings are confused with inner religion."

The book has four chapters: Introduction, The Negative Results, The Problem, and Reconstruction. The plan is excellent. In the first chapter, the author gives us a general outline of the problem. There is restlessness everywhere. A new world-unity is being sought after. There is outer unity

to some extent. But the outer unity has not resulted in an inner unity of mind and spirit. In the second chapter, he makes a rapid survey of the Western world, its Religion, Family Life, Economic Relations, Politics, and International Relations. Here we have a picture of conflicting ideas and realities. We gave our readers a sample in pp. 255—257 of *Prabuddha Bharata* (May). This descriptive chapter prepares us to appreciate his next chapter which seems to us to be the best chapter in the book. He dwells therein on the fundamentals of human civilization as determined by the eternal verities and demonstrated by human history. Human personality is composed of three constituents, body, mind, and spirit. We have so far achieved mastery over matter and life, but not over mind. "Unless the mind is interpreted as one with spirit, we have not reached the ideal of civilization." Life must be spiritualised. Spiritual values are the only true values. In the assertion of the spiritual values lies the hope of civilization.

This chapter is so convincing that all reasonable minds will find it easy to accept what solutions the author gives in the last chapter of the religious, domestic, social, political, economical or international problems. We wish we had space enough at our disposal to give a detailed idea of those solutions. We can, however, say that it is on the whole a vindication of the Hindu view of life, though the Professor nowhere expressly says so. This is a point on which we feel almost inclined to quarrel with the learned author. He seems almost afraid to wound the susceptibilities of the Western mind, bolstered up as they generally are by the superiority complex. He remarks in one place that no civilization is perfect and that the world-civilization will be the harmony of all existing cultures. Quite true. But we must not forget to mention that some civilizations may supply the basic conceptions, the fundamentals, of the desired world-harmony and are thus more valuable than the others. Hinduism, the Professor must concede, is one such; and the West must

bow down before India's wisdom as we have bowed down before the material sciences of the West. Anyhow, it is a pleasure to see the Professor again vindicating his position as an able interpreter of India's ideas and ideals to the West.

Though the book is obviously meant for Western readers, it has in a sense a greater value for Indian readers, especially for those who are infatuated by the partial civilization of the West. We recommend to them the third chapter specially. Moreover, just now we need self-confidence based on an unprejudiced comparative study of the Indian and Western civilizations. The present book will be greatly helpful in this respect. We earnestly recommend it to the serious attention of our readers.

THE MESSAGE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A. B.L. Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. 50 pp. Price As. 4.

The present is the second edition of the booklet which embodies a lecture of the author dealing with the message of the great Swami in its various aspects. Besides other things, he deals with the spiritual, moral, political and social aspects of his message to India as well as to the West. Indeed the author has been successful to cover a wide ground within the compass of these few pages. The topics touched by him are of great moment at the present time and are sure to throw a flood of light on many a problem of the day, though we do not think that he has been always correct in his interpretation of the Swami's views, e.g. his views of British Government. The printing and get-up in this edition have been improved. We hope the booklet in its present form will be more welcome.

THE HINDU COLONY OF CAMBODIA. By Prof. Phanindra Nath Bose, M.A. Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. 140 pp. Price Boards Rs. 2-8.

We regret the inordinate delay in reviewing the book. It is indeed highly gratifying that Prof. Bose of Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, has been doing inestimable service to the general public by presenting them with the results of his investigations into the forgotten domains of Greater India. In the present well-written volume he has presented the story of Cambodia. He has based his work on the Sanskrit inscriptions of Cambodia and the researches of the French savants who are mainly responsible for the

unearthing of the past glory of India in the French dominions. We heartily welcome this publication and highly commend it to the careful attention of the public. We congratulate the author on his labours in this untravelling field of scholarship and hope he will continue his services in the way he has already done.

It is rather unfortunate that at present Indians do not possess any knowledge of the spread of Indian culture and civilisation and the beautiful remains that still testify to India's glory in other countries. The story of the spread of Indian culture in the Far East is fascinating. It is generally assumed that Hinduism is not a proselytising religion. But how can we then explain the propagation of Hinduism among the Khmer people of Cambodia as early as in the early centuries of the Christian era? Hinduism took the people of other faiths into its fold, and there was no prohibition against the preaching of the Hindu Faith among the non-Hindus.

It would be very interesting if we could present to our readers the story of how the ancestors of the Hindus crossed the seas with their religion, culture and civilisation and established them in Cambodia. For want of space we shall satisfy ourselves with only introducing the royal dynasty and concluding with a few words on the cultural conquest in Cambodia.

The Hindu colonisation of the country, now known as Cambodia, took place in the first century of the Christian era. The country was then known as Funan which maintained its power till the fifth century A. D., when Cambodia rose up from its ruins. The Indian royal dynasty was established in Cambodia in the sixth century A. D. The first Indian who came to Funan was a Brahmin, Kaundinya by name, who married a Nâgi called Somâ and founded the kingdom of Funan. But this Kaundinya was not the real founder of Cambodia. It is Kambu Svayambhuva, a mythical personage, from from whom the kings of Cambodia trace their descent. He is the Manu of Cambodia and may be regarded as the founder of the royal dynasty in Cambodia.

Of Kambu Svayambhuva was born Srutavarman who is taken as the first Indian king of Cambodia. Indians had already made themselves masters in Funan and Champa. Through the Indian kings and colonists of Funan, Indian culture had already begun to spread in Cambodia also. With the

establishment of the Indian royal dynasty in Cambodia, Indian manners and customs began to obtain a firm hold in that country.

On the throne of Cambodia we find successively as many as thirty-two kings beginning with Srutavarman and ending with Jayavarman VII up to A. D. 1201, after which the country declined and gradually came under the power of Siam and France. Cambodia had thus been ruled over by Indians for seven centuries. All the kings bore the title of Varman like the kings of Champa, such as Bhavavarman, Jayavarman and Râjendravarman.

The history of Cambodia begins with the history of Indian colonists in that land of the Khmers. With the coming of Indians the Khmer people came in contact with a higher civilisation and were very soon influenced by that culture. From the very beginning of the first century of the Christian era the Indian colonists had colonised Funan and for five centuries politically dominated that land. From the sixth century onward, the centre of influence was transferred to Cambodia, which became like Champa another stronghold of the Hindu civilisation. Indian culture and civilisation began to spread over the whole peninsula from these centres. The kings of both these countries became the custodians of Indian culture in these foreign countries. The Indian kings married the Khmer princesses and Indianised the whole Khmer population. In some cases the Khmers modified the Indian manners and customs with their own beliefs and traditions. Thus grew up the Indo-Khmer civilisation in Cambodia with a distinct Indian stamp on it. The king always assumed an Indian air. His palace breathed an Indian atmosphere. In the royal court there were Brahmins, astrologers, singers, ministers, generals and a host of other officials as in an Indian court. The principal queen, as in India, had a special position of honour. The râja-guru was there, always advising the king on spiritual matters. Even the religion of the king and his people was Indian. The king used to worship the God Siva who became the presiding deity of the kingdom. From

the sixth century to the twelfth century A. D. we find the God Siva's popularity in Cambodia unimpaired. Not only Siva but other Hindu Gods and Goddesses also were introduced into the Khmer country. The manner of worship was quite Indian. The king and other donors used to make liberal grants for the maintenance of the temples and for the worship of the Gods. Priests were specially appointed for these purposes. Whenever a new town was built the image of Siva or some other God found a place there. The kings of Cambodia were very fond of building new temples and images. We scarcely meet with any reign which did not witness the erection of a new temple or a new image. Except the first few, all the kings were great builders, and they covered Cambodia with magnificent temples and monuments. Of these builder kings we may mention the names of Indravarman I (877—889), Yasovarman (889—910), Râjendravarman (944—961) and Suryavarman II (1112—1152) who erected the magnificent temple of Vishnu, known as Angkor Vat which is the master-piece of Khmer architecture. In these temples Hindu Gods and Goddesses were enshrined and received homage from the Indianised Khmer people. Hinduism on the whole made a deep impression upon the people of Cambodia who readily took to the worship of Siva, Vishnu, Durgâ, Chandî, Srf and other Gods and Goddesses. The Buddhist images were also worshipped. Many Indians of great eminence and learning like Agastya and Bhatta Divâkara went over to Cambodia from India to spread Indian culture in that land. We find the use of the Râmâyana, Mahâbhârata, Purâna, the grammar of Pânini, the logic of Kanâda, and the system of Patanjali in that land. In Cambodia Indian manners and customs even now play an important part. The people of Cambodia even at the present day profess Buddhism. The culture they have inherited is purely Indian in character, and the Indian colonists helped the Cambodians in the making of the Indo-Khmer civilisation.

The country, as is well-known, is now a French possession.

NEWS AND REPORTS

**R. K. Veda Vidyalaya, Gadadhar
Ashrama, Calcutta**

A report of the Vidyalaya for the year 1928 is to hand. It is highly gratifying to mark

its rapid progress in every respect. It was in July, 1922, that the Veda Vidyalaya was ushered into existence as an institution annexed to the Gadadhar Ashrama with a

small class of 9 students. The number during the last year was 40. As many as eleven subjects widely covering different branches of Sanskrit learning were taught in the institution by 4 competent teachers and 1717 lectures were given on all the subjects during the year. In 1928 the institution sent up 10 students to appear in different examinations under the Board of Sanskrit Examinations, of whom 8 came out successful. This year also students are being prepared for the same purpose.

The Vivekananda Vani Bhavan is a decent library attached to the Gadadhar Ashrama which has made in the course of last eight years a choice collection of books numbering over 1000, chiefly on Indian philosophy and religion. Besides the gift of several almirahs of books made to the library, purchases also to the value of Rs. 186-5-0 were made during the year under review. The total income of the library during the year was Rs. 215-6-9 and the expenditure amounted to Rs. 214-15-9. Several weeklies and monthlies were also received by the library as free presents. The total expenses of the institution during the 14 months from the beginning of November, 1927 to the end of December, 1928 came up to Rs. 3,224-4-0 leaving a balance of Rs. 549-12-0 in hand.

It is needless to mention that the cause for which the Vidyalaya stands is dear to the heart of every Indian who values the ancient cultural glories of India with which the highest spiritual concerns of the people at the present date and indeed for all times are bound up. The Veda Vidyalaya as a centre diffusing knowledge of the ancient Hindus is meant to supply a real need of the present-day society. It is confidently believed by the organisers that as time passes and the Vidyalaya continues steadily to function, its activities will come to be known and appreciated and thus the ardently cherished dream of Swami Vivekananda regarding the revival of the ancient Vedic culture will be realised to some extent. We earnestly hope that the public will send liberal help to *Secy., Sri Ramakrishna Veda Vidyalaya, 86A, Harish Chatterjee St., Bhawanipur, Calcutta.*

R. K. Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, Behar

The Vidyapith completed its seventh year of service in the field of education in 1928, a report of which has recently reached us. Located in a most beautiful and healthy

place and conducted by the dedicated lives of a group of educated monks and Brahma-charins, the institution affords the greatest facility to the young pupils towards their all-round physical, æsthetic* and spiritual growth with a spirit of consecration, catholicity and devotion to the ennobling cultural ideals and traditions of their country. The number of students on the roll fluctuated between 56 and 60. The health of the boys during the year was quite up to the mark. The institution maintains some poor and deserving students free and at concession rates. Religion is made here the basis of training. The institution observes all the Hindu festivals and holds ceremonies in honour of many prophets and saints. Moral instruction is also sought to be inculcated through daily prayers and religious discourses. Sacred books are prescribed as supplementary studies. Besides regular physical exercises, various games are organised for the boys. The are also trained to develop in themselves a spirit of self-help and dignity of labour in ordinary household work. Small patches of garden managed by the boys themselves give them also scope for culturing their æsthetic taste. The organisation of boys into a "Sevak Sangha" has advanced further by the establishment of a "Boys' Own Court" which was formed of a panel of judges elected by the boys. It works under the supervision of a teacher. Through the Sangha the boys learn to conduct meetings, deliver lectures and tend their diseased mates. Music, First aid, Hand work, Nature study and other allied subjects also form a part of the curriculum. The main features of the daily routine are that emphasis is laid on early rising. Classes are held twice daily morning and afternoon, and provision is made for devotional songs and hymns early morning and evening. The recurring expenses of the institution were met from students' fees and public contributions, but expenses for buildings were met from funds specially raised for that purpose. The receipts of the general fund including last year's balance amounted to Rs. 19,698-5-11 and the running of the institution entailed an expenditure of Rs. 12,248-10-0. The building fund left a balance of Rs. 1,175-8-9. The needs of the institution are Library, Lecture hall and Office in one building; Segregation Ward; School Building (classes are now held in dormitories); two more Dormitories for the boys; a Guest house; a Dining Hall; a Cowshed and some cows; a

fund for the maintenance of deserving indigent students; a fund for the maintenance of a number of paid teachers with special qualifications; and some up-to-date educational equipments.

We heartily congratulate the management on the success they have achieved in the line of work they have chosen, which, we believe, will be highly useful to the country in many respects; and we hope the institution will grow more and more in future in order that it may extend its beneficence to the ever-increasing number of pupils.

All contributions to be sent to *Secy., Ramakrishna Mission Vidyapith, Deoghar, Behar.*

R. K. Mission Students' Home, Madras

The twenty-fourth annual report, for the year 1928, of the above institution is to hand. A visitor has already presented our readers with a detailed description of the Home in the pages of this paper in January last. Another article on the educational ideals of the Home has been published in the last issue. We therefore barely touch upon a few figures and statements of the year under review.

During the year the construction of the staff-quarters was begun and the workshop equipment was added to. The old boys of the Home has started a quarterly magazine which will provide an account of the Home and also form a medium for the discussion of educational, literary and religious topics of common interest. The number of students on the roll at the end of the year was 137. The tutorial staff consisted of eight resident

teachers each of whom was in charge of 15 to 18 boys. The life and activities of the boys outside the class hours were looked after by the ward masters and the house-hold management of the Home was as usual in the hands of the boys themselves. Religious classes were held morning and evening Lessons from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as well as the lives and teachings of the great saints were given to the younger boys, while the Gita was expounded to the grown up students. The younger boys were also taught to chant Sanskrit devotional verses of Sri Sankara and Yamunacharya. Students attended the physical training class thrice a week in the mornings. They are trained in the Noehren's system of physical activities, besides the Indian systems of indigenous exercises. The health of the students during the year was satisfactory. The Residential High School and the Industrial School went on very efficiently. In the latter the third year classes in (i) Carpentry and Cabinet-making, and (ii) Mechanical Foreman and Fitter's work were opened. The number on the roll in the Industrial School was 25 at the end of the year. The total receipts on all heads amounted to Rs. 43,854-10-0 and the expenditure to Rs. 44,101-5-5. The management conclude the report with an appeal to the generous public and confidently believe that they will assist them liberally in achieving their objects and making the institution an ideal one in every way.

We congratulate the management on the splendid work they are doing. All help may be sent to *Secy., Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Mylapore, Madras.*

Ramakrishna Mission Flood Relief in Assam.

Swami Suddhananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission writes:—The public are already aware of the terrible devastation caused by the recent heavy flood in Assam. The whole of Surma Valley is practically under water. In some villages water rose from 10 to 12 feet high. Thousands of people whose homesteads are completely washed away are without any shelter. Innumerable carcasses of cattle, etc. could be seen floating past the waters and the number of human victims also has been considerable. The rich are to-day in the same footing with the poor, as almost everything has been washed away or damaged by the flood, and both stand face to face with starvation and in the jaws of impending epidemics.

Our workers who are in the field have already begun relief from 6 or 7 places with the help of running boats. We want the co-operation of the generous public to be able to do the work as effectively as possible.

All contributions sent to any of the following will be thankfully received and acknowledged—

- (1) THE SECRETARY, Ramakrishna Mission, P. O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah.
- (2) THE MANAGER, Advaita Ashrama, 182A, Mukhtaram Babu St., Calcutta.