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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

NOTES OF CONVERSATION WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA

[FROM THE DIARY OF A DISCIPLE]

11TH MAY, 1922.

“There are some trees which eat animals. A fly sits on the flower and the flower becomes slowly closed. After the fly has been digested, the flower again opens up. There are some trees, which can devour even a man. The line of demarcation between a plant and an animal life (where the plant life ends and the animal life begins) cannot be ascertained. Similarly the meeting-point of the human and the divine life is hard to find. As when you set a spark of fire to a block of wood gradually the whole piece becomes full of fire, similarly if a drop of divinity falls on a man he is transformed into God in this very physical body. Without changing the human body, in the very physical body, one can turn into God. Swami Vivekananda would say, ‘If a man can practise truth for twelve years, whatever he will say, will come to pass. If a person practise continence for twelve

years without the slightest deviation, whatever thing he will set his hand to, will become full of triumph and glory.’ Swamiji said to Dr. Mahendralal Sarker, at the time of the illness of Sri Ramakrishna, ‘We worship him as God-man.’

“The Yoga-scripture says that Nandi became God in his very human body. The father of Nandi was long without a son. At last he practised Tapasya to please Mahadeva for a son. Being pleased with his austerity, Mahadeva appeared before him to confer a boon. The Brahmin prayed, ‘Let me have a son like you.’ On this Shiva said with a smile, ‘There cannot be another like me. All right, I shall myself be born as your son. The son will be endowed with all good qualities, but he will not live long. He will die at the age of eighteen.’ With a heavy heart the Brahmin returned home and told his wife about the prospect of the birth of a son, but the ill news he did

not break to her. At last the wife of the Brahmin was in the family way and in due time gave birth to a son. Everybody was rejoicing, but the Brahmin remained sad. The son began to grow up and even in his childhood became versed in all the scriptures and endowed with all good qualities. Once he asked his father as to why he was always found morose. On this, with eyes full of tears, the Brahmin narrated to him all about the reason of his grief. Nandi, the son, was then fifteen. On hearing all, he said to his father, 'Well, dear father, as I shall surely die after three years, please be good enough to leave me three years earlier. Let me try a little and see what I can do.' Finding no other course, the Brahmin allowed the son to go. After hard austerities, Nandi attained success in Yoga-practices. Just when the moment of his death was drawing near, he held up the vital breath at the 'Sahasrara' and remained one with Shiva. It is the vital breath which is taken away by Death. But as Death did not find the vital breath of Nandi, he went away baffled. And now Nandi brought down the vital breath back from the 'Sahasrara.' At this Mahadeva was highly pleased with him and offered him the following boon: 'Nandi, in your physical body you will come to my abode and become one of my companions.' Nandi took permission of his father and went in his human body to the abode of Shiva; he became a companion of Shiva—became a god."

18TH MAY, 1922.

"There is something in this body, which is ever-free and untainted with sin—sin cannot even touch that. By giving up the idea that you are a Jiva, if you can be one with that, then there is no longer any fear. Lust and anger are the characteristics of Jivahood—by

gradually freeing himself from this lust and gold, Jiva at last becomes one with God. From the constant thinking of evil things, of lust and gold, man's body also becomes similar—the facial expression gets changed. After doing a sinful action, however much you may try to hide that, all is in vain, your very face will betray you. Even an ordinary man will be able to find you out, and not to speak of those who are trying to read thoughts in the face. It is the eyes which give the clearest indication. The appearances of those who commit dacoity or murder, become altogether of a different kind. Have you not marked that? A man with a very beautiful appearance becomes afterwards very ugly-looking, as he goes on committing heinous deeds; whereas when a great sinner, perhaps through the grace of some holy man, turns over a new leaf, his appearance also becomes nice. I have seen these with mine own eyes. There is a kind of bee which catching a particular kind of insect takes it to its hole. The bee thrusts its long sting into the body of the insect. As a result the insect cannot fly away and through fear constantly thinks of the bee. Leaving the insect behind, in the hole, the bee goes off, and now and then returns and sits before the insect. The insect constantly thinks of the bee only, till at last it changes its form and turns into a bee. A man constantly thinking of woman becomes like a woman. In Dakshineswar there was a dramatic performance. Those who acted the parts of female characters became like women in their manner of talks and walks, in applying the women's favourite powder to their teeth—in short, in every detail of their conduct. Sri Ramakrishna called our attention to this. In the same way, a Jiva also constantly thinking of God gives up his Jiva-consciousness and

attains to the state of Godhood. The Guru implants such an idea in the disciple, by constantly thinking of which he actually becomes so.

“Conquer lust. Assert your independence. Conquer lust even before it can conquer you. Once the lust gets control over you, you are done for. It is just like what happens in wrestling feats. In the wrestling, if once you fall below, you are gone for ever. Through discrimination and devotion to God one can be free from lust. With the gradual increase of love for God, lust, anger, etc., leave one completely in the long run. While going to visit Sri Ramakrishna, as soon as I would enter the gate (of the Dakshineswar Temple-garden) I would feel a palpitating sensation in the heart. Many would feel like that—because of the thought of going near a very holy presence. There would come a great awe. While one goes to a holy presence, one’s sins within, begin to tremble.”

Disciple : “What is the case with those who have got no sin in their mind? Does their heart not tremble?”

Swami : “No, it does not; but it does also. For who there can be, who will be found pure like Sri Ramakrishna? However greatly pure one may be, he will be insignificant in comparison with Sri Ramakrishna. When any contrary thought would cross my mind, he would at once detect that and say, ‘Why do you look so? Perhaps this is the case?’ And what was the wonder, he would say exactly the real thing. How fearless is he, whose conscience can say that he has done no wrong!”

5TH JUNE, 1922.

Swami : “If any one would lose any-

thing, Sri Ramakrishna would be very much annoyed. Once Hazra Mahashaya lost a towel in the Ganges. On this Sri Ramakrishna was greatly displeased and said to him, ‘Consciousness at times fails me as to whether I have any cloth round my loin or not; still I have never lost anything. And you are so much forgetful?’ Sri Ramakrishna would be greatly vexed, also if anybody were cheated in making purchases. He was very particular about all these things. Once Yogin purchased and brought an iron pan, which was found to have a crack in it. At this Sri Ramakrishna asked him, ‘Well, did you bargain as to the price of the pan?’ Yogin answered, ‘No, I did not. I paid what the shopkeeper demanded.’ On this he said, ‘So much putting on the airs of a rich man? You will give whatever is demanded? The small sum which you are cheated out of, without losing it that way, you may give to a poor man. You must bring that also which is given as ‘extra’ to the purchasers. You may be a religious man, but that is no reason why you should be a fool.’ Again, if anyone would pick up anything as his own, which had been lost by somebody, he would be greatly displeased. Once Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda) thus picked up a pice, young as he was. On hearing this Sri Ramakrishna reprimanded him by saying, ‘Why did you take it up? It was there left, I admit, but why did you go to pick it up? Why should one who does not eat fish, go to a fish-market? And also what necessity has he to ask the price of a fish? You are a Sadhu. Supposing there is money left there, why should you take that up? Why not let a Lakh of rupees thus remain there?’ Such was the training of Sri Ramakrishna!”

NATIONALISM, PATRIOTISM AND RELIGION

BY THE EDITOR

I

If religion is the opiate of the people, nationalism is no less. More people become easily intoxicated in the name of nationalism than are attracted by that of religion. 'For the nation and the country' people can be persuaded to do anything—any crime is not too heinous for that, any sacrifice is not too great for that and people rush readily to sacrifice their very lives in large numbers for, as they say, the sake of their country.

The pity is, when people get drunk in the name of nationalism, they do not know exactly what the ultimate aim of their combined action is. They become simply tools in the hands of a handful of persons and they follow them led by the herd instinct, but all the while priding themselves on the idea that they are out for a very noble achievement.

Very often—nay, almost in every case—deliberate attempt is made to cloud the vision of the masses, so that they may be easily led simply by "war-cries." Leaders of the nation try to infuse their ideas into the minds of the children along with the first education they get. In them are implanted the seeds of hatred for other nations and those of idolatry for their own government, right or wrong. So that when they grow up, they become lifeless limbs of the machinery of their government—they become mere tools, they automatically echo the voices of those who give out or are believed to be the custodians of the best interests of the nation.

After the French Revolution a syste-

matic effort was made in France to make education the buttress of national polity and the slave of the State and within a century this policy was adopted more or less by all countries in the world. Everywhere history is perverted and the text-books are selected with a deliberate purpose to magnify the achievements of the nation to which the pupils belong, and to inculcate the spirit of hatred for other nations. According to one authority, from 1794 education became the handmaid of Prussian militarism and from 1871 to 1914 la Revanche was sedulously preached in many of the schools of France. In Manchuria the Japanese are said to have banished the Chinese history books from the schools and substituted them by books filled with pro-Japanese sentiments. The policy of the Text-book Society of New York City is said to have recorded in 1922 as follows: "The text-book must contain no statement of derogation or in disparagement of the achievements of American heroes. It must not question the sincerity of the aims and purposes of the founders of the Republic or of those who have guided its destinies." One may get startled to find in record this policy frankly expressed; but expressed or unexpressed, what doubt is there that this is the policy of almost every Government in the world? In almost every country history is thus manipulated to glorify one's own nation at the expense of others.

And the result is, man is being dehumanized in the name of nationalism. The soul of man is stifled and he is made into a machine. Man loses his

power of judgment when a question of national importance arises, or he has not the courage to give out boldly what his frank opinion is. Thousands of persons who are ideal men in private life behave altogether differently in their collective actions against another nation. A nation can do no wrong—this is the hidden idea behind their activities. And as every nation thinks that way, all the spirits of hell have been, as it were, let loose in the world to turn it into all chaos.

II

How much blind self-love there is in the name of nationalism and how much hatred for the people of other nations is hidden in it! In the international relation people are reluctant to recognize others as human beings. A nation will be always on the alert to defend itself against the attack of other nations as from wild, ferocious beings and it will be also always ready to pounce upon others like a hunter out for games. As such the only international relation that exists in the modern world is that of perpetual animosity. All the nations are on the tiptoe of expectations for a war. At the slightest indication they are ready to flood the world with a deluge of bloodshed and perpetrate inhuman cruelties, which for their very large magnitude fail to be recognized as such. People now shudder at what was done at the last Great War, but that indicates simply the possibilities of atrocities in future. Knowledge is power. And with the passage of time man's stock of knowledge will be increased and this knowledge is not going to be utilized for the good of humanity, but is sure to be made, unless the present trend of affairs be changed, into instruments of destruction. Science has already been prostituted to nationalism

and the greater the scientific discoveries the greater the danger to humanity and the peace of the world.

Such is the intoxication of nationalism and so great is the tumult that is raised in its name that any sane voice and wise counsel will not be heard—rather will be ridiculed into silence. Should we not love our nation and country? Are we not right in staking everything for the honour of the nation and the country?—this is what everybody will say. This was exactly what, in the last war, every German would say as well as everyone of the opposite camps. Those who defend say that their action is prompted by a desire for the protection of the honour and interest of their Motherland, while those who are offensive say that they are out to increase the glory of their nation—it matters little if thousands of human beings are to be sacrificed for that.

Viscount Cecil draws a very nice distinction between nationalism and patriotism in an article in *Harper's Magazine*. He says: "The difference between such nationalism and real patriotism is as great as that between love and lust. The true patriot desires the greatness and prosperity of his country in its largest sense. He is not satisfied with mere material wealth. He wishes to see his country in the van of intellectual and moral progress. He desires to see her lead the world in all good ways. He believes that to hope for continued riches without this spiritual health is futile and worthless. He conceives of his country as the trustee of all her wealth and power for the benefit of mankind. In other words he recognizes no difference in the ethical principles applicable to individual or the state.

"The nationalist takes a narrower view. To him the only test of greatness is physical and political strength. If he

is a Briton he gloats over the extent of the map of the world which is coloured red. He glories in the statistics of population and acreage in the British Empire. He sings with fervour the aspiration that her bounds may be set wider still and wider. All this leads him to distrust foreign countries. How can British boundaries extend except at their expense?"

From the above it will be clear that patriotism itself is not bad. But when it crosses its legitimate limit, it becomes a menace. Patriotism so long as it is restricted to actions conducive to the well-being of a nation without hurting the interest of another (rather weaker) nation, is good and should be welcomed. But when it becomes so aggressive that it cannot tolerate another nation guarding its own interest or when it becomes so very dynamic that it puts a neighbouring nation into the necessity of being self-protective, it becomes a curse. When Dr. Johnson said that patriotism was the last refuge of a scoundrel, he perhaps meant that patriotism which a scoundrel utilizes for the furtherance of his own interest or ambition.

III

In private life we find that a man must look for his self-preservation, if he wants to continue his existence on earth. Sankaracharya makes concession for the demands of the flesh even for a man who has realized the Self and known that the world is simply a Maya. He says that such a man should beg his food just sufficient to maintain his existence. This clearly indicates that an individual has to give a certain amount of attention to his own interest for the fulfilment of his duties as a man. This is quite legitimate. But what about that man who is so very

self-centred and whose selfishness becomes so very mean that he disturbs the peace of the society he belongs to? Does not such a man make himself despicable? In any decent society a man whose whole concern in life is about his own interest, is looked upon with pity, if not contempt. Is that not true of a nation also? But our ethical sense becomes atrophied when we see selfishness organized in a wide scale by a nation and we bow down to it without the slightest compunction.

Nationalism of the modern world is nothing but selfishness in a gigantic scale. Activities of any nation indicate that it wants to expand itself so much that for the fulfilment of that desire, opportunities forthcoming, it is ready to wipe out of existence all other nations of the world. When the attitude of every nation is such, it is but natural that there will ensue a perpetual menace of war.

If we classify the nations of the world we find that they fall mainly into two groups—the oppressors and the oppressed. Some people have forcibly kept some people under subjection, while the latter are trying to throw off the foreign yoke. There is another kind of oppression which is more dangerous, because not so clearly visible. That is when the stronger nations exploit the weaker nations economically. Commercial greed supplies the food for the sustenance of nationalism when it takes an abnormal turn. The weaker nations always live under the threat of political subjection or commercial exploitation at the hands of the stronger ones.

So long this spirit vitiated the atmosphere of the Western world, but now the contagion has spread even in the Eastern hemisphere. Asia has awakened from its age-long slumber and while some nations are trying to assert themselves, those that have already succeed-

ed in doing so are trying to stifle the legitimate aspirations of their weaker neighbours. As such a world-wide conflagration may start at any time from either the Eastern or the Western Zone.

Those nations which talk of peace very often betray their insincerity. While talking of disarmament, many nations want re-armament, as their other activities show. As a result, the world peace is as much out of sight as ever. And the root cause of all the trouble is "nationalism," in its present shape. Is there no way out to free the world from the grip of this false god—nationalism?

The difficulty is where to begin—from the beginning or from the end? The cause and effect have here so closely intermingled that it is very difficult to separate the one from the other and apply the remedy. The spirit of nationalism has killed the soul of man and because man does not care so much for moral and spiritual excellence he falls an easy prey to the wiles of nationalism. As we hinted before, even in a free country, a man does not really enjoy his freedom. Either his sense of freedom has taken a perverted turn or he has no soul to enjoy his freedom—he has become a political or commercial automaton in the hands of certain persons who lead the nation. If there is a strong sense of moral and spiritual freedom in individuals, they are difficult to be led in any way the leaders choose, and is it due to this fact that in Russia religion has become an anathema? And why talk of Russia alone? Almost everywhere it is the case. How little attention is given towards moral perfection or spiritual development of the people in comparison with what is devoted to the development of militarism. Even in comparison with the perverted education that is given nowadays, in any country military expenditure exceeds

the sum spent on education. Could we reverse the process? That is, spend so much on education—make the people so much "human" that there will be no necessity for keeping a huge army and big armaments. We have become so greatly inebriated with the idea of nationalism that we cannot imagine that such things may be possible. Well, has man become so much degraded that such thing cannot come even within our conception? And if the state of affairs is really so, are we ourselves not the cause of that degradation? Should we not cry with the poet—What man has made of man? The man suffers for his own actions. He reaps the fruit of what he has sown. Likewise because our combined actions have made each individual a dehumanized being, we cannot expect better things from individuals.

Why is it that the appeal of nationalism becomes so strong and finds so ready a response? In the last analysis it will be found that it is the reflected selfishness of the individuals in the life of the nation. And deliberate attempts are made so that higher ideals and nobler sentiments do not grow in individuals beyond a certain safe degree. As a result, individuals learn that selfishness is a greater virtue than any moral quality; survival of the fittest is a higher law than that of self-sacrifice. And when the appeal of nationalism comes, people easily believe that that will give them greater opportunities to fulfil their interest in private and individual life, and they run after the will-o'-the-wisp. Pride of power and greed of possession are inborn in human beings. When the glamour of nationalism blinds their eyes, they readily believe that if they follow the call of nationalism, they will be able to satisfy them in a greater degree. Even in the subject nations, where national

aspirations have awakened and people are trying to win their independence, the incentive of action will be found to be not so much the desire for greater opportunities for developing spiritual and moral life as that for greater enjoyment. And the pity is that as soon as the tyrants are overthrown, in many cases, those who were oppressed become worse oppressors themselves.

IV

Everywhere it is believed or people are led to believe that the country is greater than God. And because the country becomes an object of greater reverence than God, it becomes not a greater God to us, but a Satan—a Nemesis. Light beyond a certain degree of intensity becomes darkness; reverence beyond a certain limit—and that misplaced—becomes a curse. Have genuine reverence for God and you will have reverence for your country also. Serve God and you will serve your country also. And in that service to your country a heat will not be generated which will make the existence of the people of other countries intolerable.

Can we reconcile our national aspirations with the demands of our higher nature? This is a problem, on the solution of which depends the future of humanity and the peace of the world. The modern nations have fostered national ideas at the expense of the moral and spiritual health of individuals. Can we not conceive of a state when people will be morally excellent, spiritually developed and at the same time serve the interest of the nation? Is that not possible? The answer to this demands that we must know beforehand what 'the interest of the nation' is.

The goal of a nation should be not self-aggrandisement, not exploitation and extirpation of weaker nations, but

the creation and development of opportunities for individuals to grow morally and spiritually. From God we come, to God we go—that is the goal of human life. National leaders should see that all the activities of the nation are attuned to that end—that a greater number of people find opportunities to pursue that end or to develop a hankering for that ideal. Now, if this be the end in view of a nation, naturally its activities will remain within a legitimate bound. Though the possibilities of war will not be completely removed, each nation will, then, care only for self-protection and the desire for self-preservation, if genuine amongst all nations, does not take a menacing shape as is the case with the attitude of modern nations. Under such circumstances a nation will be able to pay greater attention to develop *men* than what they have hitherto done. And greater the number of the higher type of men in the world, the better will be the future of humanity.

There are some men whose life is a constant sacrifice at the altar of humanity. But ordinarily man's interest widens from a narrower to a larger circle accordingly as he ascends to a higher and higher level in the scale of humanity. The grossest man looks to his own interest only. A higher type of man harmonizes his interest with that of the family. He may not be altogether foregoing his own interest. But he manages things in such a way that his interest does not come in conflict with the interest of the family. Then there are others who bring about a reconciliation between their interest and the interest of the family along with that of the society or clan to which they belong. The more higher type of men serve equally the interest of their own, their family, society and their country. Can we not widen the boundary of our interest one step further and include the

whole of humanity in that? Nowadays the popular idea is that the national interest cannot be consistent with the interest of humanity and this is the genesis of the national selfishness, sometimes of abject and dangerous type. But if one can equally serve one's family, society and country, why shall not one be able to serve equally one's own nation and humanity? It is only our narrowness of vision that does not allow us to see the possibility of such a thing. Woodrow Wilson struck a very new note and was prompted by a very high idealism when he declared to the League of Nations Commission at Paris that there would come a time in future "when a man would be as ashamed of failing in his duty to humanity as he now was if he failed in his duty to his country." The sooner such a thing comes in the history of the world, the better for it.

Nowadays man thinks more keenly of his relation to his country or nation than that to God, and as such national interest looms so large before public eyes that the larger interest of humanity is altogether ignored. If there is a spiritual idealism behind national activity, such a thing cannot happen. If a person knows his relation to God, he will at once recognize all men, irrespective of creed, colour, nationality or geographical boundary, as children of God and his brothers; he will realize that God is the thread that runs through, and as such links, the whole of humanity. So long as one retains one's love for God, one cannot hurt His children to whatever part of the world the latter may belong. All humanity becomes akin to him. The whole world is his home and the whole mankind is his near relation. We ignore this fundamental fact and as a result all attempts to bring about a condition of world peace end in a *flasco*. We must attack the

problem at its very centre and all the side-issues will be easily solved. Unless the activities of various nations are prompted by spiritual idealism and the consideration of human relationship, the future of the world is doomed.

It is true that charity begins at home. One cannot serve the interest of humanity unless one knows how to serve the interest of one's nation. But there is no justification for national selfishness becoming so very abnormal that it jeopardizes the well-being of humanity. Even when a man 'begins his charity at home,' he must know that his ideal of life as man is to widen the scope of his charity so much that it will, in the long run, embrace the whole of humanity. If he keeps that ultimate ideal before his mind, then and then only he can be *really* charitable at home. Otherwise any sacrifice for 'his family members will have nothing admirable in it: It will be the outcome of another kind of selfishness—of the attachment of flesh to flesh. Only if one serve one's family members not out of any personal attachment but knowing them to be the children of God, one will be able to come out of the narrow groove of family-idea. Similarly if a man knows that all men are the children of God and as such the whole of humanity deserves service from him, he will be able to *really* serve his nation or country: for service to the country and the nation will give him only an opportunity to cultivate unselfishness, which, when perfectly realized, will remove the line of separation from him and another man or from him and God. Nowadays the word 'nationalism' conjures up a glorious vision before our mind, but how much selfishness, inglorious meanness and uncharitable thoughts are hidden behind it? This incongruity will disappear if even in the performance of our duties to the nation

we do not forget our duties to *Man* as a social being or a spiritual entity.

V

To bring about that millennium, it is necessary that greater attention should be given to religion than what is being done in the modern era. It is true that religion has not been able to fulfil completely the expectations that it raised, but that is not the fault of religion so much as the fault of persons who trade in the name of religion. Ideal should never be lowered to suit the exigencies of time and circumstances. If religion contains the seeds which are likely to make heaven of earth, to lift up humanity to a higher plane of existence—above the sordid fight for power and pelf, transient joys and pleasures—we should try to foster and develop them into branching trees under which all mankind will find rest and peace. We must not say that religious idealism is too much visionary for the hard realities of the world. We must not divide life into various water-tight compartments and think we can be a political being, a commercial being, a religious being at will at different times. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you. Let all your duties to the country and the nation be attuned to your highest duty—namely, the duty to God, and in that case all your minor duties will be accomplished with greater perfection. It is truly said in the Upanishad :
ईशा वास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत् ।

Whatever is in the moving world should be covered with God. And should we while worshipping our own country and our own people as God, reject others as the creation of Satan? How shall we answer this to ourselves, if we think boldly and untrammelled by any preconceived ideas or deep-rooted prejudices?

In the history of the world, India supplies the example as to how the interest of the nation can be served equally with the larger interest of humanity. India has rejected no people by an Immigration Law, but whoever have come to India, have received a ready welcome. It sheltered people who were driven from their own country by religious persecution and sought hospitality here; it sheltered the people who came to make a propaganda of their religion from a foreign country. It welcomed all races and gradually assimilated them. And whenever Indians went outside the borders of the country, they had gone with the banner of peace and not with the trumpet call of war. And everywhere they were able to knit together different nations by the bonds of love. This was possible only because in India religion was given a better place than nationalism, or rather religion was the mainspring of all activities.

This lesson from the past history of India will be of invaluable help to get out of the impasse in which the political life of the present world has found itself.

CHRISTIANITY OR VEDANTA ?

BY SWAMI ATULANANDA

I

We often meet with the question : Why do you preach Vedanta? Christianity is good enough for us, we need no importation from foreign lands. Look at what Christianity has done for us, compare it with the social and material conditions of India, the land of Vedanta, and you must confess that we are not in need of a new religion.

The difficulty with those who make such remarks is that they have not understood the right spirit of Vedanta. Let me attempt to make our position clear.

In the first place let us understand that we do not preach Vedanta with the view of starting a new sect. For the aim of Vedanta is to break down all barriers of sectarianism and dogma, it wants to establish absolute freedom of thought.

When the Swami Vivekananda began his missionary career in the West he was interviewed by the representatives of most of our leading journals. To them he had to make his position clear. He had to give out what he and his message stood for. And his answer given to the interviewers throws much light on the subject we have taken up.

The Swami said distinctly that sects are founded on non-essentials. The essential part of all religions is very much the same, all religions have for their object the teaching either of Devotion, Knowledge or Yoga.

Now Vedanta is the philosophy which embraces all of these methods. It is the kernel of religion. Leaving aside the

non-essentials it lays stress on that which is the real basis of religion. It does not, therefore, criticize other religions but it points out their good, positive side. And filling up the gaps and strengthening the weak spots in other religions it makes all religions practical and acceptable to every one. Vedanta therefore may serve as a basis for every possible religious system, harmonizing them all, antagonizing none.

From this it follows that Vedanta does not ask any one to give up his own religion. By becoming a Vedantist I need not cease to be a Christian. But as a Christian or Buddhist or a Mohammedan I may study the Vedanta philosophy. And by doing so I shall find that new light will be thrown on my own religion. In other words, the study of Vedanta will make me a better, enlightened Christian, Buddhist, Mohammedan, or Jew.

In every Gospel there are points difficult to understand. In every Gospel we find special stress laid on certain doctrines, while other doctrines are merely hinted at. And passages appear in all the scriptures which may easily lend themselves to sectarian interpretations. These defects Vedanta wants to remove.

Now Vedanta is not only the oldest, but also the most complete of all religious systems of thought. It is the mother-religion, from which other religions have either taken their birth or have drawn their nourishment. For we must remember that the influence of Indian thought is not a new phenomenon in the world-history. India was

once a great missionary power. And even as early as Buddha's time, Indian missionaries went outside of India to preach their doctrines. This accounts for the fact that there is far more harmony between the actual teachings of the different great religions than is generally supposed. Take the teachings of Buddha, of Jesus, of Krishna, of other great world-teachers, compare their statements and you will find that in statements they are indetical. They all declare that there is a Life Eternal and that to attain to that Life is possible for every one who sincerely follows certain rules of life. And the methods advanced are practically the same. Buddha was a Hindu, but also in Jesus' teachings we find ample proof that the great teacher was saturated with Indian thought. Jesus' teaching was not a new message. It was a re-statement of the one eternal religion, uttered by one who had realized the Truth of that religion. And being a man of realization he spoke with authority. His strong personality, his character, his absolute sincerity and simplicity gave his words extraordinary weight. And he was heralded by his devout disciples as the king among men, even as Buddha was proclaimed as the lion amongst his fellow-beings.

II

It is difficult for us to believe that through an Eastern religion we can get a better interpretation of Jesus' teachings than what we get from Christian pulpits. But it is so. What the churches teach to-day is a very narrow creed. That is why our Christian missionaries meet with such poor success among the Hindus. The Hindus, as is well known, are the most philosophical and religious of all races. And they know that Vedanta is a far

more complete system of thought than what Christian missionaries have to offer. We think that our Christian religion is perfect and in our arrogance we want to convert the whole world to our religion without even knowing what others have to teach.

So great is our arrogance that when the great Parliament of Religions assembled at Chicago in 1898, some Christian sects refused to send representatives. They considered it beyond their dignity to place their religion on the same platform with Eastern faiths. These were fortunately only a few instances. But a spirit of narrowness and intolerance towards other beliefs is found among a large number of Christians in every land. But others do not regard our religion as such a wonderful success. Let me give you an instance.

In the year 1876 the Emperor of Japan sent a committee of thoughtful men to Europe to study and observe particulars about the Christian religion. These were to study the difference between the various sects and also to observe what effect the Christian faith had upon the masses of the people. This was done with the idea that if the report were favourable, Christianity should be adopted by Japan as the religion of the State. But the report of the committee when returned to Japan was altogether unfavourable. The hopeless muddle and confusion that exists in the religious world of the West and the fact that as a vital force the teaching of Christ was hardly a factor in the lives of the people, made the Japanese Government conclude that it was not worthwhile to change their religion to Christianity. And Japan kept to Shintoism as the State religion.

The fact is that in the East religion has ever held a more prominent part in the lives of the people, than has been

the case in the West. And at least in India, when passing through the land and observing the masses there, one is more often reminded of the teachings of Jesus than when we travel in Western countries. And that is not through Christian influence, for such there is none, but because the Hindus as a race come nearer to living a true religious life than the Christian nations do. What Christ lived and taught forms part of that Eternal Religion which had its birth in India and which even to-day is more dear to the Indian heart than all the prosperity of which the West is so proud.

As Vedantists we can heartily accept Jesus and his words, but we must object to the interpretation of that wonderful life as offered to us by the Christian churches. We reject the church doctrines but we cannot but be inspired by Jesus' words and by his great life on earth. There is nothing that bars a Vedantist from accepting Jesus as his highest ideal, from adoring him as God-incarnate, from taking up his cross and from following him. A Christian can love and worship and serve Jesus with all his heart and all his soul and all his mind and in this he will be helped and strengthened by a careful study of Vedanta. And the same holds good in regard to the worship of Buddha, or Krishna, or Mohammed, of all God-inspired men.

III

The Hindus have their own saints, their own Incarnations. But that does not prevent them from paying the deepest respect and worship to saints and incarnations of other lands.

In India religious persecution is unknown. It is essentially the land of religious tolerance. Every religion is welcome in India. The Mohammedan

mosque, the Christian church, the Parsee fire-temple, all are regarded as temples of God. And no Hindu will even desecrate a place of worship. Every place of worship is holy in the sight of Hindus. They say: Brother, worship God in your own way. Only one thing we ask of you,—do not disturb our faith, let us also worship in our own way. We are all children of God and by our worship we all seek to come closer to Him. There is but one supreme God and in the end we will all be united in Him. God is but one, though we call Him by various names. The path may differ, but in the end all paths unite, they all lead to the same goal.

So the Hindu scripture says: "As different rivers flowing from different mountains run towards the same ocean, so, O Lord, the different paths that men take, each one according to his own tendencies and temperament, all lead unto Thee." And again: "Whomsoever you may worship with singleness of heart as the one God of the universe, call Him by whatever name you like, He will take you to the land of eternal bliss, freedom." This is the teaching of Vedanta.

Thank God, we live no longer in the time of the Inquisition, when men by the thousands were tortured to death because they could not accept a prescribed faith. But just the same, this attitude of religious tolerance and sympathy is a lesson which we in the West may well take to heart.

Thanks to Eastern influence, we are now beginning to learn that lesson. There is no Christian to-day who does not look back in horror on the barbarous methods employed in religious persecution in earlier days. It is a sad story, the story of the Christian church and Christian martyrs. It is a story of the past and we shall not dwell on it to-day. Neither shall we blame Christ and his teachings for the crimes committed

by men who called themselves His followers. But well may we ask ourselves the question: Is Christian civilization after all such a success as our Christian friends will have us believe? Look at the class distinction, the mammon-worship, the poverty of the masses in the great cities, competition, corruption in politics and what not,—all these abuses of to-day may well humble us. And the churches have not been able to prevent them. That is why so many people have lost faith in the churches and so many look elsewhere for consolation and a broader and truer interpretation of Christ's teachings and a truer application of his commands.

IV

To these we say: Perhaps Vedanta can solve your doubts and restore to you the faith you have lost. For without faith, the religious life is barren.

And it may be well to remember that the different Incarnations of God have often taught in part. They come with a purpose, they come to fulfil the law. They give what is needed at the time. So we find in Jesus' teachings that he dealt mostly with the dualistic aspect of religion. He most often spoke of God as "Our Father who art in heaven." But sometimes he went further and taught qualified monism, "I am the tree, you are the branches." And it was only at rare occasions, when surrounded by his most faithful disciples that he hinted at the highest truth, monism, where all distinction falls away and the liberated soul merges unto the Absolute: "I and my Father are one." But generally speaking, the religion of Christ is dualistic. His monistic utterances seem to have made little impression on his hearers. Hence he often did not repeat them.

There are other phases of Jesus' teachings which seem to have had little hold

on his flock. These, together with his monistic teachings, are now entirely ignored by the churches. But these teachings are nevertheless of the greatest importance. I need only mention what is called the Law of Karma and Reincarnation, and then the greatest of all laws,—the indwelling divinity in men.

Jesus taught these truths, no doubt, but it is in Vedanta that these laws take their true position, that they come to their full right. In these universal laws we find the explanation of much which without these must ever remain a mystery. And it is necessary to understand these laws, if we want to understand at least in part the great working in these wonderful universe and realize what is meant by "Union with God."

The Law of Karma is the law of cause and effect. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again," said Jesus. And Buddha summarized this law in the simple words: "What ye sow, ye shall reap." The same words were used by St. Paul: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked. That which a man soweth, that also shall he reap."

This law of cause and effect is a universal law. It affects all men. As the shadow follows the body, so the result follows every act. It is a law taught by all the great saviours and teachers of the world. So it can be traced in every religion. Good brings good; evil, evil.

Sometimes the effect follows immediately the cause. But in other cases the reward or punishment comes long after the deed. Some Karma finds its retribution only during a future birth. Death cannot interfere with this law, for after death follows life again, just as life is followed by death.

When Arjuna questioned Sri Krishna and asked whether all our good deeds

and religious practices would be in vain if death overtakes us before we reach perfection, the Lord answered: "By no means. The fruit of such practices are reaped in a future birth." Our destiny is in our own hands, we must raise ourselves by our own efforts.

How can we do that? "Cease to do evil, learn to do good," said Buddha. And Jesus expressed himself in the same spirit when he said: "Go in peace and sin no more." The religious life is a life of self-conquest. God is not partial. He metes out justice to all creatures.

If we want to become perfect and inherit the Life Eternal, we must abandon sin and follow the path of righteousness. For as we sow, so shall we reap. These doctrines of Karma and reincarnation are now ignored by the Christian churches.

Reincarnation means that the soul of man repeats its earthly career until perfection is reached and with it liberation. It is not that man takes birth on earth once and once only. Working its way up slowly through the process of evolution, the soul after many births reaches perfection and gets free.

When the body dies, the soul retires to other spheres and after a period of rest or heavenly enjoyment is born again, under new environments to obtain fresh opportunities for acquiring wisdom through new experiences. Thus the soul expands life after life, till aware of its own divine and eternal nature the soul comes back to earth no more. Thus the Laws of Karma and Reincarnation fulfil each other. It is a doctrine full of hope and encouragement. A life may be wasted, but still there is hope. There is no eternal damnation. Another chance is given to correct past mistakes. "God is a loving Father, who willeth not the death of the sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live," says the Bible.

Jesus may not have taught reincarnation in so many words, but it is clear from his sayings that he recognized the law. Jesus was an Easterner and every Eastern teacher knows reincarnation as fact. Jesus spoke of the broad and narrow path, the one leading to sorrow and many births, the other to liberation. And that the people believed in reincarnation is clear from the question they put to John the Baptist: "Art thou Elias?" And still more significant is Jesus' affirmation, when he said: "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." Again, when Jesus opened the eyes of the blind man they asked him: "Why was this man born blind? was it for his own sins, or for the sins of his parents?" So reincarnation was a well-known fact in those days.

In the Gita we find the plain statement: "As a man putting aside old garments, puts on new ones, so the soul laying aside one body, takes birth again in a new body."

V

The potential divinity in man is another teaching of Vedanta combatted by our Christian clergy. But why should it be so? Did not Jesus teach that each soul is divine? Unless that divinity is in us, how could Jesus pray: "That they all may be one as Thou Father art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us. I in them and Thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." The Father is already in us, He is the living God within man, the divine spark, the soul of man.

In Genesis we read that "God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." And Paul asked this question: "Know ye not that ye are the temples of the living God?" Yes, "God created man in His own image, in the image of God

created He him." In the Gita we read that "A ray of God became the living soul of man." God is the central light and we are rays of that light, part of Himself.

So we see how much similarity there really is between Christianity and Vedanta, if we only look for it. Of course, these interpretations may not be agreeable to the Christian clergy, but when we study the Bible with the light Vedanta throws on it, we must come to these conclusions. We cannot be bound by church dogmas; we must read Jesus with the light that is in us. He was the Son of God, he taught the highest truth and we have the right to give to his words the highest interpretation. Jesus taught the highest truth, for in him was all wisdom and understanding. These same truths we find in Vedanta. And not only that, Vedanta also offers a reasonable explanation to these truths.

And when it comes to the practical side of religion we find again that Jesus' teachings conform with the teachings of Vedanta. We hear in the West so much against the doctrine of renunciation taught in Hindu scriptures. The clergy denounces this doctrine. But again I appeal to Jesus' own words and I ask you, Did not Jesus demand renunciation from those who wished to follow him? Jesus himself was a Sannyasin, he lived the life of renunciation. May we not follow in his footsteps? What did Jesus teach?

"Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life." "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

"Sell all thou hast and follow me." "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me." "Resist not evil." These are the words of Jesus.

But in renunciation there are steps,

degrees. Renunciation does not necessarily mean that every one must sell all he has and live in absolute poverty. This path is justified, we cannot preach against it. But we must remember that there is also a path of renunciation for those who continue to live in the world. Vedanta provides for those and Jesus prays for those who are not ready to take this final step: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil."

We all are not so constituted that we can live in utter dependence on God, breaking all connection with the world. Many of us might break down under the strain of such a life. It is only for the strongest. But *one* command holds good for every one, namely, that we renounce evil in all its forms. All scriptures demand that. If we continue to live *in* the world, we can no longer continue to be *of* the world. The life of selfishness and self-indulgence must be renounced. Self must die. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall unto the ground and die, it abideth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." "He that loveth his life shall lose it and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." The same idea is so beautifully expressed in the Gita, when Sri Krishna says: The lotus leaf floats on the water but the water does not adhere to it; even so live thou in the world and let no sin cleave to thee.

VI

The great obstacle with many Christians in acknowledging all religions as so many paths to freedom, lies in the fact that Jesus spoke of himself as the Son of God and that in that connection he said: "No one comes to the Father but through me." But have not all the Avatars said the same, using almost

the identical words? "Take refuge in the Buddha," says the Buddhist scripture. "Give thy heart to me," says Sri Krishna. Should that lead to sectarianism? "No!" says Vedanta. "In whatsoever form the devotee worships God, in that very same form the Lord communes with the devotee."

The Avatars do not preach themselves, their own personality; they preach the one spirit that manifests through every one of them. The Christ spirit in Jesus, the Buddha spirit in prince Siddhartha, the Divine spirit in Sri Krishna, is one and the same. And the realization of that same spirit within ourselves is what Jesus called salvation, is what Buddha called Nirvana, is what Krishna called Mukti or Freedom. It is the one universal spirit, God speaking to a man through different Avatars in different ages. As Sri Ramakrishna has so beautifully explained it: "The diver-bird swims on the surface of the water. Then it dives down and comes up again at a different place. So, God comes in the world and then disappears again to reappear in a different age, at a different place. Whenever He appears, He comes as an Avatara, a Saviour of man. All these Avatars are different manifestations of the One Spirit."

And of himself he used to say: "He who once came as Rama and again as Krishna has in this age come in this form called Ramakrishna." And you remember how Sri Krishna said of himself: "I take human form again and again to suppress evil, to raise the good."

How there can be any quarrel then? I do not see it. All scriptures teach purity, renunciation and faith in God. All these quarrels show that we take the letter of our scripture instead of the spirit. We waste our time over useless disputes, we forget to eat the

mangoes, as Ramakrishna said. "Give up all useless talk, all leaf-counting and eat the fruit, taste the sweetness of a true religious life." And Jesus said: "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter unto the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

From what I have said, I hope it is clear that Vedanta is not at war with true Christianity. We admit that we cannot accept everything taught in the Christian churches, we do not believe that Christianity is the only true religion, the only way to salvation; we do not believe that God incarnated on earth only through Jesus; we do not accept the errors of the churches which science has exposed. But we heartily accept Christ as one of the Sons of God. And we sincerely believe that those who take up his cross and follow him, will be liberated.

Being a Christian, does not mean belonging to a church. It means being the child of the Eternal Father which dwells in heaven,—in the heaven of our own hearts. Christ must be enthroned in our hearts, for the kingdom of heaven is within us. We must hear his voice and obey his commands. Then we are Christians, in truth.

He who realizes the Christ spirit soars beyond all specialized religions. He has shaken off all dogmas, all superstitions, all sectarianisms. He is neither a Christian nor a Buddhist, nor a Mohamudan, nor is he all of these. In him all religions find their fulfilment, in him all religions are realized. This is the standpoint of Vedanta.

VII

The question is then no longer, Christianity or Vedanta? The question is, Are we truly religious? Are we spiritual men and women? Have we

realized the Christ or the Buddha within? Have we realized that we are one with God?

Religion must lead to that realization. Sri Krishna says: "Giving up all the formalities of religion, come unto me, take refuge in me, I shall free thee from all sins, all sorrows and all sufferings."

Be a Christian, or Buddhist, or a Vedantist,—it matters not,—but remember that religion is God-realization. Let us try to realize our divine nature, our oneness with God.

And if the teachings of Vedanta can help us to come to that realization, if it can explain to us what other religions do not explain, if we find some lofty ideas there which we do not find elsewhere, then, let us listen to its message. Vedanta gives us the key to a true understanding of all religions; it points out the way to freedom, it leads man to immortality. And above all, Vedanta breaks all barriers that

separate men from men, for it teaches in unmistakable language that each soul is potentially divine and that every one can realize his own divinity through whatever religious path he chooses.

Vedanta teaches the spiritual brotherhood of man and his sonship to the Eternal Father; it establishes the spirit of love and union among all living beings. It matters not which one of the great Incarnations we follow; the question is: Do we obey the commandments?

And now let me close with a very simple prayer, a prayer that we can all utter, no matter what we call ourselves. It is a prayer from the oldest of all the scriptures, the Rig Veda. The prayer is:

"As cows delight to graze in green pastures, as man delights to rest in his own sweet home, so O Lord, do Thou delight to reign supreme in our purified hearts."

HINDUS IN AFRICA: THEIR SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITION

BY PROF. RALA RAM, M.A.

EAST AFRICA

Africa is generally known as the dark Continent, partly because much was not known about it until recently and partly because its original inhabitants are all black-coloured. People think of Africa of a grillingly hot continent, but nothing is farther from truth than this notion. While some parts of it are certainly hot, the major portion of it possesses a very equable climate. Such

is doubtless the case with East and South Africa. The northern part of Africa, Egypt, Abyssinia and Sudan, has long been known to man. In fact Egypt has been the cradle of a very grand civilization. That Indians were long ago familiar with this part of the continent, nobody now denies. We read in the Puranas about Kanava Rishi who brought to India from Egypt as many as 10,000 souls and initiated them into the Hindu faith. But it is

not known to many that the Hindus had penetrated into East and Central Africa long, long before any white man or Arab set his foot on it. The man who discovered the source of the river Nile first of all was a Hindu, as was pointed out by Advocate Phadke of Nairobi, in his evidence before the Joint Parliamentary Committee on East African Affairs. William Macgregor Ross clearly testifies to this fact, in his recently published book *Kenya From Within*. On page 2 he says :—

“East Central Africa has been a land of romantic associations from a remote period. The ancient Hindu Vedas referred to a mysterious realm of Chandrithana where were the mountains of the Moon in which the Nile had its source. The third volume of the *Asiatic Researches* of the year 1799 contains a paper by Lieutenant Wilford giving such news of the river Nile as could be extracted from the Puranas of the ancient Hindus. Referring to these old records, the Explorer, Speke, in his journal published in 1863 says, ‘It is remarkable that the ancient Hindus have christened the source of the Nile AMARA, which is the name of a country at the north east corner of the Victoria Nyanza.’ This, I think, shows clearly that the ancient Hindus must have had some kind of communication with both the northern and the southern ends of the Victoria Nyanza. Chandrithana, the country of the Moon, was so called from the native Unya-Mwezi having the same meaning, the word Chand meaning moon in Hindustani, as Mwezi does in several Bantu languages of Africa.”

Again he remarks :—

“It has already been pointed out that Indian Traders were established on the East African Coast for generations before the first European Trader came there.”

Mr. Winston Churchill paid a visit to Kenya Colony in 1907 as Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. On

his return to England he published an account of his *East African Travels*, wherein he said :—

“The Indian was here long before the first British Official.” He may point to as many generations of useful industry on the Coast and inland as the white settlers especially the most recently arrived contingents from South Africa—the loudest against him all—can count years of residence. Is it possible for any Government with a scrap of respect for honest dealing between man and man to embark on a policy of deliberately squeezing out that native of India from regions in which he has established himself under every security of public faith?”

In the Masai Reserve in Kenya there is the wonderful Magadi Lake of Natural Soda. In the Masai language Magadi means “Soda.” In long draughts it is dry and hard and a photograph of pedestrians on it conveys the impression of travels over an ice-field. Referring to the *Journal of Asiatic Researches* volume III, Mr. Ross says :—

“One’s mind flies back to the record in ancient Hindu writings of a certain lake Amagana in the interior the waters of which had the peculiar property that nothing could sink in them. Can there have been any overseas tourists here?”

The influx of Indians into this Colony began in larger numbers in 1896. Before that Guzratīs used to come in their dhows which took them sometimes, three or four months, to reach Mombasa or Zanzibar. The Arabs greatly prized the commercial enterprise of the Guzratīs and very cordial relations subsisted between the two.

A few years ago the chief Arab of Mombasa gave a very fine building to the Hindu community for a library, as a token of their past friendship. The glory of the Arab has passed away. The Sultan of Zanzibar’s flag waves over the fort at Mombasa but it is a

mere symbol of bygone splendour. In the year 1897 as many as 12,000 Indians were working to lay out the Kenya and Uganda railway. Ever since that Indians have been emigrating in larger and still larger numbers to East Africa. It goes without saying that Indians of the best type did not think of emigrating. Poor people of low mental calibre came to the colony to make a living. Later on intelligent and educated people too came over; for there were chances of getting Government service, but they never formed the majority. It was natural for the emigrants, most of whom came without their wives, to give themselves up to drinking and other vices at first. Some of the immigrants who penetrated farther into the heart of the country lost contact with their brethren and gravitated towards the African savage. Some good people who had come over were shocked to see all this. They established an Arya Samaj in Mombasa and at Nairobi. In 1905 Bhai Parmanand, M.A., of the D. A. V. College, Lahore, was sent by Mahathna Hansraj for propagating the Vedic faith among the Indians in Africa. This was done at the insistent requests of Mr. Mokamchand Varma, a youth of Sialkot in the Punjab. This young man had taken up his abode in South Africa. Thus Bhai Parmanand was the first Hindu missionary to come to Africa for religious propaganda among his Hindu brethren. The Indians in Africa have not only got their own different political problems, but their own peculiar social and religious problems also.

The task before a Hindu missionary in Africa is two-fold. He has to acquaint his own brethren with the lofty principles of the Vedic faith and thus to retain them in the Hindu fold; for, the chances of a Hindu slipping into paganism or oftener drifting into Christianity are many and real. The

second side to the problem is propaganda among the African Natives. The reader will be interested to know something about both the sides of the questions.

As regards religious propaganda among the emigrant Hindus it has ever since 1905 been carried on with more or less vigour. At present in British East Africa there are about ten Arya Samajes, eight of whom have got their own beautiful Mundals. The Arya Samaj at Nairobi is running a Girls' High School and the Shradhdhanand Bramcharaya Ashram where Chottabhai Patel is doing splendid work with the help of that millionaire Araya Samajist, Nanjeebhai Kalidas of Uganda. The Arya Samajist at Dar-es-Salaam and Zanzibar are running girls' schools. Seth Darbarilal at Nairobi is making efforts to equip a library. These Societies celebrate their anniversaries and invite preachers from India every now and then. Vedic preachers have been coming to this Colony every second or third year. Pundit Purnanand, Swami Swatantranand, Pundit Chamupati, Pundit Buddhdev, Professor Ram Dev, Pundit Rishi Ram, Pundit Buddhdev Mirpuri, and Pundit Satapal are some of the Vedic missionaries who have done good work among the Hindus in East Africa. The Arya Samaj in this Colony can proudly claim that it has done everything possible to wean Indians from drinking and other evil habits. It has led the way in female education. It has tried its level best to set a high standard of conduct, such as might win for the Hindu the respect of the Europeans. It has stemmed the tide of conversions to Christianity; it has taken every step possible under the circumstances to retain the Hindu emigrant in the fold of Hinduism. There are two Sanatan Dharma Sabhas also in East Africa. It must however

be admitted, by all impartial observers, that, in foreign countries there is very little scope for popular Hinduism of the orthodox type.

As regards propaganda among the Natives the Arya Samaj has not put its hands to this task at all. This task is a difficult one. At present most of the Hindu missionaries who come to the African territories are mere birds of passage. They stay about six months or a year and then leave for India. Nobody takes the trouble of studying the natives' language, his manners and customs. It is a task requiring long labour and much expense. The Arya Samaj at present has not the means nor perhaps the inclination to undertake this task. The Christian missionary who looks upon the African natives as his sole preserve, will certainly give the Vedic missionary a stern battle when he embarks on the task. In all fairness to the Christian missionary it must be admitted, that he has taken much trouble to master most of the native dialects and incurred much expense to translate the Bible therein, so that he can now distribute his holy book broadcast among the natives and speak to them in their own language.

It must be noted with regret that owing to the political subservience of India, no Indian can travel about in foreign lands with that self-confidence and assurance of personal safety with which a European does. Any Hindu missionary who embarks on religious propaganda among the natives must be prepared to encounter untold hardships and even face death, though to-day the chances of being killed are comparatively fewer than they were about a generation ago. The Hindu immigrant is willing to render what help he can, but he has neither the capacity nor time enough to organize or undertake such a work. Some years ago the Arya

Samaj in Nairobi started a night school for natives in order to teach them Hindi. The Christian missionary got scent of it. The matter was reported to the authorities and one Government official after another paid surprise visits to the night school to see what was going on. Most of the members of the Arya Samaj being employees of the Government could not afford to incur its displeasure. They took the hint and stopped the night school. This little incident shows that any non-Christian missionary must be prepared to bear the brunt of Government opposition. There must be a strong organization behind him, if something substantial is to be achieved in this direction. In my opinion, there is much scope for religious propaganda among the natives. When I was in India I had heard a good deal of the African natives embracing Islam by millions, but I actually find no such thing at least in British East and South Africa. It may be the case in North Eastern Africa. Doubtless among certain tribes of Eastern Africa the custom of male and female circumcision is found. But the natives do not associate it with Islam, though it can be traced, I think, to Arabic influence.

Now to come to the social condition of the Hindus in East Africa. One finds very little change except in two directions. Untouchability in any foreign land is out of the question. So the Hindu here is free from this curse. In the matter of diet he is a vegetarian though the percentage of meat-eaters is much larger than in India. Purdah has been slackened a little. Early marriage is rather difficult here. As most of the immigrants occasionally go to and come back from India, much difference in social customs cannot be looked for. Increase in drinking among the Indians here is to be deprecated.

SOUTH AFRICA

Things in South Africa are very much different. There is no conclusive evidence at present to show, that the Hindu was acquainted with Southern Africa, before the advent of the European. But every day evidence is growing which points that way. The Teri Ruins discovered by Prof. Frobenius in Southern Rhodesia bear a very close resemblance to the Frijanjanayal Empire ruins in South India. The *Natal Witness*, a leading daily of Natal, published in a recent issue an article on the above ruins, wherein it was stated: "The Holy Nandi, the sacred Bull of South India at Mysore, represents a dead 'Moon-King.' The Bull is worshipped in the same way in the region of the Zimbabwe culture,—it represents a Moon-King. Frobenius reveals that on the death of the Zimbale King he was encased in the skin of a bull before buried in the tomb."

Indians were first brought over to this part of the continent as indentured labourers. The first batch arrived in November, 1860, so that we have now well-nigh three generations of colonial Indians born here. To them India is a distant unknown land in which they are doubtless deeply interested. Now the immigration of Indians into the Union of South Africa has been totally stopped, but the number of Indians has been on the increase, because the fecundity of South African Indian is really wonderful. The average strength of an Indian family here is between six and seven. Repatriation of Indians will no doubt lessen the number, but it cannot clear the country of Indians. For some time to come the population of Indians in South Africa may remain stationary, the increase in birth-rate being counterbalanced by repatriation. The total number of Indians in the Union is 166,731, out of which an over-

whelming majority is found in Natal. Indians came to South Africa under very adverse circumstances. They were verily indentured slaves, having had to work from sunrise to sunset with a short interval. In the sun and the rain, in fair weather and foul the "Indian Coolie" had to work on. The supervisor's whip smacked over his head. Many a miserable man, it is said, committed suicide because he could not stand the strain. At night the labourers retired to their barracks where they were packed like pigs, in a sty. There were no doubt good masters, but they were the exception and not the rule. It is no wonder if under such circumstances the indentured Indian labourer lost what little culture he had. The number of females in the beginning was rather small, marriage difficulties were great. Such a state of affairs does imply some sexual looseness. The free Indian was not wanted by the European. So when the term of indenture was over and the Indian became free, the Government imposed invidious disabilities on him. He had to pay the unusually heavy tax of £3 a year. How could a labourer earning ten shillings a month pay sixty shillings a year as tax? Thus it was that the Hindu began his life in Natal. The Mohammedan came as a petty trader. So did the Guzrati Hindu. The Tamil and the Northern Indian Hindus who form three-fourths of the Indian population in the Union began their career under serious handicaps. Having lost touch with India altogether and being economically poor, most of the Hindus began to follow the flourishing Mohammedan trader. They forgot their own Hindu Festivals. For them, Moharrum or Thajia remained the only festival. When the Thajias were to be taken out, the Hindus vied with one another in putting their shoulders to

them. Sometimes the rival groups of the Hindus came to blows over the question of precedence. Some of the Tamilians masked themselves as tigers. The Europeans laughed at them giving them the title of "Coohe Tigers." The Hindu gave up cremating the dead, partly because of Muslim influence, partly because of the difficulties of obtaining the licence to fire the dead. The Christian missionary was busy converting, especially the Tamil Hindus.

Things went on like that for well-nigh forty years. It was then that Mahatma Hansraj sent over Bhai Parmanand to South Africa to propagate the Vedic Faith among the Hindus. It is said that he shed tears when he saw the pitiable plight of his brethren. His lectures aroused the Hindus; they awoke to the enormity of the life they were leading. They perceived whither they were drifting away. Bhaijee founded some Hindu organizations. Then in 1908 came Swami Shankaranand who stayed in the Union for about three years. His speeches fired the Hindus with zeal for their faith. They cut themselves asunder from the Muslim festivals and customs. The Hindu became conscious of his strength. When the Mohammedan saw the Hindu getting out of his grip, he offered resistance threatening to put the Swami to death. But he soon realized the futility of doing so. Swami Shankaranand established at many places, Vedic Dharma Societies. The Hindu gave up the Thajia and began to observe his own festivals. This Arya Samajist, Swami Shankaranand, deserves the thanks of every Hindu for having saved thousands of his brethren from embracing Islam and Christianity. Ever since that the Hindu has been trying to follow the main precepts of Hinduism. At present about 50% of the Hindus cremate their dead, the rest still bury them.

The Madrasis are the worst defaulters in this case, the 'Calcuttiars' (people from Northern India) coming next. On the whole, I think, it redounds to the credit of the Natal Hindu that he has extricated himself from the quagmire in which he was fast sinking. He is now starting schools without Government aid in which his children can learn their mother-tongue, Hindi or Tamil, the teaching of which is banned in all Government schools. Even in Government-aided schools, the Government does not provide even a penny for the teaching of vernaculars. Till the opening of the Shastri College about three years ago, Indian youth had poor educational facility.

Owing to his peculiar position the Natal Hindu has freed himself from some of the social evils existing in India. Among the Hindus up here there is no early marriage. Purdah is unknown; widow-remarriage is almost universal. Untouchability, the greatest curse of Hindu India, is not found here. The barriers of caste are almost completely broken down. The only disability under which the Natal Hindu labours is, that he has few chances of access to his Shastras. If proper arrangements are made for the dissemination of religious ideas of the right type by maintaining a Vedic or Reformed Hindu Mission in South Africa, the Natal Hindu can become an ideal Arya Samajist or Hindu. He can be weaned easily from such evils as drinking, which is almost universal here. It is high time that the Araya Samaj or some other reforming Hindu Bodies in India should turn their attention more seriously to the Union of South Africa, where I have also found a large number of Europeans who are deeply interested in Hindu culture.

The condition of the Indians in South Africa can be improved only in two

ways : one is by India attaining a more honourable status among the comity of nations; the other is that India should send out her best representatives who might be able to give the European some idea of the high culture that the Hindu has developed. Mr. Shastri has done more to elevate the status of Indians by delivering lectures on Hindu Culture than by the political negotiation at which he is considered an expert. I am not making an overestimate when I say that at least 50% of intelligent and educated Europeans hunger for Hindu Philosophy and especially the Science of Yoga.

As for the Transvaal Hindu, suffice it to say that the majority hail from Guzrat. The Guzratists are here as they openly confess only for money-making. They go back to India where their wives and children are, after three or four years' stay in the Unions. Hardly 10% of the Guzratists have their families here. These people come into touch with their culture very frequently, so we do not find them slipping from Hinduism. Among the Tamil and the Calcuttiar section here, the tendency to marry coloured girls is on the increase. But it is a matter for delight that very few renounce Hinduism on that score. Some people here also are alive to the fact that they can elevate themselves by acquainting the European with the high culture which they represent. I was therefore delighted to find a small library run by the "Vedanta Service Society" from which Europeans now and then borrow books on Indian Culture and Hindu Philosophy.

At present there are about 10 Arya Samajes in the Union of South Africa, all controlled by an Arya Prathinidhi

Sabha established here on the occasion of the Dayanand Centenary. All these Arya Samajes are not functioning actively. Four Arya Samajes, the most prominent among which is the Arya Samaj (Durban Central) and the Arya Yuvak Samaj (Durban), are doing very good work for and among the Hindus. There are also about four or five Vishnu Temple Societies. The Vishnu Temple Society (Durban) is trying to build an Indian Hospital. Over and above the preachers sent out by the Arya Samaj, Swami Bhawani Dayal who is a colonial born Hindu and who has now made a name in India by his work for the repatriates, has also done something for the religious and social uplift of the Hindus here. Living as the Indian does here with the sword of Damocles ever hanging over his head, one of the best ways in which he can be helped is to give to his antagonists some idea of the high culture for which India stands. In one's travels one notes with poignant regret that it is only in territories which are part and parcel of the British Empire that the Indian is looked down upon and sometimes treated as worse than a "Pariah." The writer had occasion to get down at Beria and Lourenco Marques ports in Portuguese East Africa. The Indians there were unanimous in telling him that there was no colour prejudice there and that they did not labour under any special disabilities. In South Africa, particularly one feels greatly humiliated because racial discrimination stares you in the face on the railway platform, in the tram-cars and in the streets. I think cultural propaganda will go a long way to dissipate these clouds which had their origin in ignorance and hatred.

HOW I MET RAMAKRISHNA

BY KSHIROD CHANDRA SEN

I

I try to recall the great events of my life in the year 1879. I was reading in the second year class at the General Assembly's College and passed the I. A. Examination at the end of the year. But the most important event that comes to my recollection is the meeting with Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar. Indeed it was one of the most fateful events for many years of my life. It opened a new light, a new current of thought with a new orientation given to the problem of life as conceived by my immature, youthful mind. Not that it changed the course of my life at once. Indeed my ideas were vague and hazy, and took many years to develop into definiteness. But I deeply felt that there was something higher to pursue in life than a graduate's diploma or a comfortable post in the public service. Both these achievements in a manner came to me and proved their hollowness in due course of time. I have also attempted to gain the 'something higher,' but on account either of original sin or of continued disobedience I have failed to achieve it. I have, however, the satisfaction of feeling that my efforts have not been a complete waste of time and energy. More than half a century has passed away since that memorable day, and I still feel proud that I gathered something on that day which helps me to live cheerfully to-day. I cannot clearly describe the thing. It works invisibly, but the reality is unmistakable.

I lived at 6, Bhowani Charan Dutt's Lane, behind the Presidency College.

There was another mess at 48, close to our own. The Lane does not exist now. It has been wiped out by the Improvement Trust, with the exception of one house, which has been left standing out of regard for the memory of Babu Keshav Chandra Sen, who was born in it, and was the greatest man in India in the days of which I am speaking.

One fine October morning about ten boys met together out of the two messes and decided that they would spend the evening at the Kalibari at Dakshineswar, where there was a beautiful flower garden, and where lived a Bengali Sadhu, named Ramakrishna. He was known to but a few men, but to these he was reverentially known as a Paramahansa. The title was puzzling to my uncultivated mind, but instinctively I tried to associate it with an amphibious bird. I was not pleased with my interpretation, as I found nothing distinctive or noble enough in a bird to inspire reverence. The Duckback Company for the manufacture of waterproofs was not yet in existence, or I might have imagined that a Paramahansa was a sublime personality on whose back the turbid water of worldly attachments could not settle. This however is an afterthought impressed by a passage in the discourse on detachment made by Ramakrishna of which I shall presently give as full an account as it is possible at this distance of time.

The oldest of the company whom I shall indicate by the initials C. K. communicated their decision to me and inquired if I would like to join the party. He told me that the excursion would cost me about three annas in

passage money and other incidental charges, while it would afford the pleasure of a walk to and from Jagannath-ghat, of another walk in the garden at Dakshineswar along an October view in reddish sunlight, of six miles of the banks of the Ganges not yet uglified by brick and mortar or a profusion of smoking chimneys with a redundant Railway bridge to connect them. He added that the visit would enable me to see the face of a great Sadhu, who had been already interviewed several times by Babu Keshav Chandra Sen and Babu Protap Chandra Majumdar, the leaders of the Brahma Samaj, for whom I had great reverence, as men of knowledge and divine devotion.

I paused a little to think over the matter. Three annas were not too great for me. They could not be said to be too little also. But the question of profit and loss deserved attention, specially in view of the fact that my university examination was staring me in the face from the near future. As to the long walks I had daily experience of them in attending college. They were far from pleasant. The banks of the Ganges were covered with trees, but I had seen an infinite number of trees in my life. I had also seen flower gardens, though not very great ones. There was not much to see in the face of a Sadhu. I had seen some Sadhus, particularly a nudist, evidently a man of renunciation, whose face did not impress me as anything uncommon. But I wondered why Keshav Babu had gone to see this Sadhu, not once but several times, and I decided that I should join the party.

Why did I thus wonder? I wondered because Keshav Babu was the leader of the true Brahma Samaj which preached the true religion for man. Hinduism was semi-barbarous. The Adi Brahma Samaj was a mere orientation of Hindu

Samaj, devoted to the cultivation of high-class music which had no association with the spiritual harmony (as I now think) which we connect with the universal Tanpura (purna-tan or perfect harmony) played by Mahadev to enlighten the world on the mysteries of creation, regulation and destruction. As to the Sadharan Brahma Samaj, it was in my opinion a mere institution for social reform, for female emancipation and improvement in women's dress.

Keshav Babu was a distinguished speaker, a profound thinker, a great man honoured by Queen Victoria and the British public. To me he was the founder of the true religion for man, the latest prophet in the history of the world. If such a one thought the Sadhu of Dakshineswar worthy of successive visits I would be guilty of psychological disrespect for him if I failed to avail myself of this fortuitous opportunity to have Darshana of my Guru's Guru. To conceal nothing I had no idea that we were going not merely to see the face of the Sadhu but also to hear his voice, to receive instruction from him on divinity and ideal morality. I cannot resist the temptation of at once informing the reader, though this may look like an error in artistic presentation, that I was successful in both ways. I saw the face of the Sadhu, which had nothing distinguished in it, and I heard his voice which enthralled my understanding for the time, and has ever after charmed my memory.

About half-past four we landed at the Kalibari. Perfect solitude prevailed at the place. We walked about peeping at every door in the expectation of seeing the face of the Sadhu somewhere. At length we saw his back in a small narrow room in the west of a house. He had been plunged in meditation. He was all but naked. The front door was open, and the afternoon sun was beat-

ing on his face. We had looked in through another door. A second man, who looked like an attendant with a prominent holy thread on his shoulders warned us from entering the room, and politely told us to wait outside. He probably suggested that we might walk in the garden until Ramakrishna was comfortable enough to see us. It appeared to me that the trance had just then terminated, and the attendant was trying to administer such physical comfort as he thought necessary to refit his master for commonplace life. Among other things I observed that he was engaged in re-clothing him. There seemed nothing elevating in what I momentarily observed at this part of the meeting.

Strictly following the instructions of the attendant we came away and walked about in the garden, looked at several buildings in the compound, and probably also shotted out of it a little to see the village, which, of course, presented a strong contrast with the surroundings of our mess at Calcutta and probably pleased us by that very fact.

At sunset we made a desparate attempt to see the face of the Sadhu, as he was slowly walking about in an open space on the north of the house in which he lived. There was a cluster of large trees. I did not care to make any botanical inquiry about them. I have been subsequently informed that they were Bat-trees. Under one of them two Hindustani Sadhus with their bodies besmeared with ashes were lighting a fire and arranging materials for cooking a simple meal. Ramakrishna approached them and said something, which I either did not hear or do not remember. One of them said by way of reply, "You are a Mahatma." Ramakrishna smiled and walked slowly away. I cannot say why he smiled. Any other man would

have either politely acknowledged the compliment or denied its truth. It seems evasiveness in personal matters is a trait in the character of a prophet. Christ shared it. Other prophets have shared it. Keshav alone was explicit. In an admirable speech delivered at the Town Hall he had told the world that he was not a prophet but only a singular man. There is no clearly known list of the Aptas of India, and very few men, I believe, have any definite idea as to what entitles a man to be called an Apta. Ramakrishna had already begun to be known as a Paramahansa. I do not know if he ever claimed this title. At least the ash-besmeared Sadhu who had complimented him as a Mahatma did not know it. A Mahatma, I believe, is not so high a personality as a Paramahansa; and wittingly to call a Paramahansa a Mahatma is not to bestow a compliment, but is open to severe criticism as a piece of effrontery. I do not know who invented the phrase Paramahansa. It is a sublimated form of So-ham, and grammatically carries in its heart an element of a personal sense of self-importance incompatible with high-mindedness as applied to one 'of woman born.' High-sounding titles are best left to be conferred by the State or public associations such as a university. Self-arrogated titles are more or less offensive. The audacity of Krishna is excused by his superhuman mundane achievements and by his grand philosophy of life, and more than these by the wide gulf of time which separates the present from the hoary age of the Mahabharata. The phrase 'Tat-tvam-asi' stands on a different footing. By a turn of grammatical personality 'Tat-tvam-asi' effectively removes the sting of personal arrogance, and artistically calls attention to a mere potentiality. However the question must remain in mystery until a clear definition of 'That'

in 'That, I am,' 'I am pre-eminently That' and "That thou art" is available to man. I am sure Ramakrishna never assumed the title of 'Paramahansa.' As to the meaning of 'Mahatma,' Gandhi silenced a scoffer in England by jestfully explaining that it meant an insignificant person. I am neither a scoffer nor a prayerful soul. I have a horror of titles, whether conferred by government or by a university or self-assumed. They curb those who bestow them as well as those who receive or assume them. Napoleon said, "I am France," and the result was that he was removed to St. Helena.

When in obedience to inmemorial custom an earthen lamp was lighted in the bed room we went into it by invitation and sat on a mat on the floor below a bedstead on which Ramakrishna was seated. This was his time for mundane talk. He talked on various things which gave no indication that he was anything but a commonplace man living in a commonplace surrounding. His knowledge of men and manners seemed limited. His wit at times lapsed into vulgarity, but it betrayed no malice. He spoke of Christian Missionaries, of Michael Dutta and of other men of whom he had secondhand superficial knowledge. He said, "Michael once upon a time challenged any Hindu Pandit to convince him that Hinduism was superior to his adopted religion. One of my acquaintances accepted the challenge, and a great meeting was arranged. The Pandit and the convert argued for a long time, and eventually victory was declared for the latter. The Pandit came to see me sometime after and I said, 'Shala, heyrey eli (wife's brother, you have been vanquished by a Christian)!"

He spoke of Keshav Babu with graceful affection and an easy air of personal superiority which we associate with

seniority in age and intimacy of relations. I tried to feel offended, but was checked by a sense of reverence creeping into my heart. He spoke of him as of a good young man in need of spiritual help to guide him in life. It now seems to me that if Keshav Babu were really a young man at the time, and not the acknowledged leader of a reforming church, he would have taken the place which Vivekananda subsequently occupied in the heart of Ramakrishna.

Ramakrishna said, "Keshav came to see me one day, and, as he was still living a married life I told him that it was high time for him to practise celibacy.

Among other things Ramakrishna said, "One evening at his request I went to Keshav's Dal. (He meant he attended service at the New Dispensation Church at Mechuabazar Street). There was a fairly large gathering of men, but the whole show seemed to me like a meeting of monkeys (Hanumans) who sometimes sit down together as if they were plunged in deep meditation, and then suddenly disperse in all directions to carry on their privileged and predatory profession in the orchards and vegetable gardens in the neighbourhood."

If the foregoing remark on Keshav's was excusable, this reference to the general misbehaviour of his followers seemed highly offensive. The reference was too sweeping, and it was indirectly a reflection on me and most of my companions personally, for we were Keshav's followers in the pursuit of a higher life. Perhaps Ramakrishna was unaware of this relevant fact. Anyhow I was not morally and intellectually strong enough to enter upon an immediate wrestling contest. Indeed we had gone with a natural or improvised inferiority-complex like all seekers of spiritual instruction. I admired his

fearlessness, and excused his want of cautious culture.

Among others I remember one thing which seemed disagreeable. We all sat cross-legged in a respectful pose, except one of us, who sat with one leg superposed on the other. Of course both legs were bent at the knee-joint. He was probably rubbing the sole of his right foot with the palm of his left hand in the penumbral light of an earthen lamp. The light however was bright enough to attract Ramakrishna's attention, and he said in a half sneering tone, "Babaji's legs are not yet sufficiently disciplined." A confused feeling disturbed me at the time. In my mind I reproached my friend. At the same time I could not bring myself to admire the open-mindedness of the Sadhu. Intolerance and culture are bad bedfellows. Probably after this I did not give much attention to what the latter said. However, I believe, all that he said was commonplace and was not much worth listening to. The humdrum continued until the attendant called us out for supper. The fact that I remember all the commonplace that I have mentioned above is undoubtedly due to its contrast with the dignity and value of what issued out of him next morning in the shape of spiritual instructions. In some respects he seemed like a volcano in slow eruption throwing out lava of gold and diamond.

The supper consisted of a few Luchis cooked in rancid ghee and a vegetable curry with dirty Indian sugar (which was a term of reproach at the time), all which gave me the impression that the fat fellow (I subsequently learnt he was a near relative of Ramakrishna) made a grand profit out of the grant for guests allowed by the owner of the temple, though I did not care to inquire if any grants were made by him. This was an unscientific conviction, but the

food supplied was so bad and insufficient that I have never felt disgusted with myself for having it.

II

THE MASTER'S VOICE

After supper a common *madur* (mat) was laid for us on a verandah, and on this we laid ourselves to rest for the night. I was restless the whole night. The face of the Sadhu was not handsome, as every impartial observer knows. His voice so far had not been enthralling. I almost seemed to think it was disappointing. I thought all my cash investment was lost for nothing. This was a biting thought for my mind. My body did not escape. There were bugs in the mat and there were mosquitoes in the air. The nomads of both races came in swarms, and we felt like the aborigines of both the New world and the Old. They however did not exterminate us, and next morning I found I was alive, though miserably exploited in flesh and blood. I suggested that we should return to Calcutta by the first opportunity that presented itself. My companions were evidently in the same boat, except C. K. who yielded after a little demurring. It was decided that we should take the first train at Bally. C. K. suggested that we should wait till we were in a position to salute the Sadhu, for it was sinful to take French leave of a holy man. Perhaps he would take advantage of the delay to thank the fat attendant for his kind attention in the shape of bad food and dirty mat overnight. We were promenading all round when C. K. observed Ramakrishna walking about with his satellite in the north. We hastened towards him. The satellite observed that boats had not yet begun to run. Some one among us told him we wanted to cross over to Bally and to take the Railway to Howrah. The latter said

that was inconvenient. But Ramakrishna smiled and said, "You are an ignorant fellow. In pursuit of pleasure man gladly suffers pain. The Railway journey will be a pleasant variation to these young men." We bowed, but in accepting our salute Ramakrishna expressed wonder as to what we had gone there for. C. K. promptly replied, "We came for Upadesh, but unfortunately there was something wrong in our choice of time." Ramakrishna smiled and said, "What Upadesh do you want, my children? Sit down and I shall hear what you want." We sat down, followed by Ramakrishna who sat by us. C. K. then asked questions and Ramakrishna answered them. But before stating the questions and answers I shall digress a little to describe in my own way the manner in which Ramakrishna spoke, for the manner seemed even more impressive than the matter, which of course was charming particularly to my youthful mind.

His sentences were terse, usually consisting of three or four words each. They were seldom grammatically complete, but were pregnant with meaning. Certainly his thoughts were coherent, but his sentences sometimes seemed discontinuous. It took time to logically connect consecutive sentences. But Ramakrishna spoke slowly. He paused perceptibly at the end of each sentence, and this enabled us to find links. He easily and artistically arranged flowers of thought; but seldom strung them together. He did not care to use thread and needle, he spoke with the confidence of a prophet. He seemed to be an organized personification of inspiration and expression.

If brevity is the soul of wit it is the soul of wisdom also. Ramakrishna possessed all three at once and possessed them pre-eminently. The only parallel that suggests itself is Nietzsche.

The one lived in the unseen world and the other dwelt on mundane experiences. The one worshipped the God of Love, the other, the God of Power. The one said, Thy will be done, the other insisted on the power of human will. The sentences were discontinuous and unstrung in both cases. They were heard to grasp. But Nietzsche's sentences were long and Ramakrishna's short. Nietzsche wrote and Ramakrishna spoke.

I shall now give some of the questions and their answers:—

Q. Why is Krishna painted dark?

A. People suffer from the illusion of remoteness. The sky surrounds you. The sky is in the firmament. They are identical. The one is bright. The other looks blue. Take a near view of Krishna. Look him fully in the face. He is bright.

Q. Is submission to a Guru absolutely necessary for salvation?

A. You wish to go to Hughly. You may walk. You may hire a boat. You may take a passage in a steamer. The question is one of speed only. If you are in earnest you will arrive at Hughly. You may stop the boat at Serampore and return. You may halt there. You may jump into the river and die. Be earnest. Have no fear.

There were many such questions and many such answers. The thing was new to me in manner and matter alike. The manner was even more impressive than the matter. But both were delicious. It was an excellent dinner more excellently served.

The question which most deeply engaged the attention of Ramakrishna, and elicited from him a long answer with the most fascinating illustrations was the following:—

Q. Which is the better, to be a Sannyasin or a householder?

A. You have no choice. Your will is not free. A few men become Sannyasins. The majority live as householders. Both kinds of life are difficult. People suppose the life of the Grihastha is natural. Diversity is a divine law. Sukadev was a true Sannyasin. He was naked. Women bathing in the tank were not ashamed to look at him. They hid themselves in the water when his old father appeared. Janaka played with two swords, one in each hand. He reconciled the two kinds of life. In essence they are not conflicting. The great thing is to escape contamination—undue attachment to worldly interests. The *Pankal* fish lives in the mud. It is never soiled by it. Man is not a mere fish. He is surrounded by dirt, mud, venom, etc. How to live untouched by them? Milk poured into water loses its sweetness. It loses its nourishing power. Butter is untouched by water. Butter must be churned early in the morning. It is vain to churn milk for butter at midday. Grown-up trees are not spoiled by the cow. She browses the young sapling. It must be fenced. Make up your minds, my children, accordingly. Acidity is persistent. The sight of tamarind has a charm for one who suffers from it. A man may resolve to avoid tamarind. Resolution must be strong.

“The green cocoanut is filled with water. Shake it. (He brought together his hands against his left ear as if he were shaking a cocoanut). You hear no sound. The water, the shell and the coir all seem to be one and the same body. Shake the ripe cocoanut. The water makes a sound. When completely dry there is no water in the

shell; and the shell is separated from the covering of coir. Shake it. The shell gives a sound of its own. It says, ‘I live in the coir; but the coir does not contaminate I have freed myself from attachment.’ ”

He continued in this strain for an appreciable time. I do not remember all that he said. That was more than half a century ago, and I was young and not accustomed to hear lessons on the value of detachment, complete or partial. Perhaps I did not understand all that I heard. But all that I understood struck a vital chord of my youthful heart. I have never forgotten the music of it. There have no doubt been variations of tune and pitch, but it has always been musical, never a jumble of discordant notes. I was then eighteen. I am now seventy-one. Detachment has been the dominant note of my life. I have tried to live like the *Pankal* fish unsoiled by the surrounding mud. I cannot say I have succeeded. But I am convinced detachment is more congenial to me than attachment. If there is any good in the kind of life I am living, it is largely due to Ramakrishna’s discourse on attachment and detachment.

Ramakrishna was not yet a famous man. Fame came to him three or four years later, when he began to gather apostles for a new mission. He was successful, for his apostles have undoubtedly made some noise in the world, and the noise has been largely musical. Ramakrishna’s mission forms one out of many. But it is not an inconsiderable one. The world is now suffering from cyclonic weather, and no body knows whether it is going,—towards harmonious convergence or noisy dispersion. One thing is certain. If disruption comes nobody will be able to throw any part of the responsibility on Ramakrishna’s mission. There is

no separation, no malice, no jealousy or spite in it. It wants to unite mankind

and to find salvation for all in its own humble way.

BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY IN ANCIENT WESTERN INDIA¹

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Great scientific subjects, to which the question of the influence of Buddhism on Christianity also unquestionably belongs, requires three different stages of investigation. When we consider the history of Science, we find that there are three different stages which must by no means be kept separate from one another in the strict succession of ideas, but which can occur side by side with one another, indeed even cross one another.

These three stages are : (1) the collection of the descriptive material; (2) connecting the collected material so as to give a significance and (3) methodology. The second does not seem to be a suitable title of my lecture. As examples of collection of material may be mentioned the works of J. B. Aufhauser, R. V. Garbe and H. Haas. On account of these two circumstances and the existence of a very vast literature, I thought it desirable to use only the principles of methodology. These can be divided into four sections.

1. Are there evidences in the history of religions which positively make the wandering of whole realms of thought and conversion of social and ethnic groups credible?

Let us consider the Manichee-congregation in North Africa, Chinese Islam, Nestorian Christianity in Eastern Turkestan, the colonization of the Syrian Christians and the Jews of Palestine along the Malabar coast. The Scythians play an important part in the spreading of Mahayana-Buddhism. The Mongols incorporate the Greek word *νοσος* into the terminology of their religious philosophy; in the monastery of the Lamas Se-ra in Lhasa, a thunderbolt of Persian origin, which is according to the history of religions connected with India, is held in veneration. Such a mixture of influences can be conceived between Buddhism and Christianity. Famous Catholic and Protestant theologians have plainly admitted this possibility.

2. Geography and History give authentic proof of the same. Buddhism already after it originated became a branched network of roads which has been used from hoary antiquity and has connected India by land and water with the West. (Cf. the pre-Aryan Indus culture of Harappa and Mohenjodaro). The Indians were not lacking in the spirit of adventure to travel in distant foreign lands (Cf. The Evidence of Cornelius Nepos about Indians amongst the Bavarians and Swabians in Wittenburg; find of Devanagari-

¹ From a lecture delivered in the 47th annual gathering of the "Eastern-Asian Mission" in Basel, on the 6th Oct., 1931.

Coins in Westslavic region). The discovery of the South West monsoon by the Greek Capt. Hippalos as well as the Pax Romana of the Roman Emperors (especially of Augustus and Trajan) rendered communication easy so that the ancient world trade to and from India in the first century after Christ reaches its zenith which was never reached later on. Egyptian Alexandria becomes the most important junction between the East and the West. The various place-names in India make it probable that there were extensive colonizations of Greek merchants along the whole of the West coast. The same Augustus temple arises like a parable in Puteoli (in Rome), in Phylae in Alexandria and in Muziris (in South India). Several Indian embassies to the court of the Roman Emperor coincide with important events in the Buddhistic church history (Cf. About 40 A.D. Pali-Canon is handed down by writing in Ceylon; about the same time an embassy from Ceylon is sent to Emperor Claudius; about 100 A.D. a great council is held at Jalandhara and the Sanskrit canon with the theistic colouring of the Mahayana is edited; about 78 A.D. Indian ambassadors come to the court of Antoninus Pius and between 98-112 A.D. to the court of Trajan). Besides, the Buddhistic wholesale merchants play the same, not unimportant role which they have played in the beginnings of the new faith (Anathapindika, Maccharikosiya, etc). The Jatakas very often mention sea voyages which extended up to Baveru, (Babylon). On the Bactro-Indian high road were more than 100 Stupas erected. An English scholar has very lately been trying to investigate the Mahayana influence in Danish Jutland. The Indian influence in Alexandria is to be found in the valuable evidences of Greek

Papyri, to which O. Stein refers (*Indologica Pragensia* 1). For the first time in antiquity the name of Buddha is mentioned by Clemens Alexandrinus and the name of the Egyptian city Alexandria is probably to be traced in the word Alasanda found in Mahavamsa (Chapter XXIX, 29), the history of Ceylon, which is the only Indian source which records the word. It is to be specially noted that the undoubtedly not uneducated Buddhist merchants, although faithful to Buddhistic and general Indian customs were not zealots, but as even now in Lhasa and Eastern Turkestan, occupied the middle position between the adaptability (of the Hellenes) and the determined proselytization (of the Mahomedans). From all this it follows that only an indirect, oral influence of Buddhism is possible on early Christianity.

3. *The testing of the detailed historical events in the spreading of Buddhism in Asia* shows that in the Graeco-Roman ancient tradition there is no mention at all of masses of Indian emigrants, prominent Buddhistic personalities, the founding of monasteries, offering of Buddha's relics and branches of Bodhi tree (as in Ceylon); there is no mention of the ruler, who marries two Buddhist princesses, sends ministers to bring the holy texts of Buddhism from the motherland, India, and gets them translated (as in Tibet); there is no mention of the Emperor who, in the Buddhistic neighbourhood with the Buddhistic central district Eastern Turkestan before him, sends for Buddhistic writings and gets them translated, whereby in later times hordes of pilgrims who are enthusiastic about travel maintain the connection with the holy Buddhistic cities of India (as in China). From the above the same conclusion as from 2, can be drawn.

4. What has been said in 2 and 3 essentially determines the question how the early Christian (canonical and apocryphal) texts have borrowed from the Buddhistic texts. The dependence of the Christian texts on the Buddhistic texts with regard to their literary form is determined, if also in the same direction by the four hypotheses which remarkably support and at the same time weaken one another. From the chronological point of view, the Buddhistic Tipitaka (well-marked also in its Mahayana strata, which can show in a characteristic manner mostly older, pre-Christian readings) is older than the four gospels; but the literary-biographical facts, *e.g.*, as in the Panchatantra are wanting. It means that there is no Buddhistic text, which is a direct translation of Pehlevi, Syriac, Arabic, Hebrew, Greek and Latin texts. From the point of view of the national psychology with regard to literature, the power of the Indians with regard to invention of fables, parables and legends is as uncontested as the fact that antiquity and Europe found it easier to accept and repeat what India had drawn from an inexhaustible spring. The superiority of India being

admitted in this respect, India with its so noticeably indifferent and hostile attitude towards all things historical, due to its love for mythology can show only three Buddhists who are both historical and political: Asoka, Kaniska and Harsa. They may be credited with power and determination to carry beyond the limits of India the contents of the Buddhistic faith and writings which had a significance for the spiritual history of mankind. Since however Asoka (3rd Century B.C.) and Harsa (7th Century A.D.) lived in times far remote from each other, all the hypotheses apply unconditionally to Kaniska and we are forced to the conclusion that an indirect oral influence of Buddhism on early Christianity can be found only in the apocryphal gospels, but that it is probable in the canonical gospels only in a few places. This formulation applies only so long as India, so full of riddles—as it has often done—does not surprise us with new discoveries and finds. One cannot know this. But one must desire to know this.*

* Translated from German by K. Amrita Row, M.A.

TWO PILGRIMAGES

BY SISTER DEVAMATA

All my life I have been a wanderer. I have bowed at many shrines, I have prayed before many altars, I have worshipped in many temples. Among uncounted pilgrimages two stand out in my memory with glowing vividness. The most vivid is my pilgrimage to Calcutta and to the Temple of Dakshi-

neswar, the very ground of which has been hallowed by the footprints of Sri Ramakrishna. So permeated is the atmosphere with his presence, the leaves of the trees seem to whisper his name, the river seems to murmur it as it flows by. That presence saturated my consciousness as I moved from holy place to

holy place in the Temple garden. I sat under the banyan tree where Sri Ramakrishna attained the vision of eternity. I pushed barefooted through the brambles to the Bel tree to which he had fled for deeper seclusion. I bowed before the image of the great Mother of the Universe where he had worshipped. I lingered in the room where he had lived and taught.

To other places also I made pilgrimage,—to Kankurgachi, a shrine and garden dedicated to his memory; to Cossipur Garden where he spent his last days on earth; the quiet, shaded spot on the Ganges-side where his body was cremated; and to the head monastery of the Order on the Ganges above Calcutta where his ashes are kept in devout reverence. I saw almost daily the disciples who had served him; I sought out those who had known him or they sought me out; I visited in homes where he had visited; and I lived day after day close to Saradamoni Devi, Sri Ramakrishna's wife—wife in name only. The pilgrimage stretched out over months, and with each passing hour of it came a deepening realization of the spiritual grandeur of the One whose pilgrim I was.

The other and earlier pilgrimage that glows in my memory was to Assisi. I had fled from the noisy, crowded Holy week observances at Rome and reached Assisi just in time for the Easter Vesper Service and Benediction. As I came out on the great *piazza* of the city, facing me across the square stood a pillared church—once a Roman temple to Minerva. Through its broad, open doors I could see the high altar blazing with hundreds of lighted candles, and in front of it priests in rich feast-day vestments intoning the sacred office. The square outside was crowded to its edges with simple villagers who had come from the whole countryside round

about to attend the Service. As the altar bell rang three times to announce the blessing with the Holy Sacrament, everyone in the vast assembly dropped to his knees and struck his breast repeating “*peccavi*,” “*peccavi*,” “*peccavi*,”—“I have sinned,” “I have sinned,” “I have sinned.” So earnestly was it done, it seemed the glorification of repentance. Then a wave of music from choir and organ swept out over the square and Easter day was at an end.

I returned to the Inn. It adjoined the monastery and church of St. Francis and seemed to share their conventual atmosphere. There were only eight guests in the Inn and among them was Paul Sabatier, author of the most authentic Life of St. Francis. I had read it more than once; that created a bond and we became good friends. He told me many interesting incidents of his researches. When the Government had taken the monastery away from the Franciscan monks, their rich library had been thrown into two empty rooms in the Town Hall. M. Sabatier was one of the few who had free access to it and he had countless absorbing stories to relate of what he had found. One day while I was in Assisi he came upon a remarkable Latin record of a holy nun who may have been at St. Damian's at the time when St. Francis was so often there.

In the early morning of my second day at Assisi I was awakened by the sound of chanting. I looked out my window and saw a band of pilgrims climbing the steep slope carrying lighted candles, a priest investments marching at their head bearing a crucifix. Every morning of Easter week similar pilgrim bands—villagers from the plain below—toiled up the sheer paths, singing as they climbed. I made pilgrim-

age with them to all the places sanctified by association with St. Francis. We knelt and prayed where he had prayed, we stood where he had preached, we bowed our heads where he lay entombed.

Unlike the pilgrimage to Calcutta, the pilgrimage to Assisi covered scarcely a fortnight, but it was full of exalted inspiration. These two pilgrimages I would weave now into one. The sug-

gestion for the task came to me in the sanctuary at the hour of prayer and with prayer has it been accomplished. There has been no thought of comparison in putting those two Great Ones side by side. My hope in doing it has been that those who love the one will learn to love the other, those who know the one will learn to know the other, and a new link will join East with West, West with East.

THE VEDANTA*

BY DR. MAHENDRANATH SIRCAR, M.A., PH.D.

The University of Calcutta is popularizing the Vedanta through Sreegopal Basumallik Lectures. Originally, these lectures were confined to Sanskritists, but recently they had been thrown open to the students of Western as well as of Eastern Philosophy. This decision has widened the scope of the lectures. Formerly they were confined to the orthodox interpretation of the Vedanta by erudite Pandits. Now their objective has been the study of the Vedanta after the method of Western Philosophy, specially indicating the elements of the system that have been the source of its being a living issue in the speculative and formative life of India even this day.

The book embodies the Fellowship Lectures for 1929 and is one that meets the above requirements. It is a free but accurate account of the system of the Mayavada of Sankara which, according to the author, is Vedanta *par excellence*. The author

thinks of the other systems of Vedanta as "thoughts of arrested development," and if this arrest can be anyhow checked, they have their culmination in Sankara Vedanta.

Philosophy is life brought to the focus of self-consciousness. Vedanta is philosophy in this sense. This is the truly philosophic method. It can see the whole of life and cannot remain satisfied with sidelights and superficial readings. Philosophy often deflects from the self-centripetal tendency and takes rest in the sectional and the surface-views of life; but it cannot long rove in this way, for the centre of interest lies within and the light of knowledge burns there. Philosophy in the ancient India finds its satisfaction in this enquiry into the Self, which is the foundation and prius of all existence. But enquiry into the fundamental fact comes last of all (Vedanta), for the "informing spirit of the whole can be realized as the drive and *nisus* of the subordinate phase of thought." The Vedanta, in this sense, is the cream of the Vedas.

* TOWARDS A SYSTEMATIC STUDY OF THE VEDANTA—by Saroj Kumar Das, M.A. (Cal.), Ph.D. (Lond.). Published by the University of Calcutta. x+292 pp.

The author traces the germ of the Vedanta, the true philosophy of life amongst the sagas of the Vedas, especially of the Rig-Veda where "the unity of the gods and of the world" has been, according to Keith, asserted.

If the Vedanta has its germ in revelation, it has its gushing spring in intuition, and confirmation in reason. In offering allegiance to reason and intuition, Sankara keeps up the true philosophical attitude. He is not a theologian. He is a philosopher in every sense of the term. With the true philosophic instinct the author tells us that philosophy has nothing to be afraid of revelations, for they are the inner experiences which philosophy cannot neglect to study and reflect. Human experience supplies materials for reflection, and the Vedanta in recognizing the different dimensions of experience—normal, sub-normal and supra-normal is observant of the wider stretches of experience and psychic life, and is not satisfied with the sectional presentation of it. Philosophical constructions are often set upon a section of experience and naturally as a review of life they become defective and short-sighted. The key-note of the Vedanta lies in the acceptance of all phases of experience, and in this lies its uniqueness. It is the chief reason why it has been able to satisfy all the demands of being, pragmatic, realistic and idealistic, and at the same time been able to offer something which transcends them. This has been really the mystery of the Vedanta which has baffled the attempts of many with philosophical proclivities of the West to rightly comprehend it.

Philosophy has its starting ground in the German Transcendentalists in the unity of synthetic apperception. Kant accepts it "as the epistemological correlate of the object" and cannot "secure for it an independent status."

Fichte seizes its metaphysical aspect "not as a fact, but as an act." The genius of Sankara, which ordinarily accepts it as the correlate of every specific act of cognition, affirms it to be pure, self-manifest Chaitanya existing as the transcendental fact without the least determination of any content. Here he differs from all the Absolutists,—Hegel, Bradley and others. The lapse of the subject-object reference in this height of knowledge has led many to think of the Absolute of Sankara as unconscious, because we are not accustomed to the kind of supra-normal experience, which is still conscious but without the implication of relativity. If "the place of dreamless sleep in a metaphysical rendering of experience has appeared too slippery a ground for Kant," it has widened the philosophic vision of Sankara, whose uniqueness lies in boldly accepting all the phases of psychic life as the ground of his philosophical construction. The author has developed this phase of the central thought in Sankara and has been able to successfully bring out the implication and uniqueness of the Vedanta in the chapter on 'From Authority to Freedom'.

In the next three chapters he confines himself mainly to the epistemology and the dialectic of the Vedanta and shows how Sankara differs from the pragmatists in his definition of truth as *fait accompli*, which does not depend upon any kind of subjective construction or activity. This naturally leads on to the criterion of truth as consisting in immediacy, intrinsicness and objectivity. Sankara is an epistemological realist. Jnanam has always "an objective basis" or more accurately it is the Fact.

In the chapter on 'Analysis of Experience', the author has brought under discussion the fundamentals of the

Vedantic epistemology—the distinction between Nirvikalpa and Savikalpa knowledge, the theories of error, the Vedantic theory of superimposition, the doctrine of import of proposition. In the dialectic of the Vedanta the author draws a happy distinction between “knowledge as timeless reality and manifestation of such knowledge which belongs to time.” The author thinks that the main fundamental basis of the Vedanta—identity of Being and Consciousness—is more accepted on revelation than confirmed by dialectic. And dialectic in Sankara is the negative art of refuting the opponents. And for this Sankara is not to be condemned, for all philosophical constructions have their root in intuition in life; dialectic comes in afterwards either to affirm it or to deny the contradictions. For philosophy is life first, understanding next. The Vedanta puts forward this character of philosophy. The learned author then examines the conception of relations and differences and introduces interesting discussions on the different kinds of Bheda and their refutations.

In the next two chapters the author considers the metaphysics and the theology of the Vedanta. The metaphysics of the Vedanta is confined to the relation of Brahman and Maya, the doctrine of causation, the nature of Maya and the knowledge of its existence, the distinction between Maya and Vidya. In these matters the author has given the traditional views and rightly interpreted them. The author rightly points out that “Advaitism is not *monism* or *singularism*—it is only the statement of what is, *viz.* the denial of duality or affirmation of not-twoness.” Again he proceeds, “What is sought to be established is the non-existence of a being (in the effect) other than that of the cause, and not their

absolute identity.” This is in line with the authoritative interpretation of the Vedanta.

In the next chapter the author introduces before us the conception of the Vedantic God in its two aspects, Para and Apara and institutes a happy comparison between Sankara, Bradley and Alexander regarding religious consciousness. They seem to be in a felicitous agreement about the religious instinct and the satisfaction it finds in personal God. But this personal God is to Sankara as well as to Bradley but an aspect and an appearance of the Absolute. To Alexander, “there is no actual infinite being with the quality of deity; but there is an actual infinite, the whole universe, with a *nisus* to deity; and this is the God of religious consciousness, though that consciousness habitually forecasts the divinity of its object as actually realised in an individual form.” There is a difference between Sankara and Alexander. While Alexander follows up the practical approach with a metaphysical enquiry to give the God of religion a sure footing, Sankara resolves God and the religious consciousness in the higher intuition of the plenitude of being in the Absolute. Sankara has not allowed religious instinct to get the highest claim and with unique boldness has declared that intuitions of pragmatic reason have their values as spiritual verities in the world of relativity but not in the Absolute. Sankara has given a shock to the religious susceptibilities and spiritual values, but in doing this he presents before humanity the source of true freedom, the freedom of knowledge beyond the relative in knowledge and spirituality. This is indeed a unique privilege. And this privilege is given by the Vedanta.

And this privilege does not take

away the zest of life, its charm and satisfaction. But, on the other hand, it adds to the dignity and sublimity of life and puts the adjustment of claims on a firm basis. The equilibrium of the human society is disturbed by the false emphasis upon personality, apparently ignoring the wide truth of the supra-personal identity. When humanity will have the knowledge of this dignified truth and perceive in its transcendent being the oneness of existence, it will enjoy the fine current of transcendent love and supernal delight which invariably follows the perception of transcendent truth. The Vedantic *summum bonum* is the installation of life in transcendent bliss. In this height of existence the contraries and conflicts of ethical realism cannot arise. Such a vision can put them at rest. Vedantism is not pragmatism, but it can give us in humanistic sense more than materialism or pragmatism. For the realization of the oneness of being does not leave us cold about the humanistic problems but lends a roseate colouring and loving grace to service.

The author has gone into all the technical details of the Vedantic ethics and the nature of Moksha. He has entered into an elaborate discussion regarding the place of ethics in the scheme of absolutist metaphysics and says in somewhat apologetic terms "What is affirmed here of modern Absolutism or, for the matter of that, of the pre-Christian or Hellenic thought applies *mutatis mutandis* to Sankara's Absolutism, which as presenting the notion of individuality or personality in too exclusively intellectualistic terms, errs, if at all in no less honourable company, so far as it also subscribes to 'episodic' as well as restrictive nature of finite selfhood or personality." The human mind is so

much possessed of the sense of personality and the values arising therefrom, that it shudders at a scheme in which the personal hold of life is cut off. Ethical values have not been ignored by the Vedanta, but the highest value has not been set upon it, for in the realization of supra-personal all resistance of life ebbs away, and life exhibits its supra-moral and supra-religious character. Morality indeed attracts us because of the dignified promise of Self-realization, but this promise presupposes the offended majesty of the Self. This moral sense introduces us into the world of moral valuation and relativity, and it will all along be confined there. But it can have no place where there is no sense of conflict and resistance. And the Vedanta cannot be condemned because it sees far higher stretches of life than that represented in personality.

There is an urge in life to rise above the claims of personal life, and what really charms us in moral life is expansion, and if in the search after expansion, life is dissociated from the personal reference, it is no disappreciation; it comes as the result of natural seeking in man, though in this seeking life has to change its axis from the relative to the transcendent. The aesthetic, moral and spiritual lives have their value in the relative world and they attract us by the relaxation they offer to the tension of being and by the sense of opposition and conflict overcome. They can naturally have no place in the silence beyond the tension and relaxation of our being. And the Vedanta in accepting this aspect of being is certainly introducing something quite unique, which places us beyond moral and spiritual susceptibilities and wherein we become free from their demands and urges.

This is the uniqueness of the Vedanta;

and in presenting this uniqueness the Vedanta really invites us to rise above the usual moral and spiritual susceptibilities and be free from the insistences of life, however fine, attractive and graceful they may be.

The author passes on to the consideration of Lila and distinguishes it from "Mechanism" on the one hand and "Purpose" on the other, and compares it to Bosanquet's teleology above finite consciousness or simply providence. This conception of Lila brings forth the conception of Iswara as a Supreme Artist, not actuated by any purpose in His creative effort. The author has found in Ananda the central principle of Lila. But lest there should be any misunderstanding a distinction should have been drawn between the Ananda of Atman as unconditioned witness and the Ananda of creative expression. While Sankara emphasizes the former, the Vaishnavic teachers accept the latter. Bliss, according to Vaishnavas, is self-expression; according to Sankara it is self-transcendence. This indeed draws the true line of distinction between Sankarites and the Vaishnavas. In Sankara there is place both for self-transcendence and self-expression.

Creativeness, spontaneous or otherwise, has in it a limitation; and Iswara cannot create without the Karma seeds. But since the material and the efficient causes are united in Iswara, the hypothesis of an extraneous cause in creation naturally falls through.

The genius of Sankara has been able to make a happy synthesis between the inexorable moral law and the conception of God as the inspirer of moral life. Here the learned author has drawn an instructive comparison between Kant and Sankara and the comparison has been in favour of

Sankara. Kant finds the necessity of a God for the full explanation of moral life, but this God is introduced as the external paymaster of the virtues acquired here. But in Sankara God is the heart and life of the moral life, the very condition of moral law and progress, which does not abrogate human free-choice and initiation. God is the ideal of moral excellence—of perfection. He, therefore, does not simply distribute according to merits. He inspires moral excellence and spiritual holiness. In this chapter the author has nicely dealt with the theistic implications of the Vedanta. It is instructive and will repay perusal.

The author then introduces the different conceptions of the finite self and the evolution of the world-process.

The learned professor has closed his book with the hope that the Vedanta may supply the proper incentive and inspiration of the Church invisible of the federated humanity.

The book as a whole is a pleasant reading and presents accurately and logically all the aspects of Sankara Vedanta. The learned author has not followed the course of being original at the cost of accuracy; on the other hand, he has advanced the important phases of the system and shown how Sankara's philosophy has its unique value as a system which does justice to all the parts of our nature—intellectual, moral, religious and at the same time gives us the full satisfaction in the vision of the Transcendent. A system that accentuates the one phase of life rather than others, naturally has its shortcomings. But though Sankara, in transcending all these, denies these phases in the Absolute, yet he denies them in reference to a total change in the dimension of consciousness from the relative to the Absolute.

ASIAN ORIGIN OF MAYAN CIVILIZATION

DR. TARAKNATH DAS, PH.D.

To Western scholars and world at large the origin of Mayan civilization has been a mystery; as no adequate explanation is available on the subject. This is due to the fact that Christian missionaries as well as rulers from Spain and Portugal ruthlessly destroyed many of the monuments of ancient civilization in South American and Central American countries as well as Mexico.

The Mayans were the earliest people in recorded history to reach a high state of culture in the New World. According to their own traditions they came originally from the extreme north some time before the beginning of the Christian era and migrated into Yucatan, where some of their finest monuments now stand.

The story of "Sita and Ram" of the *Ramayana* is known among certain section of the South American Indians. According to Indian tradition the region of South America is regarded as "*Patal*." It is also interesting that some of the ancient Hindu mythology regarding creation and the snake "*Basuki*" is similar to that which is known among the American Indians.

So far as I know, no Indian archeologist and student of comparative religion has devoted his energy in finding out the possible connection between Indian or Asian civilization and that of the Mayans. Now comes a young Western scholar who claims to have discovered definite proofs of Asian origin of Mayan civilization.

It has been reported from Bogota (Columbia) that Dr. Herman Walde Waldegg of the Colombian National Library hold that Mixtec writings bear

definite relations to Chinese, Japanese and Sanskrit. Dr. Walde is an Austrian scholar of 30 years of age. He is the son of Baron Waldegg, holder of numerous Austrian estates before the revolution of 1918. Dr. Walde speaks twelve modern languages and has knowledge of various Asiatic tongues. He was once an assistant in the famous Vatican Library in Rome. Here in the Vatican Library Dr. Walde tried to decipher the famous "Borgian Codex." This document is of deer-skin, thirty feet long and two feet wide.

It is generally accepted that this "Borgian Codex" was found in Mexico in the eighteenth century and ordered to be burned as an idolatrous object, but was rescued and smuggled to the Vatican, where it was found among the possessions of Cardinal Stefano Borgia in 1804. "Many famous archeologists have worked on its secret symbols in the hope that it would prove to be the Rosetta Stone of the New World, and would furnish a key to the hidden history of the Mayas, just as the Rosetta Stone led to the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphics. But the consensus has been that it was merely a conglomeration of astronomical signs without word-meaning."

However the symbol for "the feathered snake," which is the great creator of the Mayas, occurs frequently in the "Borgian Codex"; and Dr. Walde conceived the idea that it must have some connection with the Chinese idea of the "dragon" which is the serpent with wings and is regarded as a union between heaven and earth. Dr. Walde is convinced that he has made progress in

deciphering the mysterious document which eventually may prove that the Mayan civilization had very close relation with Asia. Dr. Walde's research may throw new light on the history of world civilizations.

ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA

By SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

CHAPTER XXI

CONTENTS

दश षट् चोपदेशे स्युः श्लोकाश्च पञ्चविंशतिः ।
सत्यात्मानुभवोल्लासे उपदेशे चतुर्दश ॥ १ ॥

दशषट् Sixteen श्लोकाः verses उपदेशे on instruction च (expletive) स्युः are पञ्चविंशतिः twenty-five सत्यात्मानुभवील्लासे on the joy of the realisation of the Self, the Truth (स्युः are) चतुर्दश fourteen च and उपदेशे on instruction (स्युः are).

1. There are sixteen slokas on instruction, twenty-five on the joy of realisation of the Self, the Truth, and fourteen on instruction.

षडुल्लासे लये चैवोपदेशे च चतुश्चतुः ।
पञ्चकं स्यादनुभवे बन्धमोक्षे चतुष्ककम् ॥ २ ॥

षट् Six उल्लासे on the bliss of Self-realisation (स्युः are) चतुश्चतुः four each लये on Self-absorption (च expletive) उपदेशे on instruction च and (स्युः are) पञ्चकं five अनुभवे on realisation स्यात् are चतुष्ककं four बन्धमोक्षे on bondage and liberation (स्यात् are).

2. There are six slokas on the bliss of Self-realisation, four each on Self-absorption and instruction, five on realisation and four on bondage and liberation.

निर्वेदोपशमे ज्ञाने एवमेवाष्टकं भवेत् ।
यथासुखे सप्तकं च शान्तौ स्याद्वेदसम्मितम् ॥ ३ ॥

अष्टकं Eight निर्वेदोपशमे ज्ञाने एवमेव on indifference, on quietude, on wisdom and on the state of the seer भवेत् are सप्तकं seven यथासुखे on true happiness (स्यात् are) वेदसम्मितं as many as are the Vedas, i. e. four च and शान्तौ on peace स्यात् are.

3. There are eight slokas each on indifference, quietude, wisdom and the state of the seer, seven on true happiness, and four on peace.

तत्त्वोपदेशे विंशच्च दश ज्ञानोपदेशके ।

तत्त्वस्वरूपे विंशच्च शमे च शतकं भवेत् ॥ ४ ॥

विंशत् Twenty (च expletive) तत्त्वोपदेशे on the instruction on Truth (स्युः are) दश ten ज्ञानोपदेशके on the instruction on Knowledge (स्युः are) विंशत् twenty च (expletive) तत्त्वस्वरूपे on the nature of Truth (स्युः are) शतकं a hundred च and शमे on peace भवेत् is.

4. There are twenty slokas on the instruction on Truth, ten on that of Knowledge, twenty on the nature of Truth and a hundred on contentment.

अष्टकं चात्मविश्रान्तौ जीवन्मुक्तौ चतुर्दश ।

षट् संख्याक्रमविज्ञाने ग्रन्थैकात्म्यं ततः परम् ॥ ५ ॥

अष्टकं Eight चात्मविश्रान्तौ on the repose in Self (स्यात् are) चतुर्दश fourteen जीवन्मुक्तौ on liberation-in-life (स्युः are) षट् च and six संख्याक्रमविज्ञाने on a statement of the number and order (स्युः are) ततः परं after that ग्रन्थैकात्म्यं the unity of the book (स्यात् is).

5. There are eight slokas on the repose in Self, fourteen on liberation-in-life and six on a statement of the number and order, followed by the unity of the book.

विंशत्येकमितैः खण्डैः श्लोकैरात्माग्निमध्यखैः ।

अवधूतानुभूतेश्च श्लोकाः संख्याक्रमा अमी ॥ ६ ॥

विंशत्येकमितैः Twenty-one खण्डैः in chapters आत्माग्निमध्यखैः three hundred and two श्लोकैः in slokas अवधूतानुभूतेश्च of the intuitions of an Avadhuta (च expletive) अमी those संख्याक्रमाः with the number and order श्लोकाः verses.

6. The above are the slokas, with their number and order, of the intuitions of an *Avadhuta*,¹ recorded in twenty-one chapters and three² hundred and two verses.

[¹ *Avadhuta*—an ascetic who has renounced all worldly connections and realised the Supreme Self.

² *Three hundred and two*—It is interesting to note how the Sanskrit word gives the meaning of this figure. *Atmā* in the word denotes 'two' inasmuch as it stands both for *Jivatman* and *Paramātman*. *Agni* stands for 'three,' as there are three fires. *Kha* which means *Akāsa* (void) stands for 'zero.' Literally, the word, therefore, means the figure which has 2 as the first digit, 0 as the middle and 3 as the third, i.e. 203. But according to the dictum अङ्कानां वामतो गतिः the number should be read from right to left, and thus the Sanskrit word means 302.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Notes of conversation with Swami Turiyananda is concluded in this issue *Nationalism, Patriotism and Religion* was suggested by an article, 'The New Patriotism,' in the *Harper's* by Viscount Cecil, a great friend of the League of Nations and one of the most respected statesmen in international affairs Swami Atulananda is an American monk of the Ramakrishna Order. *Christianity or Vedanta* was a discourse given to a group of Vedanta students at Oakland, U.S.A. . . . Prof. Rala Ram is the Vice-Principal of the D. A. V. College, Hoshiarpur. He speaks from his experience of a recent visit to Africa . . . Kshirod Chandra Sen has earned a good reputation as the author of *SIDELIGHTS ON WESTERN CIVILIZATION*. Here he takes us back to the incidents which happened more than half a century ago. . . . Dr. Walther Wust is one of the most promising young Sanskrit scholars in Germany. Dr. Wust thinks that Buddhism has directly and indirectly influenced Christianity and he gives authentic information on the subject *Two Pilgrimages* refers to the visit of the writer to Dakshineswar, hallowed by the association of Sri Ramakrishna, and Assisi, the birth-place of St. Francis A keen student of Vedanta as Dr. Mahendranath Sircar is, special value attaches to his review of any work on the same subject Dr. Taraknath Das gives information about a valuable discovery which may throw new light on the history of world civilization *Ashtavakra Samhita* is concluded in this number.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON UNTOUCHABILITY

We are orthodox Hindus, but we refuse entirely to identify ourselves with "Don't-touchism." That is not Hinduism: it is in none of our books: it is an unorthodox superstition which has interfered with national efficiency all along the line.

A dreadful slough is in front of you—take care; many fall into it and die. The slough is this, that the present religion of the Hindus is not in the Vedas, nor in the Puranas, nor in Bhakti, nor in Mukti—religion has entered into the cooking-pot. The present religion of the Hindus is neither the path of Knowledge nor that of Reason,—it is "Don't-touchism." "Don't touch me!" "Don't touch me!"—that exhausts its description. See that you do not lose your lives in this dire irreligion of "Don't-touchism." Must the teaching *अस्मत् सर्वभूतेषु*—"Looking upon all beings as your own self"—be confined to books alone? How will they grant salvation who cannot feed a hungry mouth with a crumb of bread? How will those who become impure at the mere breath of others, purify others? Don't-touchism is a form of mental disease. Beware! All expansion is life, all contraction is death.

Well, do you think there is any religion left in India! The paths of Knowledge, Devotion, and Yoga—all have gone, and now there remains only that of Don't-touchism—"Don't touch me!" "Don't touch me!" The whole world is impure, and I alone am pure! Lucid Brahmajnanam! Bravo! Great God! Nowadays Brahman is neither in the recesses of the heart, nor

in the highest heaven, nor in all beings—now He is in the cooking-pot. Formerly the characteristic of a noble-minded man was विभुवनमुपकारयेषिभिः प्रीयमानः “to please the whole universe by one’s numerous acts of service,” but now it is—I am pure and the whole world is impure,—go and get money and set it at my feet.

To the Bhaktas who are not Brahmins, give this Mantra of Gâyatri (here Swamiji communicated the special Gâyatris for them). By degrees all the people of the land have to be lifted to the position of Brahmins Each Hindu, I say, is a brother to every other, and it is we who have degraded them by our outcry, “Don’t touch,” “Don’t touch!” And so the whole country has been plunged into the utmost depths of meanness, cowardice and ignorance. These men have to be uplifted; words of hope and faith have to be proclaimed to them. We have to tell them, “You are also men like us and you have all the rights that we have.” Do you understand?

Alas! nobody thinks of the poor of the country. They are the backbone of the country, who by their labour are producing food,—these poor people, the sweepers and labourers, who if they stop work for one day will create a panic in the town. But there is none to sympathise with them, none to console them in their misery. Just see, for want of sympathy from the Hindus thousands of *pariahs* in Madras are turning Christians. Don’t think this is simply due to the pinch of hunger; it is because they do not get any sympathy from us. We are day and night calling out to them, “Don’t touch us! Don’t touch us!” Is there any compassion or kindness of heart in the country? Only a class of “Don’t-touchists;” kick such customs out! I

sometimes feel the urge to break the barriers of “Don’t-touchism,” go at once and call out, “Come all who are poor, miserable, wretched and down-trodden,” and to bring them all together in the name of Sri Ramakrishna. Unless they rise, the Mother won’t awaken. We could not make any provision for food and clothes for these—what have we done then? Alas! they know nothing of worldiness, and therefore even after working day and night cannot provide themselves with food and clothes. Let us open their eyes—I see clear as daylight that there is the one Brahman in all, in them and me—one Shakti dwells in all. The only difference is of manifestation. Unless the blood circulates over the whole body, has any country risen at any time? If one limb is paralysed, then even with the other limbs whole, not much can be done with that body—know this for certain. (Collected from the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*).

A VILE PROPAGANDA AGAINST HINDUISM

Miss Cornelia Sorabji some time back wrote in the *Atlantic Monthly* an article, the ostensible purpose of which was to make a propaganda against Mahatma Gandhi. In that she betrayed her morbid nature of fault-finding and withal a fine capacity for carping at things, however noble and great. Now she steps out of politics into the field of religion. Recently she has written in the *Nineteenth Century* an article, entitled ‘Hindu Swamis and Women of the West,’ holding up Hinduism to ridicule. In this, from a superior height, she mocks at the Hindu theory of reincarnation, law of Karma, etc., and talks “as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”

Now, what is the qualification of Miss Sorabji that she can talk so confidently about Hinduism? Well, she has the greatest of qualifications, namely, IGNORANCE; for that gives one the most complete freedom to talk anything one likes—sense or no sense, relevant or irrelevant. She has however taken pains to know something about Hinduism. The objects of her adoration are two Mahatmas—one is 'Mathaji,' and the other is 'Bawaji'—at whose feet she learned about Hinduism and who, she gives a certificate, could "be put beside the saints of mediaeval Europe." The 'Mathaji' told Miss Sorabji that "Hinduism is a matter of caste," and about Vivekananda and Ramakrishna sect, the Brahmos and Arya Samajists her opinion was, "Nor are such people Hindus." By the way, Miss Sorabji says that "One knows how even individual Brahmos—theists who have really renounced Hindu ritual—revert to Hinduism in times of difficulty."

The other Guru—namely, 'Bawaji,' when asked by Miss Sorabji "How does one find God in meditation?", "explained the way of meditation—to sit silent and empty the mind of every thought, to hold it still by imagining a hollowed-out bamboo, and then to travel in thought up and down, up and down that bamboo." Indeed like Guru like Chela.

Cornelia Sorabji knows "that American women are 'au fond' deeply religious," and so she warns them not "to run after Swamis and fancy religions." We admire Miss Sorabji for evincing so much concern about the American women. But she herself, perhaps, runs no risk even at the hands of Christian Fathers, most wisely caring for no religion at all.

We have indeed painfully heard from time to time of cheats and charlatans,

giving themselves out as Swamis, who exploit Hinduism to find out an easy road to make money. But these cheats are by no means confined to Indians only. We know at least of one American, who came to us but was found unfit to be allowed to stay even as a guest and as such he had to quit the Ashrama. Afterwards he went to America and gave out himself as a Swami who had practised Tapasya in Tibet for twenty years. These facts only indicate that Hinduism has got its attraction; for only good things in the world lend themselves to be exploited whereas things having no intrinsic merit of their own die of inanition. A religion should be judged by its best and not by its pests or scoundrels who profess religion only in name. But have no Hindu preachers gone to America who have been able to give solace and comfort even to a handful of persons who were hungering and thirsting after righteousness? It is not for Miss Sorabji to give or even surmise an answer.

Miss Sorabji is not without a fling also at the Belur Math, the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission, and caricatures the "Westerners—English, Australian, etc.," who have been attracted there. "Miss Noble (Sister Nivedita), an English woman, used to lie prostrate before the image of Kali on Christmas Eve and then say to the monks: 'Now let us go into the fields equipped with crooks and read the story of the shepherds of Bethlehem.'"

It is only what might be expected that Miss Sorabji who could ridicule Hinduism so much, should give her own prescription as to how to live a Hindu life, no matter that she does not belong to that faith. Indeed, versatility and omniscience are the order of the day. So she says: "There is

no reason why people should not study Hinduism for themselves without the aid of pseudo-Swamis. There are books and translations enough, made by scholars; and the practice of meditation, of going into the silence, cannot fail to help us all. Any beautiful thought may be used for the practice of Yoga as understood by my two friends; and the posture of the body was, in their opinion, immaterial."

Poor India, she has to suffer from enemies inside and outside! But India which has survived the ravages of time and the onslaught of so many plunderers and conquerors is bound to live on. These prin-pricks of a Sorabji or persons whose sole vocation in life is to vilify others will cause little harm to her. So we only wish that God forgive them.

THE MOTHERHOOD OF GOD IN CHRISTIANITY

The Christian Churches recognize the Holy Spirit as important an aspect of God as the Father and the Son. As there is no clear picture of the Third Person of the Trinity, many Christians attribute this aspect of God to Virgin

Mary. They adore this Mother aspect of God as dear as the other two. In the book of *The Shepherd of Hermes*, Jesus Christ is reported as saying, "My Mother, the Holy Spirit." On this subject, Rev. J. S. M. Ward writes an interesting article in *The Occult Review* of recent date. "If we turn to the opening chapters of Genesis we find that 'God created Man in His own image; male and female created He them.' If, then, He created women in His own image, then there must be somewhere a feminine aspect of the Godhead, and the Apostles' Creed shows this to be the Holy Spirit." He refers to the Lincoln Cathedral in which there is a carved stone boss where God, Jesus and Mary have been represented in descriptive figures as the Eternal Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit respectively. But this conception of the Motherhood of God cannot transcend the limits of popular theology. In India, this aspect of God has been realized by the Seers as the Supreme Truth. The Divine Mother is not only the source of projection, protection and dissolution of the universe, but She is both Personal and Impersonal God also. Nay, She is beyond human speech and mind.

REVIEWS

THE SCIENTIFIC OUTLOOK. By Bertrand Russell, *George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Museum Street, London.* 280 pp. Price 7s. 6d.

Mr. Bertrand Russell discusses here in a series of essays the consequences and implications of the scientific civilization of to-day. He examines, *first*, the nature and scope of scientific knowledge; *secondly*, the increased power of manipulation derived from scientific technique; and *thirdly*, the changes in social life.

As pointed out by him, "Manipulation and exploitation are the ruling passions of the scientific Industrialists. . . Fortunately they are not yet quite aware how much they could do if they chose; but when this knowledge dawns upon them, a new era in human tyranny is to be expected." And he imagines that ultimately will be produced a world-wide organism as complete and elaborate as that now existing in U. S. S. R. But whether human society will be happier is uncertain. For, "The man drunk with

power is destitute of wisdom and so long as he rules the world, the world will be a place, devoid of beauty and joy."

In conclusion the author sums up the development of science as the passage from *contemplation* to *manipulation*. We may seek knowledge of an object because we love the object or because we wish to have power over it. The former leads to contemplation and the latter to manipulation. Thus it is only in so far as we renounce the world as its lovers that we can conquer it as its technicians. But this division in the soul is fatal to what is best in man. This is the fundamental reason why the prospect of scientific society must be viewed with apprehension.

N. S.

THE MESSAGE OF SAT TAL ASHRAMA
(WITH A FOREWORD BY DR. E. STANLEY JONES.) *Association Press, 5 Russell Street, Calcutta. 300 pp. Price Rs. 2-4.*

The Ashrama is situated in the Himalayas at Sat Tal. The present book contains a collection of papers presented to the Ashrama group by several able men and women already engaged in the promotion of Christianity in India. The purpose of the Ashrama is said to be "to yoke the Christian spirit and the Indian spirit" and here are discussed the ways and means to make Christianity more truly Indian in method and outlook.

Dr. Stanley Jones aptly imagines a string of questions as proceeding from the Indian patriot. "Is this Christian movement one that allies itself with the best in our past or will it stand as alien and iconoclastic? And what does the Christian movement do for us abroad? Does it, in order to get funds, show up the worst sides of our culture and civilization and religions? . . . And does not the very fact of missionaries coming from a civilisation that dominates us make for our being considered inferior? . . . Is this not, after all, the religious side of the invasion and domination of the East by the West?"

As one reads through the book the apprehension is evident that Christian movement as it stands to-day will make little progress hereafter into the awakened India and so it stands in urgent need of reform. The leaders of the movement plead guilty to the charge that "Many of our Christians have been proselytes rather than converts.

There has been far too much of a change from a *dhoti* to pants, from vegetarianism to meat-eating, from Indianism to Anglo-Indianism, . . . This is proselytism and should be condemned."

Therefore they want now to wear Indian clothes, to eat Indian food, sit upon the floor for meals and eat out of brass vessels usually found in the Indian home. But this touches only the outside. With regard to their faith, as the Rev. Popley has put it, the conviction seems to be gaining ground "that an attitude of sincere respect for the religious value of other faiths and of genuine co-operation with earnest religious-minded seekers of these faiths, will do more for the cause of religion than the older method of ignoring the religious values of other faiths." Again it is realized that "Modern idealism shows a closer relationship to the mysticism of the Vedanta than to the Apostle Paul." That is why "the West, and America especially, has become progressively Hinduized." So they are anxious to establish with Hinduism all possible points of contact to make the way easy for those "who while desirous to follow Christ have no wish to renounce the Hindu traditions of their forefathers."

A perusal of the book gives a peep into the subtle workings of the Christian mind in India to-day. The days when Christian ideals exercised a fascination over the Hindu seems to be over now. The tide is turning. Hinduism is now beginning to fascinate those who came to conquer. Slow and silent is this charm. It has always been so in the past and it has never failed. So if history is true, Hinduism is on the road to reclaim these children who have strayed into other folds for a time.

N. S.

GERMAN

THE LAWS OF WORLD-HISTORY

Hartmut Piper: *Die Gesetze der Weltgeschichte*: (1) *Der Gesetz macssige Lebenslauf der Voelker Chinas und Japans* (xvi+110 pages, 1929), (2) *Indian* (xvi+232 pages, 1931). Theodor Weicher, Leipzig.

Hartmut Piper is interested not so much in the archæological and antiquarian aspects of Chinese and Japanese history as in the interpretation of well-known data bearing on the developments of life and thought in

Eastern Asia from the standpoint of comparative race-biology. The methods that he has applied in the study of European culture-history he has applied to the historical facts of China and Japan also, and although the work is small in size every reader, even if he be a specialist in Chinese and Japanese questions, will be agreeably surprised to discover many parallelisms and identities with the expressions of European civilization such as have as a rule been overlooked in conventional treatises on history.

It is not necessary to summarize the details. Piper's scheme is as follows. For every culture-system he recognizes seven biological ages:—(1) patriarchal childhood (monarchy), (2) youth (aristocracy), (3) early manhood (absolutism), (4) full manhood (constitutionalism), (5) late manhood (imperialism), (6) old age (Cæsarism), (7) senility (marasmus, decay). One would be easily reminded of Spengler's classification into seasons of cultural life. But Piper's speciality consists in pointing out categorically how the features of Chinese and Japanese civilizations have been similar to those of the European although in different epochs of time. And to this extent the present writer's standpoints in *Chinese Religion through Hindu Eyes* (Shanghai, 1916) and in *The Futurism of Young Asia* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1922) may be said to have been considerably verified and enlarged in Piper's contributions. Naturally, however, when one tries to divide manhood itself into three different stages, early, full, late, one can hardly avoid an over-fineness in analysis which can very often appear to be but strained and unconvincing.

Piper discovers the same laws of universal history in the biography of the Indian peoples. There was a time when scholars used to take a pride in discovering and emphasizing the differences between race and race in regard to the achievements of civilization. The alleged distinction between the East and the West has long remained the stock in trade not only of Orientalists but

of all sociologists, culture-historians, and philosophers who take their cue from Orientalists and who propagate the political ideology of chauvinism and imperialism. Piper's work on India like that on China and Japan is well calculated to cry a halt to this sort of cheap specialism in Oriental lore and compel scholars as well as statesmen to revise their orientations in regard to Asia. Piper is naturally being challenged by the professors of the *status quo* but he is in good company as he is substantially backed by the laborious researches and investigations of that brilliant culture-historian of our times, Hermann Goetz. Piper is more at home in literature than in institutions. His analysis appears very often therefore to be more metaphysical than factual. His equations between Indian celebrities of diverse epochs and those of the West look very often like mere shadowy parities rather than concrete realities. But all the same, Piper has succeeded in rescuing India from the side-tracks of splendid isolation to which she had been forced for nearly two generations. It is just good and right that he considers Goethe to be one of his spiritual predecessors in this work. For it requires to be well known that Goethe was one of the very first to discover the fundamental identity between India and Europe.

BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

HINDI

KALYAN (ISHWARANKA). *The Gita Press, Gorakhpur. 618 pp. Price Rs. 3.*

The 'special number' of the *Kalyan* becomes always a welcome volume. The Editor in the present copy has kept up the tradition of the former issues. The 'Ishwaranka' contains 207 articles—prose and poetry—some of them from writers of international reputation, and 93 pictures coloured and half-tone. The object of the *Kalyan* is to spread religious ideas amongst the public. We feel no doubt that the present volume will stimulate religious feelings in those who will go through it.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, BRANCH CENTRE, DACCA

The annual Report for 1931 shows the activities of the above under the following three heads :

I. MISSIONARY

There were held 149 weekly religious sittings, the average attendance being 66. A scriptural class used to be held at the Math premises on every Sunday except on special occasions like birthday anniversaries of prophets and saints. The total number of classes was 89 with an average attendance of 50. On invitation from the different quarters of the city of Dacca and its suburbs as well as several other districts, the Swamis of the Mission delivered 20 public lectures in 1931.

II. EDUCATIONAL

A Free Primary School for the boys was conducted in the Mission premises. The average number of students on the roll was 107. A Girls' School was maintained at Brahmakitta. The total number of girls on the roll was 19. The Library at the Mission house, comprising of a rich collection of books on religion, philosophy and other subjects was utilized by the reading public of the city. The total number of books in the Library was 2,824 as against 2,298 of the previous year. A Free Reading Room with a large number of periodicals was open to all every day except on Saturdays.

The Mission occasionally helped poor students with money. The Vivekananda Gymnasium was provided with a good wrestling ground and various other instruments for physical exercise. The average daily attendance was 18.

III. CHARITABLE

The Mission carried on an Outdoor Charitable Dispensary. The total number of cases was 7,714 in 1931. Besides, the workers of the Mission nursed a good number of patients at their houses. Two poor feedings were organized by the Mission in which about 6,000 people were fed on each occasion. During the year, the Cholera Relief

was undertaken by it at Daulatpur Thana, Dacca.

FLOOD AND FAMINE RELIEF

In July, 1931, there was a terrible flood in Eastern Bengal which caused a widespread distress to the people. The Mission opened centres at Simulia, Sahbajpur, Kaliakair and Dhaljora in Sadar north ; Baliati and Khalsi in Manickgaon, Sonargaon (Tajpur) and Duptara in Naraingunj, Kalma in Mnnshiganj and Solepud (Madaripnr) in Faridpur. Of these the last centre was opened to relieve the famine-stricken people of that quarter. In all, the Mission had to work over an extensive area of 289 villages. The total amount of corn (food grain) distributed was 1,086 mds. 25 srs. 12 chs. The total number of cloth distributed was 1,706, of which 1,319 pieces were new and 387 old. The total amount of receipts in cash was Rs. 5,275-5-9 and the total amount of expenditure was Rs. 5,248-12-9 leaving a balance of Rs. 31-9-0. In the afflicted area, 1,876 families were helped.

The Mission has some immediate needs for the expansion of its activities. The public are requested to help the Institution which has been rendering manifold services for the last thirty-five years.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SOCIETY, RANGOON

The second report of the above covers the period of its activities from 1929 to 1931. The Society has a good library and free reading room. The number of books on the 31st December, 1931, was 4,454, showing an increase of nearly 2,000 volumes since 1928. The number of borrowers was also increasing, the number on the 31st December, 1931, being 949. The total number of books issued was 6,078 in 1929, 4,000 in 1930 and 11,072 in 1931. The total number attending the Reading Room was 87,835 in 1929 ; 88,112 in 1930, and 40,200 in 1931, the daily average attendance being 115 in 1929, 120 in 1930 and 125 in 1931.

There was a large number of periodicals, in different languages. Their total number was 193. Two free libraries for the exclusive use of ladies were opened—one

for the Tamil-speaking ladies and the other for the Bengali-speaking ladies. Occasional Study Classes and Public Lectures were arranged by the Society. The number of the latter was 32 during the period under review. The Society took effective parts in the Mission Relief Works in the Arakan Flood Reliefs in 1929, in the Pegu Earthquake Relief in 1930 and in the North and East Bengal floods in 1931. The sources of income of the Society are mainly subscriptions and occasional donations and lately Government grants for the purchase of books and periodicals.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, RANGOON

The eleventh annual Report for 1931 shows that the activities of the above were very much increased inasmuch as there were 1,67,678 total daily attendances as against 1,22,644 of the previous year. These patients did not belong exclusively to the city of Rangoon. A considerable number of them came from the suburbs and remote districts of Burma. The number of patients admitted in the In-door Department was 2,053 males and 561 females including children. At the Out-patients Department the total number of attendance came up to 133,653 including men, women and children.

The year under review opened with a balance of Rs. 864-4-10 and deposit accounts of Rs. 180 with the Corporation of Rangoon and R. E. T. & S. Co. The total income of the Sevashrama under different heads was Rs. 42,751-4-6 for the year. The total amount spent was Rs. 42,352-18-9. The year closed with a balance of Rs. 398-6-9 in hand, besides the deposits of Rs. 180. The balance of a loan Rs. 1,500 was debited against the income of the current year of 1932. The financial position of the Sevashrama in comparison with its extensive work is quite unsatisfactory. The Managing Committee appeal to the generous public for help and co-operation.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION INDUSTRIAL HOME & SCHOOL, BELURMATH, HOWRAH

The Institution has already completed the eleventh year of its useful career. The annual Report for 1931 gives a detailed account of its activities as below:

During the year, a thatched house was constructed for the accommodation of students. Another small thatched house was made for congregational prayer and *bhajan*. To meet the growing needs of the Institution the construction of a shed, to be used as a workshop, was under contemplation. The old Home building had to be abandoned as unfit for habitation. The students and the staff had to use the office and class rooms for study and sleeping at night as a temporary makeshift arrangement.

During the year under review, there were 56 boys of whom 36 were resident students in the Industrial Home while the remaining 20 were day-scholars. Three students held scholarships from the District Board, while ten were given stipends from the school funds. Almost all the students were in receipt of aid for their education in some form or other.

In the morning and evening some general education was imparted to the younger boys by competent teachers. Studies and all other activities of the students outside school hours were regulated under the close supervision of the Warden. Weekly classes on the scriptures and the lives and teachings of saints were held.

Daily congregational service in the Home and the birthday celebrations of saints took place as usual. Music classes were held in separate groups. The boys worked by turns in their small kitchen garden and produced a portion of the needs of the Home. They were encouraged to take regular physical exercise in the morning and evening. Parallel bars, a pair of rings and a football and trapezes were provided for them in the Home compound. The boys made good use of their small library which contains books on industrial and technical subjects.

The Home urgently requires a permanent hostel of its own and also funds for other various requirements of the school. The importance and value of such a technical Institution can hardly be exaggerated.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, SARISHA, DIAMOND HARBOUR

The Ashrama was established in 1921 with a view to reform and remodel villages according to the exigencies of the time. Since then, it has been serving the villagers by various means for their uplift. Up to

this day, along with other useful works, it has founded one school for boys, three for girls and one night school for the labouring classes. Of these schools all are free excepting the school for girls at Sarisha. The Report for the years 1929—1931 shows the activities of the Ashrama under the following heads :

I. *The Ramakrishna Mission Shiksha Mandir*

During the years under review the numerical strength of the institution rose to 220 at one period. In 1929, of the six candidates sent up for the final U. P. Examination, five were successful, one securing a Government scholarship. Of the five students sent up in 1930, four were placed in the first division and one in the second division. In 1931, all the thirteen students who were sent up passed, twelve in the first division and one in the second division. The school was managed by a competent staff. The boys practised various forms of physical exercise, such as squad drill, Swedish drill, jujutsu, lathi, etc., under the guidance of a well-known physical culturist. Lessons in music were given to them. They have a library of their own, containing about 300 volumes. During the years under review, books worth Rs. 247-10-6 were distributed free among the needy students. The school spent more than Rs. 80/- per month for giving daily free tiffin to boys.

II. *The Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Mandir*

There had been no school for girls in the locality. So the institution was started in 1927. It was raised to the Middle English Standard in 1930. The number of girls on the rolls at the end of 1931, was 69. Since 1928, the institution has never failed to win Government Scholarships in any year. The girls held, to their credit, one L. P. Scholarship in 1928 ; one L.P. and one U.P. scholarships in 1929 ; three L.P. and U.P. scholarships in 1930 ; and three L.P., one U.P., and one M.V. scholarships in 1931. The girls were given physical training every morning and evening. There were held regular classes in music for them. Several poor and deserving students were furnished with text books worth Rs. 198-1-8 during the years under

review. The institution provided a free supply of daily tiffin to the girls. The girls published a quarterly manuscript magazine called *Chhatri*. Of the 69 girls, 30 only paid their tuition fees ; the rest enjoyed free studentships.

III. *Two More Girl Schools*

The Ashrama undertook the charge of two more girl schools, one at Mankhanda and another at Kalagachia. The former had 42 students under the care of two able and experienced teachers. The latter had 25 students with a qualified teacher in charge of it.

IV. *Philanthropic Activities*

Apart from these institutions, the Ashrama carried on a night school for the labouring classes. It maintained a Charitable Homœopathic Dispensary for the helpless villagers. It spent a sum of Rs. 8,081-10-6 for giving relief to poor persons and families during the period under review. Together with this, 388 pieces of cloth etc., and 238 blankets were distributed among the poor people. The Ashrama sank a tube-well at the cost of Rs. 1,000 for removing the scarcity of pure water in the village. There are a good Library and a Gymnasium attached to the Ashrama. A Weaving school worked regularly with two looms and villagers were trained in weaving.

The activities of the Ashrama are splendid in many respects ; they are at once in keeping with the traditions of India as well as the needs of the present time.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVA SAMITI, KARIMGANJ, SYLHET

The report for 1930 and 1931 shows that the Samiti has served the local public in manifold ways with its limited resources. It has a pretty good library. Occasional classes and lectures were held during the period. A Lower Primary School has been started by the Samiti for the spread of education among the depressed classes. The distribution of medicines to the sick and the nursing of the same form an important item of its philanthropic activities. During the period under review, it helped some poor families and people with doles of rice, clothes and money.