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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]

2ND FEBRUARY, 1922.

Dr. K. of Cossipore came to Benares with an idea of becoming a Sannyasin and was putting up in the Advaita Ashrama for some days past. A pleader has to-day come to Swami Turiyananda to enquire about him. Swami Turiyananda remarked, addressing the pleader, “Dr. K. is a nice man. He would earn about Rs. 500 a month. Horses, carriage and everything covetable he had. Lately he has come here for spiritual practices. Dr. K. said, ‘I shall not again return to my service.’ I told him, ‘No, don’t say that. Everything depends on God. There should be no personal resolution. You just wait here for 2 or 3 weeks and see what happens.’”

4TH FEBRUARY, 1922.

Dr. K. came and stood before Swami Turiyananda when he recited a couplet

of Tulsidas, and explained its meaning : When once God is realized, all religious practices seem like children’s play with dolls. In the play children say, This is my bride, this is my husband. They give one doll in marriage to another. This playing with dolls is but the forecast of the actual play they will have in life. And when they get real husbands, all their joys are with them, the dolls are all encased in the box ; who cares for them then ? Similarly, when God is realized, all religious practices are left behind like children’s dolls. As Sri Ramakrishna used to say, “The bridegroom will come, so a bride dresses herself nicely, combs her hair, does many things for beautification—on the expectation of getting a husband. But when the husband is got, everything is neglected ;—*i.e.*, who then cares for the beauty of her hair, or for the beauty of her person ?”

Then he recited four or five couplets from Mirabai, and while explaining their meaning said, "Mira says, 'The seat of my Beloved is above a spear. How to get him? He will be got, if one can climb upon the spear.' Mira's husband claimed his right as a husband upon Mira. On this she said, 'My husband is Sri Krishna himself. You are no husband of me. He who wears a crown of peacock-tail on his head is my husband.' * * * * Mira told her husband, 'Through the influence of holy association, I have got rid of all sense of fear for public opinion. I am no longer a 'zenana.' * * * With the tears of my eyes I have planted a creeper of Love. I have churned the butter out of curd (*i.e.*, I have attained the essence of my being, my Lord). I have given all my love to God. Now you may do whatever you like with this my physical frame.' "

Then Swami Turiyananda came to his room from outside. I told him that the gentleman who with his family had come to the Kashi Giri's garden was gone. On this Swami Turiyananda remarked, "How can they live here? Do you remember that parable of Sri Ramakrishna?" And he began to narrate the Sri Ramakrishna's parable of fishwives, how due to storm they could not once return to their house and got shelter in a rich man's garden. The fragrance of the sweet-smelling flowers in the garden was too much for them and they were pining for the smell of fish. They felt greatly uncomfortable and disturbed in sleep. At last it occurred to them that their fish-baskets, though empty, could supply them the much-needed odour of fish. On this they brought their fish-baskets to the

bed-side and afterwards passed a happy night. In the same way, worldly people cannot live without a supply of objects for sense-enjoyments. Then he said, "God himself has removed them. But then you need not tell them this. For there is God within everyone."

On hearing the story of the fishwives, Dr. K. said, "How wonderful! How appropriate are his parables! Scholars and learned men would come to Sri Ramakrishna, but none had the courage to say a single word in his presence. How could it be possible unless the Mother awakened within one? So I pray that I may be given a ray of Light."

On this Swami Turiyananda remarked, "No, you should not say that. Harbour no desire whatsoever. Be absolutely desireless. Those who are feeble in their faith, want to see Him. He is and pervades all—just try to be established in this idea. That is tantamount to seeing God. What else is meant by seeing God?"

Then he began to sing the song :

"I have made Thee the polestar
of my life
And in this ocean of the world, I
shall never miss my way. . . ."

When the song was over, he said, "If you are to pray, pray that He may remain ever awake within you. As Arjuna said :

मन्वसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।

योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम् ॥

—If, O Lord, Thou thinkest me capable of seeing it, then, O Lord of Yogis, show me Thy immutable Self.

That is, if you consider me as fit to see you, bless me with your vision."

A CHALLENGE, AN OPPORTUNITY AND A PRIVILEGE

BY THE EDITOR

I

The world is perhaps passing through the greatest crisis in its life-history. Economic suffering, social chaos, political strife and many other factors have made man's life miserable, and at times it seems that the cup of human misery has been filled to the brim. Everywhere there is found gloom and despair.

So long poverty was the monopoly of Indian population. We would think that India is the only land where millions and millions of people live a life of semi-starvation and thousands and thousands of persons do not know what it is to have two meals a day. But now almost in all countries are to be found a horrible number of persons who have been thrown out of employment and the Governments do not know how to save them from the immediate jaws of death. In America, noted for its fabulous wealth and millionaires, the problem of unemployment has been no less keen and the sufferings of millions of its population have become unimaginable. One great question which is, at present, exercising the minds of economic experts as well as lay men with a grain of human feelings in them is, what to do with the starving millions. Similar is the case in Germany and England. All people are dreading the future, as the prospects are by no means more hopeful—if not more gloomy.

Yet how much luxury is amongst those who have been fortunately untouched by the economic crisis. On

the one hand there are to be found persons, who are rolling in wealth and who do not know what to do with their riches, on the other hand there are people who are struggling for a few crumbs of bread for their very life and existence. The gulf between the rich and the poor is daily becoming wider and wider. And the rich are still going on grinding the poor.

Countries standing at economic disadvantages are mercilessly exploited by the nations which are placed in a better position. It does not stand in their way that people in the exploited countries are the limbs of the same humanity to which the exploiters themselves belong and as such they deserve sympathy and compassion. Different countries of the world are in a mad struggle to push one another down. It matters little if any race or nation is altogether wiped out of the face of the earth, if thereby any other nation can reap a greater harvest of enjoyment, luxury and comfort. Human feelings find no consideration, when a nation is out to satisfy its unquenchable greed for wealth and riches, power and prosperity. There would have been some little justification if thereby the general mass of the nation in question could be happier and live a better life. A prosperous nation does not necessarily mean that its masses are free from grinding poverty. Side by side with overflowing wealth there may be, as a matter of fact there always is, an abject penury amongst the people. As a consequence the poor are everywhere indignant against the rich. Fight between Capital and Labour has become

an eternal problem. The same inhuman feelings are visible in the treatment of the poor by the rich within a nation itself. No wonder that communism and socialism have become the cry and the dread of the day.

And economic strife is followed by political strife. In every country there is a great competition amongst its people as to which party will hold the reign of the government. Monarchy is becoming almost a thing of the past. But democracy has met with no better success. It is a common experience that democracy, in reality, is not the rule of the people, but only a false garb for the rule of the few who may or may not look to the interest of the nation as a whole.

And how bitter is the feeling between the different nations of the world. They are always in a fighting mood and at daggers drawn. The political situation of the present world is like a huge magazine of gunpowder waiting for only a trifling spark of fire to blaze up into a huge flame. What is still now considered wrong in private life is highly applauded in national life or international relation. To satisfy its pride or love of glory a nation may within a few hours destroy thousands of villages belonging to the enemy and make millions of people homeless and destitute, but this does not cause the slightest compunction; on the contrary this is belauded as an example of great patriotism and huge monuments are built to commemorate this act of national shame, as one of national glory. The world had a bitter experience of devastations caused by the last War; but it is doubtful whether people have grown wiser by that. For it is in everybody's lips that within a decade there will be another war, greater than the last War and far more disastrous in its effects.

Then there is the feeling of hatred,

jealousy and rivalry between the East and the West, between various races. The West is proud of its present, the East harps on the glory of its past. The West is proud of its material achievement, the East is vainglorious about its spiritual legacy. And all these stand as almost insurmountable barriers against the meeting of the two. As indirect offshoots of this attitude, the coloured races are looked down with contempt by the White people and this in turn causes in the former feelings of bitterness, if not suppressed desires for revenge.

There is a new order of value everywhere. What was considered to be wrong a few decades back is now openly avowed as justified and justifiable. Social morality and code of conduct are undergoing great and rapid changes. The older generation views the conduct of the younger people with alarm, the younger generation looks upon the older people as having become fossilized and incapable of moving with the changing times. There has arisen a clash of interest between the two sexes. Women are claiming many rights which, they think, have been unjustly denied them so long by men occupying, as they do, a more advantageous position. Women in many places have stood as a party against men, as if there is no interrelation of interest between men and women.

Religion was so long supposed to have the power of giving ultimate peace and blessedness. But nowadays the general tendency of belief is that there is no God, that there is nothing good in religion. Political interest is undermining the influence of religion in many places. Religion is supposed to be not a safe thing, when political ambition of any kind suddenly seizes a nation. Deliberate attempts are sometimes made to inoculate atheism into the minds of the

young, so that they may grow up free from any religious ideas. Advantage is taken of many scientific discoveries, though through wrong application, to set up a rational basis for atheism. So there has arisen a conflict between science and religion. Secularism is daily gaining ground. Man is trying to turn his eyes away from the eternal problems of life and concentrate all his attention to those of material interest. For this ensures for him a greater freedom of conduct and less restrictions to his actions, however grave may be the consequences in the end.

II

All these have given rise to depressing thoughts in many quarters as to the future of civilization and humanity. Some are in great doubt whether civilization is not in a declining state; others apprehend that we are going to experience in near future the shipwreck of civilization. Everywhere we find pessimistic views about the existing state of affairs. Those who might be held responsible for the present condition of the world are too much in a delirious mood to judge their actions aright; others who realize the gravity of the situation and the enormity of the folly that is being perpetrated, find their voice of protest too feeble to have any effect. During the last War many churches also succumbed to the influence of times and gave direct or indirect countenance to the actions of the fighting nations in which they were respectively interested. A few noble and bold souls who had the courage to protest against war, were ostracized and put under restraint. Things have not much improved even after the experience of the last War. Nowadays we find that at best theories are being offered as to how the condition of the world and the

trend of events can be changed. But no *effective* means have as yet been adopted. As a result, pessimism is becoming more and more wide-spread and keen.

Those who succeed in life are temperamentally optimistic in their outlook in spite of all odds. Their cheerfulness is not disturbed by any opposition and adverse circumstances. The greater the opposition, the greater the energy they put forth in their struggle and greater they enjoy the fight. Pessimism is no remedy against the ills of life. It paralyses our power and weakens our nerves all the more. This holds good in private as well as in collective life. If the world is at all heading towards destruction, it is a challenge to our manhood and a call to the best amongst us to put forth greater energy to action. Those who have built up the present civilization had not been without ceaseless struggles. And those who want to see it safe and right in its course, cannot claim any immunity from labour and fight. Evil always scores an easy victory, though the result may not be lasting. Good has to struggle hard, but when the victory is won, it becomes far-reaching in its effects. Herod has become simply a name in history associated with cruel acts of tyranny, but Christ has become the perennial source of peace and blessedness to millions of people and will remain eternally so.

III

The relative existence is always the field of play for dual forces—good and bad. Wherever there is good, there will exist evil; wherever there is evil, there will be found good also. In an age when Rama lived, there was also Ravana; with Yudhishthira there was Duryodhana. Absolute perfection is

rare or cannot be found in this world. There was no time in the history of the world, when there was nothing but good, and evil was totally absent. In the present civilization also, however gloomy might be the outlook, we cannot say that there is nothing good. In that case all the good thoughts of all the noble souls that humanity has seen, all the lives of saints and prophets that have been lived and sacrificed for the cause of the world, and all the good deeds that have been directed towards the evolution of human thought and civilization will be said to have been lost. But that cannot be : as no energy is lost. Life means struggle and ever since the time man first came into being, he has been in a ceaseless strife against obstacles and difficulties for his very existence as also for the purpose of bettering his condition. At present also there is the same strife and struggle, but the energy seems to be misdirected. Evil seems to be preponderating over good ; virtue seems to be on the decline and vice seems to be thriving ; Adharma seems to gain ascendancy over Dharma.

It is the Indian belief that whenever the balance between good and evil is disturbed, the world sees the Incarnation of God on earth. Can we not say that the present state of things is a clarion call to the God within every man to wake up and give things a right direction ? to the Christ in every human being to offer himself on the Cross for the sake of the world ?

There will be always good and evil in the world. But their action and counteraction are simply opportunities for men to better their lives. Things got ready made lose their value. If we do not get a thing by hard struggles, we cannot rightly appreciate its value. If there had been no evil by the side of good, good would have no charm for

us. As such, the present crisis of the world is an opportunity—a privilege for all to serve humanity. As we said, evil will not be altogether exterminated at any time ; but it can be kept within a proper control. Outlook of life can be changed, so that the trend of events will be *towards* good and evil will not be taken for good. The worst thing at the present time is that evil is considered as good. Man is liable to commit mistakes ; but when a man is incapable of seeing his mistakes, his case is beyond any hope of recovery. The Gita says that the intellect which can properly distinguish between right and wrong is Sattvika, that which takes a distorted view of right and wrong is Rajasika and that intellect which, enveloped in darkness, views all things in a perverted light and takes wrong to be right is Tamasika. The best of humanity by their labour and efforts can free mankind from the clutches of the ‘Tamasika intellect’ and put them under the influence of the ‘Sattvika intellect.’ Thus far is the scope of human endeavour. And by trying to do so, individuals will only better themselves ; by trying to better the condition of the world, they will simply seize the privilege to better themselves. For, is there not a Divinity behind everything which shapes our ends rough hew them how we will ? Is there not God behind the universe who remains ever awake to give it a direction and guidance ? In that case, man can only offer himself to be a tool in His hand so that he can make his life blessed through service. It is said that there is misery in the world, so that it may offer an opportunity to men for the exercise of their moral qualities. This is so true.

IV

Now, if we desire to save the world from its present crises, what is most

necessary and of the foremost importance, is sincerity of purpose and readiness to work—and not nicely-worded theories and wildly-imagined speculations. Actions most often prove futile and abortive, not because they were not backed by good theories but because there was no sincerity of purpose behind them. Those who want to transform the modern civilization into something better or give it a wiser direction, should ask themselves if they are sincere in their motives. Some time back it was said that the Disarmament Conference would fail, because the Great Powers feared that it would succeed. World peace is still beyond the reach of human vision, because many of those who talk about it are in readiness for a world-war. Any theory is good enough for the sincere souls who want to apply that for the good of others without having any personal end in view. For, if there is at all anything wrong in the theory, it is bound to be revealed in the course of action; and all our theories and ideas pass through the process of evolution as we apply them in life. There have been many theories in every field of action as to how to better the condition of the world, but why is it that the world is still, as it were, in a retrograde condition? It is because the theories were offered not really for the betterment of the world, but for the justification of the actions of the authors themselves. And if there was any thing good in those theories, that was lost as the theories were not applied to action by earnest persons. An ounce of practice is better than tons of words. Earnest souls who feel for the present hard condition of the world should show by their life and action that they are sincere in their feelings. If the economic sufferings of millions of people all over the world prove distressing to any one,

he should by his sacrifice show that he really feels for others. The sacrifice of a handful of really sincere souls will move the stony heart of those who are responsible for the present economic crisis or are in a position to remove it. Even a dozen of persons in any country sincerely feeling the inhuman cruelties that are perpetrated in times of war, can check the growth of war-spirit in their country. For, good is no less contagious than evil. If disease is catching, no less so is health. A particle of good thing contains a potentiality to fight against a mass of evil. For it gathers strength in the course of action.

V

If we analyse the forces that have been in operation to bring about the present condition of the world, one thing, which seems to be the main cause of evil is that man is guided more by selfishness, sometimes of the abject type, than any idea of self-sacrifice and altruism. But whatever might have been the law in the early stages of the evolution of life on earth, the human society is fundamentally based on self-sacrifice rather than on gross self-interest; on the spirit of man's readiness to protect his weaker brethren rather than on the application of the theory of the survival of the fittest. The sacrifice of the mother makes the life of the child possible on earth; self-sacrifice of the head of a family is responsible for the peace among its different members. The greater the self-sacrifice of an individual, the higher the type of man he will prove himself to be and the greater will be his influence over others. It is by gradual self-sacrifice and suppression of ego-centric ideas that man evolves in the scale of humanity, and when the extinction of the self or ego is complete,

man becomes Divine. It is by sacrificing himself at the altar of humanity that Sakyamuni became the Buddha and it is for this reason that he has been deified by the posterity in spite of himself.

But nowadays due to the influence of too much secularism, self-interest is preached and taken as the law of life. And once one is given to self-seeking and widening the scope of one's selfishness, there is no knowing where one will stop. This is the reason of the ridiculous situation that can be experienced nowadays that a millionaire rolls in luxury and superfluity while his next-door neighbour dies of starvation. It is true that all cannot be expected to be guided by altruistic ideas,—that is at best a utopia to hope for. But the ideal life lived even by a few will change the present valuation of things and keep the spirit of self-aggrandisement in check and within a harmless limit. A nation will not altogether give up exploiting another nation weaker than itself so long as there is a scope for that; but can we not expect a state of things when the exploiting nation will consider the misery of the exploited one and keep its hunger and greed within a reasonable control? It is because individuals become avaricious, the nation also becomes a prey to the greed for greater and greater wealth and power, though that might cost the very life of another nation. If the life of individuals be controlled, actions of the nation will be automatically controlled. And that is possible only by the influence of the life of the best and the noblest in the society. So long as man will be given to self-indulgence and will make self-enjoyment the law of life, the present state of things must continue. The Upanishad says that our senses have got an out-going tendency and it is by checking this that a man becomes

divine. In the same way, by making self-control and self-sacrifice the law of the society we can bring down heaven on earth. Otherwise peace on earth is as impossible to expect as to have one's fingers unburnt though placed in a fire.

VI

And we must arrive at a correct decision as to the goal of human life. For, on that will depend all actions of individuals, the society and the nation. We shall banish God and religion (we mean religion of a higher type, freed from all dogmatism and orthodox bigotry) from the life of our own and that of the society and expect things that presuppose belief in them,—that cannot be. Those who have given real impetuses to the world towards peace and blessedness, have always been Men of God. It is they who have been the beacon-light to humanity. But we forget the lessons of their life and bemoan the lot brought on by our own wilful ignorance.

Unless the realization of God and the higher Self is universally taken as the goal of human aspiration—however imperfectly that ideal may be realized—human society will never be transformed. For, where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. Man who seeks to find his higher Self will naturally attune his actions to a higher code of conduct, and his influence will automatically spread over the whole society.

It is very often said that organized religion has proved a failure in this respect. But religious organization is not an airy something—it is composed of individuals whose actions are responsible for the good or the bad influence it exerts on the society. And organized religions are bound to fail, to judge by the highest standard, for in it there will be, in the very nature of things,

persons who are not equally earnest about God. And the farther away in time from a Prophet we live, the less will be the influence of his life upon us. Those who put blame to organized religions, owe it to themselves to live a better religious life, if they do not altogether deny the utility of religion. If

they, by their earnest endeavours, realize the real essence of religion in their life, even by their silence they will work wonders, and their influence will be of untold benefit to the entire humanity. And the greatest service to the world will be done by those who can succeed in seeing Truth face to face.

ARMOUR OF LIGHT

BY NICHOLAS ROERICH

Verily those are blind, who do not want to see!

During the practical studies in Roman Law, our old professor once gave us a thesis on the prosecution of slander. Discussing this subject we came to the conclusion that slander and defamation, in their essence, were not prosecuted sufficiently. And we asked the professor why the statements of false facts were not prosecuted under any of the laws. I remember how the kind-hearted professor smiled and raising up his hands, exclaimed, "But then practically nine-tenth of mankind would be in jail."

These dreams of students to protect humanity from lies and falsehood often come back to memory. It seems that the very accumulation of circumstances destructive to humanity nowadays indicates what attention should be paid to the vast oceans of false inventions, which are mostly directed towards evil.

None of the contemporary laws, if even they were to try to stop the harmful slander, have sufficient power to counteract the whispering of lies. Someone may say that such lies are identical to slander, but in fact a great many of evil whispers would not come under the section of slander, and still would be

the source of spreading the most harmful consequences. If even we would try not to pay attention to every lie, which like birds people chirp light-mindedly, not realizing what terrible verdicts are often passed in irresponsible twittering in drawing rooms,—even if we would not pay attention to this, the essential harm caused, would not diminish. But besides this irresponsible chirping, there has grown in the world a multitude of consciously false inventions, which have the only and fully intentional aim, to cause harm by dissension and devastation.

If we would put on record all the instances of harmful falsehood, which we meet daily, this would make a huge "book of evil"; also on the stage sometimes is shown the making of picklock-keys, thus imprinting upon the minds of weak-willed spectators all sorts of harmful ideas. To record such malicious inventions of the mind, would be harmful in itself; but one should from time to time give oneself the trouble to ponder about the colossal amount of lies parading in life, which destroy on their path most valuable and often irreplaceable possibilities.

People now often come out from

temples, after most calling and uplifting sermons, rejuvenated only for new slander. Now by most touching psalms the soul becomes encouraged only to whisper evil. The best heroism of dramas now results often in paroxysms of suspicion. And does not even prayer become a threat? Is this not so? And is this good?

The snake that kills through its poison need not be of a large size. The coral-snake and viper are small. And the poison of even a small scorpion may be fatal.

The deceiver dreams of cheating. The traitor lives on treason. The coward is tormented by horrors. Everyone in his way. "Tell me of what you think and I will tell you who you are."

Certainly, if laws are to protect the safety of citizen, then they should be adequate to counteract slander and lies. And when humanity sees that the torrent of evil is so inventively increasing, then it would be strange to fight these giants of evil by out-of-date ancient Roman Law, or the Codex Justiniani or even by the Codex of Napoleon, whom many of the present law-givers imitate.

If evil has created new formulæ, then the counteractions must also be adequately innovated. If every liar would realize that he is not only like a winged sparrow chirping, but does something already foreseen by the criminal law, he will think twice whether his beloved evil-whispering will not cost him too much.

It is quite natural that the increased number of blackmails and kidnapping of children in America resulted in enforcing corresponding laws. Probably at this hour Lindbergh will smile sadly, realizing that this reinforced law so far has not helped him. On the contrary, after the enforcing of the new law, he suffered from renewed blackmail which

came like a scoffing. Does not such cruel mockery prove how the evil has grown and how the legal measures against it are already too late?

Is this not like a gangrene, which the knife of the surgeon tries to follow up in vain? Do we not come again to the same solution, which had already been proposed by us also for other domains of life? Is it not high time to introduce without delay in all schools, from the earliest forms, the foundations of practical Ethics?

Unfortunately this most essential subject is regarded now as something abstract, of that which it is not even customary to speak, because it would be considered as something antiquated, not of proper social standing and would call forth the severe scoffing of all ignor-amuses. But the ancient beautiful conception of "Ethics" is not guilty in itself; we are guilty because we have made all discussions about good blissful things inadmissible in our social life.

We all are guilty of having clad the life-giving foundations of ethics into a boring grey toga and allowing evil-whisperers to use the most significant pages of human vocabulary. Is not in our social life enthusiasm, this radiant flame of the heart, considered as something unfit and childish? Praise and admiration, these flowers of the Beautiful Garden are almost considered a sign of bad breeding. And adoration, instead of its inspiring significance, takes the form of conventional hypocrisy—and is admitted as such.

Well brought-up children should ask for nothing, should strive to nothing and should dull their creative strivings, following blindly that standard of these educators, to whom in their turn no one ever taught anything blissful and constructive. And there are many such pseudo-educators!

Dusty are the grey togas in which we

have enwrapped Ethics and every high creativeness. And the latter have been replaced by accusations, ill-whispering and the spreading of falsehood. It is strange to witness how faces brighten up at the very mention of an untrue story. How then the vocabulary becomes enriched and even the most silent guest turns into a brilliant speaker. And often his brilliancy increases when he is certain that he lies.

A liar is inventive also in suspicions. Judging by himself, and entering this dark ocean he feels himself as a fish in water. His malicious experience encourages him, because he knows that all his attacks shall remain unpunished. And should you remind him of the text of the Gospel: "with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you," he will only wave his hand self-contentedly and will say: "Après nous-le deluge!" ("after us let there be the deluge!")

His bad conscience will whisper to him, that his own self-defence lies only in evil, and without evil he shall, like the fish out of water, lose his vitality. In this basic malice, in his suspicions, in his desire to blacken all, is also expressed a bottomless atheism.

The liar has before him no Highest Image, before which he would become ashamed. His poor imagination can show him no vista of his own future, when he will be called upon to give an account of his actions, or rather when he will put himself in the place he will have deserved.

It is a wise motto: "Act, as you would like others to act towards yourself!"

But for this purpose one must have at least some imagination. And such imagination should be brought up, in order that it may guide beyond the limitations of to-day. People are very much afraid of illness, poverty and

every kind of misfortune. The most impertinent liars and slanderers often turn out to be most primitive fetishists. They hazily know of some unlucky signs but they do not want to hear that the reverse side is simply the return of their own boomerang, Karma!

Everyone who has watched the throwing of boomerangs will remember, how sometimes an unexperienced and careless thrower afterwards will try screamingly to avoid being hit by his own weapon, which mercilessly surprises and strikes him with mathematical accuracy, with the force he himself used. Experienced boomerang throwers call the victim, first of all, a fool. Verily, there is no better denomination for the malicious ignoramuses, than fools!

The ignorant evil-whisperers, are above all, fools! Whatever faked gilded words they shall invent, whatever they would do to please their naive listener with disgusting narratives, they will still remain fools! Their every lie accumulates with perfect accuracy and at an unexpected moment will strike them the harder. Every garden grows, whether dark or light.

It is indeed unbelievable that our earth should have existed innumerable years in order that now the necessity has become undeferrable to cry out against the immense evil caused by lies! But it is sufficient to take any newspaper, and events of a single day will prove what terrible limit has been reached by humanity in trying to harm each other.

As children are reprimanded: "Do not fight during play," so one wants to advise the grown-up: "Try to pass a day without harming each other!"

It seems that on such a day, which humanity would pass without infliction of mutual evil, some great Miracle must occur, that some beautiful healing possi-

bilities would descend as naturally as sometimes descends a kind smile of the heart or a fertile shower on the dry fields.

Once a woman told a priest: "When I prayed, the sacred Image smiled at me." And the wise priest answered: "Your heart smiled and the smile of the Saviour responded!" Is it possible that this saving smile of truth, the smile of blissful giving and self-sacrifice is now already impossible? Is it possible that egoism, this nearest relative of a lie, has actually become the victor?

No, this is impossible—since the oldest times there have been given wise Commandments.

Not in boredom of Ethics distorted by non-understanding, but in joy of Ethics, transmuted by the fire of the heart, let the children, from very infancy, from youth proceed by new paths of great co-operation with creative Bliss!

History gives us remarkable examples, how often not only the children's yet unspoiled mind, was transmuted, through the art of thinking, but how even the apparently most inveterate criminals became enlightened. Such examples of enlightened criminals have always been given by great Ordain-

ments; thus nothing is lost. Consequently one fortunately may reach the best results by enlightened consciousness and not by mere threat of law.

A scholar once told me, we have no more formulae. What nonsense! All most beautiful formulae are kept in full vitality. Not much valour is required to turn to these beautiful and blissful formulae. This purifying teaching is called the science of the heart. Of course this annunciation of Good Will should be clad in garments of Light; as the Apostle Paul ordained: "Let us array ourselves in Armours of Light!"

In such light-bearing garments, in radiant armours, amongst dazzling torches of the heart, it will not be difficult to keep awake throughout the long night and to await the Dawn. No one ever said that festivals are not needed. On the contrary, the true Festival of Enlightenment, the Festival of Labour and Truth, are most inspiring! And how easily this sacred Festival is possible from the simplest hut to palaces!

Let us cover everything, even the most dark and the most evil, by creative constructiveness, which will bring to humanity the real Festival of the Spirit. By this we abide!

SANKARA AND HIS MODERN CRITICS

BY V. SUBRAHMANYA IYER, B.A.

(Concluded from the last issue)

As Dr. Otto rightly holds, philosophy in the modern sense of the word is inseparable from science. And if Sankara's thought be not 'scientific' he cannot be a philosopher. We have,

therefore, first to ascertain whether he is a scientific thinker. In making this enquiry we shall necessarily be led to the question of the place of intuition, intellect and Buddhi in his philosophy.

By science, we generally understand that kind of knowledge that relates to the acquisition of power over nature and the consequent achievements which have a bearing on human life and which are often proving more baneful than beneficial to mankind* We also think of science as being concerned with the pursuit of Truth. It no doubt deals with both. But when we speak of it with reference to philosophy, we are concerned with the latter aspect—namely, the pursuit of truth and particularly the method of such pursuit.

The well-known scientific thinker, Whitehead says, "The greatest invention of the nineteenth century was the invention of *the method* of invention. . . In order to understand an epoch, we can neglect all the details of change, such as railways, telegraphs, radios, spinning-machines, synthetic dyes, etc. We must concentrate on the method itself. This is the real novelty, which has broken up the foundations of the old civilization." An equally good authority, Karl Pearson says, "The unity of all science consists in its *method*, not in its *material*. The man who classifies facts of any kind whatever, who sees their mutual relations and describes their consequences, is applying the scientific method and is a man of science. . . It is not the facts themselves which form science, but the method in which they are dealt with. . . To truly apprehend any object is to apprehend the totality of its relations. The discovery of this totality is the goal of science."

One of the most modern scientists says, "We have already pointed out that Science is independent of any

* When science is divorced from morality, it is put to diabolical uses. But the pursuit of philosophy especially of the highest kind which seeks a truth higher than that which science gives, demands moral training as a pre-condition.

particular order of facts. It takes the knowable universe for its subject; it deals with psychical as well as physical processes, with man as well as nature; it has to do with everything to which its method can be applied. What makes a study scientific is not, of course, the nature of the things with which it is concerned, but the *method* with which it deals with these things. A study of a skylark is not necessarily zoological." (Thompson's *Introduction to Science*.)

It is the method of science that is said to be vital to philosophy by modern philosophers from some of whom I have quoted already. Both these subjects have for their object the ascertainment of Truth. Science studies the world of experience in compartments. Its materials come from the sense-world or rather the objective world. What therefore characterizes first the scientific method is that it seeks a knowledge which depends upon the object itself, not upon ourselves, that is, upon our own feeling, wish or imagination as for instance in poetry. Next, the knowledge so derived from the objects of the phenomenal world is tested and verified. This method is not something accessible exclusively to those that are called scientists though only a few know how to apply it. Mr. Bertrand Russell says, "This method is in essence remarkably simple . . . but has been acquired with great difficulty . . . and is still employed only by a minority." Nor is it new to the world. It is as old as the man that was first troubled by what is known as doubt.

The two terms *Purushatantra* and *Vastutantra* used by Sankara indicate his method most clearly. The knowledge of the Ultimate Reality, Brahman, depends, like that of objects in this world, upon Brahman itself. Its knowledge is of the character of *Vastutantra* knowledge. And this we find at the

very threshold of his *Sutra Bhashya*. In other words, the knowledge of Brahman being dependent upon the Vastu (Brahman), does not depend upon the knower (Purusha). Sankara says in the *Gita Bhashya* and elsewhere that Brahman, to attain which is the aim of his philosophy, is an existing entity, like an apple in the palm of one's own hand, and that in so far as it is an existing entity its investigation is amenable to the methods applicable to the world of Pratyaksha (cognition). This is made more explicit in his commentary on the *Gita*, (chapter VI, verse 26). Here, he says that one ought to begin with a study of the phenomenal world and convince oneself of what the nature of all such objects is and then proceed to a knowledge of the other part of Existence, the Self or Consciousness considering that also to be a 'Vastu.' Here is a close translation of his very words: "By convincing oneself of the illusoriness of sense-objects through an investigation into their real nature and by cultivating indifference to such sense-objects the mind can be restrained from such objects and brought to the Self wherein to abide firmly." Now what does the 'investigation' into the 'real' nature of sense-objects indicate, if it does not mean a *scientific* study of the phenomenal world? It enforces the elimination of all personal factors, and emphasizes the entire dependence of all true knowledge upon the object of enquiry. This is further corroborated by the conditions laid down in his 'Sadhana Chatushtaya,' such as those of '*Iha amutra phalabhoga viraga.*' In fact, it is such an investigation as was anticipated by Sankara more than a thousand years ago that has led modern scientists like Sir James Jeans, and even those like Bertrand Russell, to the view that what we know is confined only to appearances, in the

objective universe. This as well as the modern scientific discovery of Max Planck that no such thing exists as a causal relation explains best what Sankara meant by Maya. These are not mere theories, but hard facts, as real as the rest of the world we live in. Sankara only goes one step further and observes that what does not exist or is not real appears to exist or to be real. This is a wonder! This is *Maya*. And in speaking of Maya he only states a fact which Dr. Otto seems unable to see. If causal relation as such does not exist in reality, the question regarding the 'origin' of Maya or Avidya has no meaning. This is what 'scientific' investigation leads to. What science reveals as the 'real' nature of the sense-world or the objective world, philosophy coordinates with the knowledge of the nature of consciousness (self). Those, on the other hand, who do not make a deep study of the objective world and who, therefore, do not know its *real* nature can never understand what Maya or Avidya is; much less can they ever get rid of their Avidya or Ignorance, so as to attain Brahman. Now, what prepares the modern student to realize this fact is what is called Scientific Method. Sankara, in his *Bhashya* says, as indicated above, that the method of investigation adopted in regard to external objects is applicable to the investigation of Brahman to the extent to which Brahman is an existing entity. And to the extent to which Brahman is imperceptible to the senses though existing, the same method has to be applied but modified so as to meet the requirements of philosophy or metaphysics, as we shall presently see.

The elimination of the 'Purusha' or personal factor having been considered so far, we shall turn to the other important feature of this method, that known as verification. In the absence

of verification, thought is no more than speculation or *hypothesis*. In Europe, so far as the reaching of the ultimate reality is concerned the attempts are mere guesses. Hence is the contempt of philosophy and science that men of the Dr. Otto school exhibit. But Sankara as a *philosopher* has applied 'scientific verification' to his doctrines. This is unknown to Europe.

Bergsons, Croces and all theologians like Dr. Otto may ignore the intellect or science as an indispensable factor of the means of attaining to their ultimate reality. But their ultimate is not Samyag-jnanam—Perfect Knowledge of the All. If their ultimate were Samyag-jnanam, how could they omit or dispense with even an iota of human knowledge, of whatever nature it be—be it science, religion or anything else? Brahman is not only all things but all thoughts. Brahman is here with us, outside as well as inside. As Sankara says, all efforts to get at truth in the internal or in the external world, the subjective or the objective world, are only efforts to attain Brahman.

Verification in philosophy is naturally applied not only to the phenomenal world, the province of science, but also to that of metaphysics, to consciousness or the perceiving self. The scientific method applied to philosophy as a whole is called 'Avasthatraya,' the states of waking, dream and deep sleep—a method, let me repeat, yet unknown to enlightened Europe or America which is often so presumptuous as to think that the world outside those continents knows no more of philosophy than they themselves do. The 'Avasthas,' it must be noted, are studied as phenomena scientifically. Avasthatraya simply tells us that any investigation based upon partial data leads to defective or imperfect inferences and that which is based upon a totality of data yields

valid conclusions. Western philosophy considers the *experiences* of the *waking* state alone as important. Hence it cannot arrive at what is called *perfect* knowledge or Brahmajnanam. But the most valuable feature of Avasthatraya is that it applies the scientific principle of verification to the metaphysical knowledge of Self also, which no European or American system does. In those countries philosophy is still theory or speculation. This peculiar approach to philosophic problems has been possible till now to a greater degree in India than elsewhere.* For it demands an amount of '*self-elimination*' which does not seem to appeal to minds in other parts of the world. The self-elimination needed in science has to be carried to its perfection in attaining truth in Sankara's system. And it is this method that he calls the rational or logical method applied to philosophy. (*Vide* 2. 1. 6.) For Sankara, Brahman is an absolute fact only because the existence of the entity, Brahman, is proved beyond all doubt. (*Vide* Sankara's Com. Brih. Upa. I. 4. 10, for instance). The moment we fully know the real character of what is perceived as the Avasthas we realize Brahman. All that science has to do is to press its method forward into the realm of philosophy 'till the goal is reached.' Rightly says a German philosopher: "Science is potential philosophy and philosophy is science in *actu*."

Science is sometimes discredited as a stepping stone to philosophy on the supposition that scientific enquiry is possible without moral discipline while

* Here I must say that in having brought to the notice of the Western world the importance of 'Avasthatraya' from a philosophic standpoint in his book, *Vedanta or Science of Reality*, Mr. K. A. Krishnaswami Iyer of Bangalore has rendered a service deserving of the highest praise.

true philosophy is inseparable from the highest morality. Persons without moral culture may possess the highest scientific acumen. This no doubt is partly true. For it is the science of such men that has caused harm to the world. But one that has read any work on scientific principles, in our own day, could see that scientific thinking needs the help of great virtues, such as absolute truthfulness, dispassion, patience, non-attachment to personal views or self-elimination and the like. The well-known Grammar of Science of Karl Pearson, for instance, emphasizes their importance. When such is the need for moral discipline in studying any single branch of science how much more should the need be for it in philosophy which is the 'completion' of all sciences? Sankara says in the *Gita*: "To one whose mind is subject to the passions of desire and aversion, there cannot indeed arise a knowledge of things as they *really* are, even of the *external* (sense) world. And it needs no saying that to a man whose *Buddhi* is overpowered by passion, there cannot arise a knowledge of the inner-most Self." He recognized the fact, as the best scientists now do, that even for scientific investigation of the sense-objects, we need not only intellectual (*Buddhi*) acumen, but also moral virtues.

Without the qualification of 'Sadhana Chatushtaya,' it is impossible to approach the philosophic study of *Brahma Vidya*. It is true that men without such qualifications do talk and write on *Brahman*. But what such men say or write would be either a piece of imagination of their own, or a repetition of what has been said elsewhere. For, let us remember the term 'Vastutantra' which means that a knowledge of *Brahman* comes from *Brahman* only. And I am only repeating here what is said in *Kathopanishad*,—'Brahman can

be taught only by a *knower* of *Brahman*.' What has to be borne in mind is that without the requisite moral equipment, the mental or rather intellectual acuteness needed for the pursuit of the highest philosophical truth is an impossibility which is one of the reasons why Europe, till it realizes the full importance of self-elimination cannot attain to the highest philosophical level but has to be satisfied with mysticism or theology or a positivistic attitude. Western science and particularly philosophy must till then be only speculative in this respect.

It is said that science and philosophy have only theoretical value inasmuch as they are within the province of the intellect. Whereas mysticism and religion, they say, have an actual and higher value because they are based upon feeling and intuition. The controversy regarding the relative merits of faith (or feeling or intuition) and thought (or reason or intellect) has gone on for ages. Even in India, we find the largest number saying, 'Why should we worry ourselves about intellectual enquiries or disquisitions, while we can rely on our feeling that we are in actual touch with God, who is the highest Reality?' The intellectualists have, however, not given up their contention. Recently, a school of philosophers has tried to ease the situation by emphasizing what is known as the doctrine of values. They say that there are different kinds of values in life. Some men seek truth-values, and some seek feeling, aesthetic, i.e., religious or mystic values; others, economic values and so forth. To every man that which he values most is dearest and highest. The mystics say that they have little concern with intellectual values and therefore they care less for truth-values, than for other values. It is 'feeling' or aesthetic-value that they esteem most and seek. On

the other hand, scientists and philosophers may hold the latter values inferior, or even all values to be equal. But this philosophy of values proceeds upon an assumption which though it holds good in the practical world, fails in dealing with Ultimate Reality. It supposes that thought or thinking is separable from Being or Existence. In fact, every kind of thinking implies Being. But unverified thinking is certainly unreliable. It is such unverified thought that is said to be 'theoretic' or purely intellectual. A divorce between feeling and thought appears possible only in the lower stages of knowledge but not in the highest. In India, we have recognized their basic unity, and we do not, therefore, hold that science and philosophy are 'theoretic,' *after the verification stage is passed.*

In India, mystic intuition or Yogic experience has been weighed in the balance of philosophy and found wanting. What have the Yogis and mystics to say to the questions: How do we know that what has been realized by them is the *highest Existence*? Where is the assurance that what they have realized as God, or the Ultimate Reality, may not in the future be replaced by something different?

Having seen the Sankara attitude towards the scientific method, we shall turn to the other topic as to whether philosophy leading to the highest truth or perfect knowledge is a matter of intuition or intellect or Buddhi. Intuition* is defined as immediate knowledge gained without the help of reason or intellect. The word reason itself has been variously interpreted. In Germany

* Kant's place in the world of philosophy is too well-known to need any words of appreciation here from me. But while he has done the greatest service to philosophic thought by analysing the intellect, he has misled the world by trying to effect a divorce between intellect and intuition.

it is interpreted as either 'vernunft' or 'verstand.' The German thinkers have rightly started the enquiry. But they have not pushed it so far as Sankara. To avoid ambiguity, we shall use the word 'intellect' as distinguished from 'reason.'

While Dr. Otto tells us that Sankara bases his system of thought on intuition, we find that the *very first* topic that Sankara deals with in his *Sutra Bhashya* is his repudiation of the position that Brahmajnanam is based upon intuition, *i.e.*, knowledge independent of reasoning.

Now Sankara says that Brahman is in a way known to every one. But Brahman is held to be of different natures by different persons. And the object of philosophic enquiry is to ascertain the 'true nature' of this Brahman. In other words, every one has an intuition regarding Brahman or the Ultimate Reality, but the intuitions differ and contradict each other and are fallible. The ascertainment of the 'real nature' of Brahman is to be made by 'Jijnasa' or enquiry. This Jijnasa or enquiry is the work of the intellect, of science or philosophy, not of intuition or mysticism which repudiates reason. This enquiry is similar, as has been pointed out, to the investigation into the nature of all existing objects including those perceived by the senses, in so far as Brahman is an 'existing' entity. If, therefore, one be not an expert in enquiring into the nature of sense-objects, how will his mind be fit for investigating matters beyond the province of the senses? Sankara says in the *Sutra Bhashya* that in all such investigations 'Yukti' or reason, is indispensable. (*Vide* 2.1.4.) Intuition as providing the matter for investigation and intellect or scientific enquiry as being the means for removing the errors in which intuition is involved are

both indispensable. What Sankara himself says in 2.1.6. *S.B.*, is that 'Anubhava' or 'Sákshátkára' of Brahman has for its 'Anga' or limb 'Tarka' or 'Yukti.' Sankara puts the same most clearly when he declares that intuition divorced from reason gives us *erroneous* knowledge. "If knowledge springs up in the mind of itself . . . it is mere error. *True* knowledge on the other hand is produced *by the means of true* knowledge and is conformable to its object." And what is it that tests this conformity? Now that which determines truth from falsehood which are both mixed up in intuition is what is called *Buddhi*, for which the nearest equivalent in the English language may be Pure Reason, or better still the Vedantic Reason, inasmuch as the Pure Reason of the German philosophers differs from the Vedantic Reason.

Intuition is no doubt the basis of religion, theology and mysticism. But intuition by itself is a mixture of the true and the false. The truth has to be discriminated by the intellect or science or philosophy. Mysticism which relies upon intuition solely, has a fallible basis, as is evident from its contradictions.

Here, I may perhaps invite your kind attention to the fact that the word *Buddhi* has been translated into the English language by at least seventeen different words. Intuition, as translated till now, seems to have for its equivalent seven different English words. There may be a justification for using so many of them, but they never lead those that rely solely upon translations to the fact that, at bottom, it is *Buddhi* that is meant. *Buddhi* is rendered into intuition in some places and intellect or reason, in others, according to the whims of the translator. The confusion resulting therefrom has been enormous. For, many a modern writer, and many

a professor in Indian Universities has thought intuition or mysticism but not philosophy to be the goal of Vedanta. And all such modern philosophers of Europe as have relied upon intuition subordinating intellect to it have been characterized only as mystics. For in the West there are two classes of mystics not only religious but also philosophic. But in the Advaita Vedanta of Sankara there is no kind of mysticism whatever, though it is common for people to call anything mystic which they do not understand. Sankara admits the existence of intuitional knowledge in every man, but holds that it needs to be purged of its errors by the intellect in attaining Truth. The joint effort of both leads to Truth, which is perceived by *Buddhi* alone, which is then called *Maha Dhi* or *Maha Buddhi*.

Is Anubhava the same as intuition, though it has been translated as such? The expression 'Anubhava Avasanam' indicates that Anubhava and Brahman are not different from each other. What leads to or reveals this Anubhava is *Buddhi*. Intuition is defined as a means of the knowledge of Brahman. It implies a *duality* of knower and known. Brahmanubhava is non-dual. Europe and America do not seem to have yet developed concepts corresponding to *Buddhi* and Anubhava, which are unfortunately rendered into words which only cause confusion. As regards intuition what the author* of one of the most modern histories of philosophy says is:—

"It was unwise to offer intuition in place of thought as it would be to correct the fancies of youth with the fairy tales of childhood. Let us correct our errors forward, not backward. To say that the world suffers from too much intellect would require the courage of a

* Will Durant.

mad man. The romantic protest against thinking from Rousseau and Chateaubriand to Bergson and Nietzsche and James, has done its work: we will agree to dethrone the Goddess of Reason if we are not asked to relight the candles before the ikon of intuition. Man exists by instinct, but progresses by intelligence." Or, to quote another well-known modern German philosopher, Windleband: "Mystic intuition which forswears a conceptual knowledge of its subject also ends in picturesque language and glowing imagination, but it yields no firm and distinct results; as history repeatedly teaches us, it merely loosens the soil for substantial dogmatism to sow its seed and reap the fruits in its own domination." Finally let me invite your attention to the words of a great European philosopher held in the highest esteem in India also, I mean Schopenhauer: "An endeavour is being made to smuggle palpable sophisms in place of proofs, appeal is made to *intuition*. But thought, that is say, the reasoned knowledge, judicial deliberation and sincere (proper) demonstration—in a word, the proper and normal use of reason is disliked; a supreme contempt is proclaimed for rational philosophy; meaning by that all the series of linked and logical deductions, which characterize the work of previous philosophers." "There is only one method of reaching truth which brings the result of intuition into accord with logic and the study of facts. This is the positive method which admits only *rational* inductions as valid." Does this not read almost like a verbatim translation of a part of Sankara whom Schopenhauer had never read.

When Sankara in his commentary on Gaudapada argues the doctrine of 'Ajati' or the unreal nature of the causal relation from a mere investiga-

tion into the character of the phenomenal world, it is clear that only one who does not understand Sankara would feel puzzled as to the origin of Avidya or of Maya. If Maya or Avidya is the world and if men of Dr. Otto's school like Eckhart wish to connect Brahman or even God with the creation of it, they do so at the cost of verifiable fact. If Sankara does not answer such questions, it is because he is too scientific a philosopher to think of palming off falsehoods as truths. For, which philosopher has seen God actually creating the world? Or who can prove that it has been created at all? let alone the ineffectual and childish surmises of the logician. Such is the mistake often made by scholars like Dr. Otto. In fact, there can be no understanding of Sankara till one's mind is purged of all misconceptions regarding causality. It is only the non-scientific or non-philosophic mind that is oppressed in a thousand ways by the bugbear of the causal relation.

Lastly, there is an impression not only in Europe, but also in parts of India that philosophy can be divorced from life and that therefore, people ought to fall back upon what they conceive to be more real or of higher value, *i. e.*, what they find either in religion, in mysticism or in applied science. It is needless to go very far to explode this fallacy. From the day the word philosopher came into use, the world's curiosity has ever been to know the life led by one called philosopher. What we admire most in a Socrates, a Plato, a Kant or a Sankara is not merely the intellectual worth of their teachings but also the moral and rational content of their lives. It is the lives of great men that remind us that we can make our lives sublime. What has been possible for them, we feel, is possible for us. Life is inseparable from

thought. And in a true philosopher thought and life are both Brahman. There can be no contradiction in Brahman or Perfect Being. And perfection in Thought is attained only through philosophy or Tattva Vichara.

Further, philosophy is meant for this world and this life; for one who actually lives in the midst of Samsara and ignorance, not for one who has no sorrows or worries or who is wise. He who has no doubts or troubles or who cares not for this mortal body, needs no help of philosophy. The moment one steeped in sorrows or fears realizes the highest truth, one sees everything including his body as Brahman, the Ever-Existent, and that there is no such thing as sorrow or death. It is for this reason that a Jnanin living in this world is said to be a 'Jivannukta.' And it is for this that men wallowing in Samsara or ignorance seek Brahman. Sankara has put this fact in the clearest language in his commentary on the fourth Sutra of the very first Pada. But he is most emphatic in 3.3.32. where he says; "The passage 'That art Thou' cannot be interpreted to mean 'Thou wilt be That' after thou hast died!". Further, the Upanishads repeatedly say that the realization of Brahman comes 'here' and 'now' but not after death as Dr. Otto imagines through sheer ignorance of the most fundamental doctrine of Vedanta as taught by Sankara.

"There is no ethic in Vedanta" is another observation of his. I do not think that Dr. Otto was serious when he wrote this. When the golden rule, "Do unto others as you would wish them to do unto you," from which an entire code of ethics is developed, has its foundation laid in the Upanishads, in the words, 'That Thou art,' it is impossible to think that Dr. Otto knew not this fact. What is more, Dr. Otto

was in India. He must have seen how deeply the entire life of its people is influenced by the teachings of the highest ethical doctrines. May we ask, how many Europeans have shown the other cheek when they were smitten on the one, as taught by the most ethical of teachers, Christ? If the Europeans have not learnt this lesson after two thousand years of training, should we Hindus not doubt the utility of any mystic ethic of which Dr. Otto may be proud? Comparisons are always odious.

It is true that Sankara harps upon the sorrows of life and Samsara. But he does so because it is they that make men most earnestly think and seek truth, be it scientific, be it philosophic. Sorrows are among the best incentives to progress in general in the world as it is constituted.

To put the whole matter briefly, Sankara's Vedanta aims at an explanation of existence in its entirety. But he who would be a truth-seeker ought to be a hero, and ought not to stop till the goal is reached. If one cannot reach it, one has to be satisfied with whatever is possible for him to attain. If everything is Brahman all attempts made by men in all ages and in all places to get at It by looking behind what is seen at first sight, are only attempts, though at different levels, of attaining the truth of Brahman. Hence a follower of Sankara has no quarrel with any school of thinkers. He looks upon those who differ from him as comrades or as brother pilgrims proceeding to the same summit of truth. And all men working in any capacity in life even outside the field of philosophy, he knows, are working towards the same end, though under the impression that they are proceeding towards a different goal. The *Gita* says, "Men approach Me alone from different sides." Though we have here had to defend Sankara

against the misunderstanding of critics we know that they are with us and that we are with them. Such clashes will only draw Vedantins nearer each other, and make them seek each other's good. The aim of Vedantic teaching is to make the knower of truth rejoice in working for the good of all. (*Sarvabhuta hite ratah*). For, all are Brahman.

"The philosophies (Darsanas) of different schools, contradicting one another, are the cause of making the world appear real and are as such full of partiality and aversion. . . . The Advaita being not inclined to partiality and aversion, and being therefore, *by nature all peace*, is the true philosophy of existence." (Sankara's Commentary, Mandukya Karika, IV. 87.)

If by science as applied to philosophy we understand, as the modern philosophers do, the scientific spirit in the pursuit of truth and the scientific method, and again if we understand by scientific method its two most essential features, (1) that of *eliminating all personal* (Purusha or Kartri) interests, making true knowledge dependent upon the Vastu itself, and (2) that of *verifying* our results by going back to life, *as a whole* (in the Avasthatraya) as is done in India, we find in Sankara one of the most scientific of philosophers. Europe has not yet seen the like of him.

Men of Dr. Otto's school discount science and philosophy. It is because they do not know what possibilities there are still in philosophy, yet unknown to them. We, students of

Sankara, shall not seek to teach them the self-delusion of mysticism or the word-juggling of scholasticism but shall present the method of attaining to the Ultimate Reality, Brahman, in the broadest daylight; by a method open to the criticism and scrutiny of the entire world, in any manner it likes. There is no secrecy in Sankara's Vedanta. It stands or falls by universally recognized tests or Truth.

At no time in the history of the world has mankind felt the need for the truth of Advaita more than it does at the present moment. As Swami Vivekananda once observed, "It has saved India twice already;" and the time has come for its application for the solution of the problems now confronting the world for a third time. The solution for all the differences and struggles between man and man in the political, economic and social life lies in the pursuit and realization of the truth that all are Brahman and that the well-being of the one is the well-being of the other, and the suffering of the one is the suffering of the other. To realize one's own Self in others and others in one's own Self—that is the message of the *Gita* which has drawn its inspiration from the Upanishads which has again been taught by Sankara, who as Dr. Otto quotes, is considered the greatest philosopher of India, but who as considered by Dr. Deussen is "one of the greatest philosophers of all times and countries." So let me wind up in the words of Swami Vivekananda, "Let the Lion of Vedanta roar."

IDEALS—AND FACTS IN EDUCATION

BY DR. MARIA MONTESSORI, M.D. (Rome), D.LITT., (Durham)

It is remarkable to observe how often the ideals of educationalists are at variance with educational facts. Many believe for instance that children should love study, do their exercises wholeheartedly and obey discipline; or again, that they should be free and happy in the joy of working, that family and school should be linked in close and harmonious co-operation. These ideals exist only in the adult's brain: they have no correspondence with reality.

In fact so tenaciously do many parents and teachers cling to these beautiful ideals that they often fail to realize that any problem is involved.

And yet this discrepancy between educational ideals and facts is a problem of major importance, one which cannot be solved simply by direct means and served up as a set of rules for guidance when educating the youthful mind, because at the root of the whole difficulty lies a further problem which is both social and moral. When once we have discovered the social and moral implications of, first, *the work natural to the child*, and second, *the reciprocal relations between adult and child*, suitable education will follow quite simply. Our first step towards understanding is to search out these implications.

What I am about to write consists of simple things. But it often happens that simple things and those that lie nearest to us are the last to be noticed; we have formed the habit of overlooking them.

We must take into consideration, separately, the adult and the child, particularly the work of the adult and that of the child, so that we may dis-

cover the essential difference between the two activities and whence comes the dissension that is the hidden cause of unconscious but real and deep-lying strife between adult and child, an obstacle to our happiness, a hindrance to our efforts in educating the child.

The adult has his own task of transforming the environment, an external matter in which his intelligence and will power have play: productive work brought about by man's activity directed towards conscious ends. From this activity arise man-made laws of order represented by the discipline to which the workers voluntarily submit. Then there are other laws which may almost be called the laws of adult work, such as division of labour which brings about specialization in production, and the adaptation of the individual worker to his work, the law of least effort, according to which man tries to produce as much as possible with a minimum of effort.

Now in the social environment of the adult everything does not go smoothly, there is competition and strife, men deprive others of their work and make others work instead of them.

Such is, one might say, the atmosphere in which the adult works. The child lives in all families close to the adult, but we know very well that he takes no part in the active life of the adult; he is a stranger to it all. This is quite apparent. But there is a matter of absolute and fundamental importance underlying what is so apparent, and it is this which has to be stressed. Not only is the child a stranger to our material world of external production, but we

really consider him as *extraneous to our social life*.

An extra-social being : what does that mean? A person who cannot take part in the work of society, one who becomes in consequence a disturber of the social order. This is the case with the child : he is that extra-social being who is a source of continual disturbance, wherever there is an adult producing, acting as adults do. The child is a disturber even in his own home.

This extra-social being is nevertheless essentially an active being ; it is precisely this activity, extraneous as it is to the social order, which renders him a disturber. So it is that the adult interferes, takes action, imposes passivity upon the child, or else relegates him to what is not actually a prison like that of grown-up disturbers, but something not very different—a school, where he is kept until he is capable of acting usefully in the adult's own world.

Up to that time the child, whose activity is disturbing, must live in complete submission to the orders of the adult. It is the adult who produces—he produces also for the child—it is he that is the Master. The child is the subordinate. It follows from this that what is lacking to the child is a social world of his own, a world in which he in his turn may be a producer, one in which his activities may be utilized.

For the child has work proper to himself ; his production is of immense, of vital importance ; he works to produce the man. From birth on he is at work upon his own transformation into an adult being.

Quite unlike the work done by the adult, this work of the child is unconsciously performed. Yet it is creative since through his own effort he brings into being the man latent within himself, the potential man. The perfection of the adult, and his normality, depend

upon the child's having been allowed to work freely, to carry out undisturbed his inner work, which however implies external activity. For it is not by ~~pondering~~, not by immobility, that the child creates the man. It is through activity manifesting itself indomitably, irresistibly, in the world without. The child who practises, moves and co-ordinates his own movements, acquires notions about the outer world, learns to speak, and to stand erect : little by little his intelligence reaches exact formation, till one recognizes the characteristics distinctive of its different stages at various ages. Therefore we say : the child does actually create the man.

Here we have the great question of humanity and of education : *the child's work and the reciprocal relations between adult and child*. The child is growing into a man through his own efforts and the power of growth within himself : such intimate aid it is not in our power to give. We are producers of things in the outer world, and it is only these things that we can furnish as aids. But this child who is creating the man to be, is creating independently of us in a world of his own. The important matter is that he should be allowed full opportunity for complete development, that he may create a man who is strong, well-balanced. Our task is to enable the child to *live*.

The guiding impulse is seen to be different in the work done by the child and that done by the man. The child is active that he may grow ; the adult, that he may produce. When we try to fit the child into our adult world, to force and squeeze him according to ideals we have formed of what his correct behaviour should be in order to give us the least amount of trouble, we are deceiving ourselves into believing we are doing our best for him while

actually we are distorting his development.

The work of the child is not guided by the intention to reach some external aim, its end and aim is action; to act, to continue to act as long as the inner self needs to satisfy its need of growth. So the external object is for the child merely a means, never an end. We have here a clear, well-defined, undeniable characteristic of the child's work.

The child must do all his work by himself. Here we have another truth. Who could ever help another to grow? Supposing growth to be fatiguing, who could lessen and relieve another's fatigue by co-operation?

Only if the adult sets obstacles does the child fight and defend himself. Almost all the sufferings of the child are due to this strife against the adult who has not understood him. The child works alone towards his own development, he does not stand in need of association or division of labour.

Thus the necessary law of external discipline which reigns in the field of adult production, has no part in the work of the child, for here there reigns another kind of discipline which is revealed to us through spontaneous

actions of the loftiest kind when the child has been placed in an environment favourable to his development.

If the child is to perform his tremendous task, how have we omitted to prepare for him an environment in which he may live? How is it that we have abandoned him, merely offered him hospitality in a world we have made expressly for ourselves? We are only bent on getting him to submit to us, to fit in with our convenient ideals, and we lose our tempers when he acts in self-defence. How does it happen that we have never once considered that each stage of life needs its own environment? For the child above all, there must be an environment free from disturbance; the child at work, though he needs companionship, is a solitary being, living the life of his own spirit. And who is to create an environment for him if not the adult? It is the adult who creates the outer environment.

That we should do this wisely is an educational necessity. Our part is to see that the child is free to do his own work in surroundings where he may develop himself. There we have the gist of the matter; the laying of the foundation stone of the new education.

MAHENDRA NATH GUPTA

BY SWAMI RAGHAVANANDA

(Continued from the last issue)

Mahendra Nath was inclined to the worship of the Formless God from the beginning and spoke of this to the Master. The Master encouraged him in that worship and gave him instructions accordingly. One day he took him to see

the white sheet of waters of Mati Seal's Jhil, to teach him how to successfully practise the Nirakara Dhyana—like a fish moving about in high glee unobstructed in a large sheet of water. But he asked him, (in tune with the truth of all

modes of worship, which is the present dispensation as preached by Sri Ramakrishna) to give up all sectarian and narrow outlook in looking upon other modes of worship as wrong. Then gradually he taught him the Worship of God with Forms (Sâkâra). So we find him teaching in July, 1883 : चार तीनाय बलद्धि, रूप—ईश्वरीय रूप मेनी, अविश्वास करी ना। रूप चाहे विश्वास करी। तारपर ये रूपटी भालवासी सेरूप ध्यान करी।

“Recognize the worship of God with Forms. He appears before the devotees in Forms carved out of Consciousness (चिन्मय).” He was broadening the base of his spiritual life in accordance with his own spiritual life—broad as the heavens and deep as the ocean. Again when sometime in 22nd October, 1882 (*Kathamrita*, Part III—3 Khanda, I) Mahendra in the course of his spiritual struggles was saying to his Master, “I find that in the beginning it is not easy to fix the mind in the Formless,” the Master at once took up the hint thrown and said “Did you see so then? Why not then worship God in Forms also?” So Mahendra Nath took up that aspect of Divine Worship. Then M. asks, “Can one worship God in the form of earthly Mother?” “Yes, one can. She is Brahmamayee-rupa.” Then he asks the Master again, “Can the Formless be realized and how is it seen in realization? Can it be described?” The Master describes it and then goes on to say that to actually realize it in life it requires stern spiritual practices, not mere empty words. In June 5th, 1883, the Master asks M., “What sort of worship appeals to you now?” “Now the formless worship appeals to me, but I have also now understood that He has become all forms.”

We find if we study chronologically the different chapters as depicted in the four parts of the *Gospel*, how the Master is leading M. gradually from one to

another aspect of Divinity and giving him tastes and visions of God, desired of the Devatas. We find the Master leading him from the first day to the idea of the “Word made flesh and lived and dwelt amongst us,” the grandiose truth of the Incarnate Divinity, the Avatar born for the Establishment of Religion, the Kingdom of Heaven. The Master felt within himself the incarnation of the Divine in him and would ask his newly-come disciples, to test their power of spiritual appreciation and openness to spiritual truths, “What do you think of me?” And if any one at an early period discerned the truth of Avatarhood in him, he considered him an Uttam Adhikari. Accordingly on the third day of his meeting, he asked him, “What do you think of me, how many annas of knowledge I have?” M. answered, “Annas, I cannot say, but such love, knowledge, dispassion or catholicity, I have not seen elsewhere.” The Master began to laugh. Sometime afterwards he asked him again about himself. M. answered, “The Lord has created you Himself in His own hands (self-create); other beings, mounted in a machine.” Then again later, M.’s estimate of the Master on being questioned is, “The power of the Lord has been embodied in you.”

“What is the measure of that power?” “Measure, I cannot say, but that His Power has become incarnate is clear.” Then on 28th July, 1885, M. made an open avowal and said, “I think Jesus Christ, Chaitanya and yourself are one and the same.”

When the Master in explaining Avatarhood compared the Avatar to a big aperture in the wall through which the Infinite Expanse of the Unconditioned Existence is seen, M. answered, “You are the Opening through which the Unknown is seen.”

The Master with great satisfaction patted him on the back and said, "You have understood that at last. It is excellent." That very evening when M. avowed his liking for the Formless, the Master said, "I also would not see Forms of Gods before, now also it is diminishing (vision of form)." Then M. said, "Of Forms the manifestation of God in human form appeals to me (नरलीला)." "That is sufficient and you are seeing ME," was the reply. The Divine incarnate in his Master Sri Ramakrishna was the last word in the Sadhana of Mahendra Nath. Since then he knew nothing besides him; his whole mind and soul clustered round him: to meet him, to serve him and to hear his words were his all-absorbing passion. His allegiance and loyalty to his Master was phenomenal. Never for a moment did he waver in his love and devotion to him and never did his interest flag. His infinite pleasure in his company knew no satiety. When he complained to his Master, towards the end of his life, that his satisfaction in him had not reached its limit, the Master said, "The Bhakta's satisfaction in God is unlimited and knows no bounds."

Such was the infinite love he bore to his Master, some of which he radiated to his hearers in latter days while talking about him.

The Master made him realize the truth of the Incarnate Divinity, infused him with the power of his spirit and commissioned him to preach his word—the mission of his life. When towards the close of 1883 he spent nearly the whole of the month of December, in the company of his Master, in the practice of spiritual Sadhana, he taught him truths after truths. One day M. asked him, "Is it possible to realize Jnana and Bhakti at the same time?" "Yes, but, is it easy for all? All vessels have not the same capacity, but in your Adhar it

will be possible to realize both Jnana and Bhakti through the Grace of God!" Then again on 27th December, 1884 (*Kathamrita*, Part II, 22 sec.—8 chap.) Sri Ramakrishna asks M., "What is your idea? Your idea is both to fix the mind on the Real Nature, (Swaswarup) as also to worship God like a servant. Is it not?" M. says humbly, "Yes." "That idea happens to one when far advanced in spiritual path. That is why Hazra says, 'You can see into the hearts of people.'" The Master would in his catholic all-embracing view of religion say: "It is true that He (God) is the Akhanda Sachchidananda beyond mind and speech, it is also true that He appears in various Sâkâra Chinmaya (conscious) forms; it is also true that He becomes incarnate, in the form of a human being (Avatar) for the uplift of mankind; it is also true that He has become manifested as all these various forms of creation; yet He is infinitely more besides. Who can fathom Him or reach His limit?" Says the Master again, "Is it only true that I find God within when I shut my eyes? Does He not exist when I open my eyes, in various forms of creation? (Pointing to M.) Is it not so?" "Yes," was the reply. Many times when the Master refers to seeing God with eyes open, he pointedly refers to M. Evidently he was training him in that way of worship. Among those who have lived with M. in latter days some felt that he always lived in this constant and conscious union with God even with eyes open. The Master had thus broadbased the spiritual realization of Mahendra Nath both on Jnana (knowledge) and Bhakti (devotion), made him realize the truth of the Divine Incarnation, and taught him to live in the world as the servant of all. The texture of his life was woven in the same pattern as his Master's and his lead cast in the mould of his Master

—a fit instrument for being his torch-bearer and for preaching his Word.

The estimate of his Master about him was high. The Master would say how in one of his trances, he had seen him in the circle of Sri Chaitanya's disciples and the face seen in vision was imprinted on his mind, so that when he saw him he recognized him at once. Again we find the Master saying, "I have recognized you, hearing you read the *Chaitanya Bhagavat*: you are of the same essence as me, as father and son. So long as you did not come here, you were self-forgotten. Now you will know yourself. Now go and live in the world unattached." Then the Master prays to the Mother, "Do not make him give up everything! Do in the end what you will. If you keep him in the world, show yourself to him now and then. Otherwise how will he remain in the worldly life, where will he find the zest for living?"

Latterly, on the 7th March, 1885, (*Kathamrita*, Part III—12 sec., 2nd. Chap.) when Mahendra Nath one day expressed his desire for giving up all for the sake of God, the Master said, "You are well in God already. Is it good to give up all? The speaker or preacher of the Word, the Lord keeps in the world with a bondage; otherwise who will speak the Word of God to people? That is why the Mother has kept you in worldly life?" Such was the Master's estimate of Mahendra Nath and his high mission in life.

The intense non-attachment to conditions of worldly life and the tense life of absorbed meditation in God that we saw in Mahendra Nath, was the result of life-long struggle. The spiritual practices which he began under the shadow of the feet of his Master, he continued in later life after his Master's Ascension, and was of an intense kind. He regularly visited the Baranagore Math established

by the group of Sannyasi disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, headed by Swami Vivekananda, and spent the week-ends there invariably. There was then a fever of excitement for spiritual Sadhana and for realization of God in the Baranagore Math and Mahendra Nath warmed himself in that benignant flame. He was never tired of narrating the life lived by the Apostles and of the tense heat of longing for God manifest at the period. He was loyal to the Apostles. When some of the householder disciples brushed them aside as a few unripe, inexperienced youths, Mahendra rallied round them. Swami Vivekananda writes in one of his letters to the Math from America, "When Sri Thakur left his body, everybody gave us up as a few unripe urchins; but M. and a few others did not leave us in the lurch. We cannot repay our debt to them." M. used to relate to us that the life and atmosphere of the Baranagore Math appeared to him to be so holy, that he would sprinkle over his body the water gathered in a cistern there, with an idea to purify himself thereby. Sometimes at the Baranagore Math, sometimes at the Dhyângar or Nahabatghar of Dakshineswar temple-garden, he would retire into solitude and spend long days in Sadhan-bhajan. Once when he stayed in the Panchavati room at Dakshineswar he got very ill with dysentery, due to the dampness of the place. He could not move and reverend Baburam Maharaj put him in a carriage and accompanied him home. When he would get leave for a longer period, he would sometimes retire to some neighbouring garden and there live alone cooking himself his simple meal and thinking of God. At home also, sometimes he would get up at night, carry his bed, go to the open verandah of the Senate Hall of the Calcutta University and there sleep among the waifs

of the city to feel that he was homeless. When questioned why he did so much, he said, "The idea of home and family clings to one and does not leave easily." At times of 'Yoga for Ganges-bath' or at occasions of religious Mela at Ganga-sagar, when Sadhus would assemble in great numbers in Calcutta, he would get up at dead of night, walk to the banks of the Ganges where the Sadhus congregated, and watch from a distance, silently and unknown, some of them (Sadhus) performing their worship and repeating the name of God, seated before the Dhuni fire. At times he would go to the Railway station, stand and watch the stream of pilgrims returning from the Jagannath, see the seraphic look in their faces, bright with enthusiasm, and sometimes would ask for a little Prasad from them. During the hours of his work at college as Professor, whenever he would get a little leisure or interval he would retire into a solitary room on the roof and there alone and by himself open his Diary of the Master, pore over it, read, think and digest it. Latterly when we met him first, he had become the proprietor of a school. He used to live then alone and apart in a single room in the school-house and as soon as his work of supervision was over, he would retire to his private room, shut the door, and live by himself. All these—only to recount a few among many of his habits. And is it a wonder that with his talents and such intense living in God, he was able to live in the world unattached—filled through and through with the thought and Presence of God? We remember talking with him on religious topics in his piazza after school hours till about midnight during this period.

It is at this time that young men from the colleges gathered round to hear him speak on God and his Master's life and teachings. It is his burning

words of renunciation and intense love of God that first roused the fire of spirituality in many young men, who afterwards became completely dispassionate to worldly life and dedicated themselves to God and His worship. Many of the present Sannyasins of the Belur Math owe their first spiritual awakening to the magic influence of M.'s personality. Even during the lifetime of Sri Ramakrishna, he brought some of his students to his feet, and they afterwards became great personalities in the circle of the Master's disciples. Among them may be mentioned Narayan, Purna, Tejchandra, Binode, Bankim and others. So he was called by the familiar name of Master Mahasaya.

Thus living and moving in the atmosphere of his Master's life and personality and the associations of his brother disciples for more than a decade, he received the permission and blessing of the Holy Mother to bring out the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*. The genesis of how the diary of the life and incidents of Sri Ramakrishna came to be recorded he narrated to us one day: "I was in worldly life, bound to my work and could not visit the Master whenever I wished; so I used to note his words and impressions, in order to be able to think on them in the interval before I met him again, so that the impressions made on my mind might not be overlaid by the press of worldly work and preoccupation. It was thus for my own benefit and good that I first made the notes, so that I might realize his teachings more perfectly."

The *Gospel* first appeared in 1897 in a pamphlet form in English. It drew immediate praise and encouragement from Swami Vivekananda. The dramatic setting, the vivid impression of the Master, the calling out at every instance the framework and the atmosphere, all contrived to produce a

wonderful effect. One felt transported to the period of the Master's living, to be sitting and listening to his talking; the dramatic personæ seemed to be moving and living figures, and the spiritual aroma of these lovely scenes and holy conversation filled one's heart with a divine fragrance. Swami Vivekananda was all praise for the book. He wrote: "I am in a transport when I read it. The dramatic part is infinitely beautiful. The language is fresh and pointed and withal easy. I now understand why none of us attempted his life before. It has been reserved for you—this great work." Indeed it is the poetic temperament of Mahendra Nath, his sensitive impressionable nature, his long dwelling upon these scenes with infinite love and reverence which helped him to recall those scenes with the vividness and the force of life and make his Master and disciple live in literature as immortals.

The Gospel then appeared in monthly instalments in Bengali magazines and the fragments were afterwards collected and brought out in Bengali in 1902 from the Udbodhan Office as *Sri Sri Ramakrishna Kathamrita*, Part I, by Sri M. Its fame and popularity was immense and immediate. Mr. N. Ghosh wrote in the *Indian Nation*: "The style is biblical in its simplicity. What a treasure it would have been if all the sayings of Sri Krishna, Buddha, Jesus, Mahomed, Nanak and Chaitanya could have been thus preserved."

The second part of the *Kathamrita* was published in 1905; and in 1908 the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* in English was published from Madras; and the third part of the Bengali Gospel also saw the light of the day in the same year; in 1910 the fourth part of the Gospel appeared.

Sri Ramakrishna's words were thus broadcast far and wide; those old

heavenly scenes of the Master living and moving and speaking to his *Antaranga* disciples were reproduced with life-like vividness. Bhaktas far and wide breathed in the heavenly aroma of those scenes and were entranced; they lived again the old times with the Master and the disciples, and drank in the nectar of these words. M. could remain hidden no more. Bhaktas from Madras, Bombay, Kumaon, Assam, and other provinces of India, even from far away America and England who had heard and read of the Master, came to his house to visit him who had such infinite store of treasure and who had disseminated that far and wide. Young men from the colleges and the schools of Calcutta and other places, fascinated by the reading of his books, came to visit him. His house became a veritable pilgrim-place, already rendered holy by the visit of the Master, once in his Shyampukur residence and another time at his Hatibagan residence (when he came once to see M., lying ill in bed with cholera); and also by the visits of the Holy Mother who stayed for a long period at his house at Guruprasad Choudhuri Lane.

Freely he had received, and freely he began to give. In 1905 he retired from his work as guardian tutor and purchased the Morton Institution, then situated in Jhamapukur Lane. The school remained in the premises for many years and when the number of scholars increased, he transferred it to 50, Amherst Street, where it has remained for nearly 20 years. At both these places he remained in a solitary room in the school-building by himself, much sought after by Bhaktas and devotees far and wide. In the mornings and evenings he would be surrounded by a circle of listeners and would continue to talk of religious topics, mainly on the life and teachings of his Master,

in burning words of love and reunciation. Some attracted by him would visit him day after day for years. Some carried away by the force of his burning words of love of God and forsaking all for His sake became dispassionate to the world and its enjoyments and followed God. There he lived alone awakening the spiritual fire in several generations of seekers; living the most frugal life of utmost simplicity, of simple living and high thinking; visiting his family only once a day to look after them a little; finishing his work of super-

vision of the school as quickly as possible and then retiring to his cell and taking the eternal and main theme and refrain of his life; loving God with all his mind, soul and strength—always at the disposal of those who sought him for the Word of God, sitting with them, talking to them of God and His love sometimes till a late hour of the night. And this went on day in and day out, year in and year out for many years without rest. What a blessed life—in the world and yet out of it, rapt in thought of God!

(To be concluded)

THE EASIER PATH

BY SWAMI SHARVANANDA

In the Twelfth Chapter of the Gita Bhagavan Sri Krishna speaks of the grand Bhakti Yoga. The question was raised, who is the greater spiritual man—the Jnanin or the devotee? *i.e.*, whether the one who fixes one's mind open the transcendental Reality, the Nirguna Brahman, or the one who worships Him as Ishwara, the Supreme Lord of the universe?

They are but two aspects of the same principle: One is the absolute aspect and the other the relative. Take for instance the sun: it has two aspects, the sun as it is in its own real form, and that you cannot understand, unless you go to the solar region and be within it; secondly as it appears to us from this earth as the great luminous orb, the sole giver of light and life to this earth. So also in the path of religion there are two standpoints to look at God: God as He Himself really is, and God as He

appears to us in relation to our present finite being. From our present position we look at Him as the 'infinite personality' (although it is an illogical conception), and as such, He is the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer of the whole universe. But from the standpoint of God, *i.e.*, as He Himself is, there is no creation, no second existence at all. So Vedanta declares that from the absolute standpoint, *i.e.*, from the standpoint of the Absolute Reality, there has been no creation. तदेव परमं सत्यं यन्न किञ्चित् न जायते । (Goudapa). But on the relative plane, that supreme substance, Brahman, assumes a different appearance—the appearance of causality and of plural being. So necessarily to us, whose mind is thus circumscribed by Time, Space and Causation, Brahman cannot but appear as god or Ishwara. As one becomes a father only in relation to one's son, so Brahman becomes God or

Ishwara in relation to Jivas or individual creatures. That is the difference between the Absolute Brahman and the relative Ishwara.

So the question naturally arises in Arjuna's mind as regards the comparative merit of the Jnanin and the Bhakta. Further, sectarian views on this particular point have much obscured the truth: the followers of Jnana path hold that the worshippers of Ishwara or Saguna Brahman cannot attain the final liberation in this life, at best they can attain *Krama Mukti* or the process of "gradual liberation." The followers of the Bhakti cult, on the other hand, maintain that the Jnanins are really atheistic at heart and heretic in their conception, so they cannot attain the beatitude of the Supreme Heaven. Therefore the question is quite natural to all seekers of the Supreme Truth.

Sri Bhagavan gives the most beautiful answer to the question, and the whole purport of his answer is that the Nirguna and the Saguna Bhava are, after all, but two aspects of the same Being. One who sincerely and wholeheartedly attaches himself to any of the aspects of God having chosen or elected it as his own *Ishta*, he is the best. So the merit does not really lie in the selection of the aspect but in the depth and ardour of the pursuit. Bhagavan says: "He is the most steadfast in devotion who worships Me always having centred his whole mind on Me, being imbued with great faith. They also attain Me, who meditate upon the absolute, immutable, unmanifest, all-pervading ever-the-same transcendental Principle."

But, for an ordinary man, conditioned as he is by human limitations and untrained mind, it is very difficult to contemplate upon the Absolute. Nay,

it is well-nigh impossible for an ordinary mind to have any definite idea of the Absolute, excepting a vague negation of the relative. Then what is the easier path for the general humanity? The easier path is to worship Him as an Ishwara. Is it not easier for an ordinary man to develop his spiritual emotions by giving to the mind a definite tangible hold than the pursuance of an intangible abstraction and under-defined negation?

Next, Bhagavana speaks of the four stages of Bhakti: The highest state is that where our intellect, our emotion and volition, all are concentrated upon Him, and our mind is completely absorbed in that contemplation. It is called *Samadhi*. When human soul drops this physical vesture being in that kind of *Samadhi*, it gets merged in the Supreme Soul having transcended all limitations of individuality.

Sri Bhagavan further says, "If you cannot attain that state, as that is the highest state, then you should constantly try to fix your mind on Me through Love. If you cannot do even that, then do all your actions only for Me." Though it is hard to fix our mind on one object, our mind being drawn out constantly by the activities of the senses and their impressions, yet we *can* control our will to a certain extent and do actions only for the sake of God. This gentle method of leading our mind Godward is comparatively easy. So let our actions be for God. This is the third aspect of Bhakti.

Next, Bhagavan advises, "Even if you cannot do that, do actions as you are doing ordinarily, only dedicate the fruits of your actions to Me." That is the fourth aspect of the Bhakti Yoga. But really speaking, this is the very first or initial stage of Bhakti or Karma Yoga, as technicaly it is called. You

need not wrench yourself away from your surroundings. You do your actions—do your duty considering that it is the command of God. Consider that you are doing your own Dharma, and Dharma is the eternal injunction of God. God has ordained that each man at a particular stage under particular circumstances must do a particular thing to maintain his well-being. So Dharma should be considered as the command of God, and by the performance of your duty or Dharma you are only serving God indirectly as we serve our king by obeying his command.

In this attitude of mind towards life's task there is no tendency to hanker after the enjoyment of the work that you do, and therefore it does not forge bondage around you. On the other hand, it would slowly bring about self-purification. When we begin to feel that the results of all that we do we must dedicate to God, our heart cannot but be purified of selfish dross. Thus then comes of itself the Chitta Shuddhi; and when Chitta or the mind is purified it begins to reflect like a clean mirror the rays of the Divine Sun, and the knowledge slowly dawns on us that it is God's power that is ensouling and energising us. This is what the devotees call "Grace" of God.

"Grace" cannot be established logically. If you begin to argue logically you cannot substantiate it, because it is beyond all law. Those who have been fortunate to get "Grace" in their own life, can alone understand its true import and testify to its truth. Then the devotee feels that all actions that are being done by his mind and body, are but expressions of His power—the Power that is moving the sun and the moon and stars, the Power that is threading atom to atom, molecule to molecule and producing this glorious spectacle of the physical world.

Then all the fibres of his inner self get quickened with the consciousness, and he spontaneously bursts out, "Not I, not I, O Lord, but Thou, Thou art doing everything."

When the mind is filled with the consciousness of the Divine Being, God appears as permeating all the objects the eyes behold. It so happens then that if you consider God with form, you will see the form everywhere, you will feel His presence everywhere. Then again through His Grace, the mind will be slowly drawn up to a still higher plane where the form will melt away into the Formless—into one sublime, indescribable, transcendental existence.

So Bhagavan says here that "this is the safest and most perfect path for all persons. Those who practise such single-hearted devotion with great concentration of mind, will certainly attain God and be blessed with Life Immortal. Their heart will be filled with My Grace, with My Love, with By Bliss."

Just as a bale of wires becomes magnetised when brought into contact with magnet, so all those who approach Him with such intense love get surcharged with the divine light and grace; and these great souls become like 'spiritual dynamos' in the society. They emanate as it were the power of spirituality and Bhakti and establish in the ordinary doubting mind the truth of the Divine existence, and also show to the world how man can ennoble his life and raise himself from the deepest depth of animality and sensuousness into the most sublime spiritual life of God.

So in the Twelfth Chapter Bhagavan describes the Bhakti Yoga, combining in it Jnana, Karma and Bhakti, all the three—which is the safest and the best path for all humanity.

The highest form of spiritual intui-

tion that directly apprehends God as the Supreme Reality of life cannot be attained without a proper, well-balanced, harmonious culture and convergence of our emotion, volition and judgment, *i.e.*, the senses, the Manas and the Buddhi. In the concluding verses of the Chapter Sri

Krishna gives the most beautiful description of such a typical man of God-consciousness and devotion, exemplifying the wonderful balance of action, thought and feeling—all sublimated by the touch of the Divine consciousness. He says that such a devotee is the most dear to Him.

HINDUISM : WHAT IT IS

BY PROF. AKSHOY KUMAR BANERJEE, M.A.

(Concluded from the last issue)

(c) Respect for the Sannyasins

The ideal, which is involved in the Hindus' regard for the Brahmans, is revealed in a still more transparent form in their respect for the Sannyasins. The life of a Sannyasin, without any means of livelihood, without any house to call his own, half-naked and sometimes stark-naked, having attachment to nothing but contemplation and meditation on the ultimate Reality and the highest goal, recognizing no other duty to the world than occasionally to give instruction and inspiration to the seekers after truth and blessings to all poor souls, is regarded by the Hindus as the highest culmination of the life of a man. The discipline and acquisition in the Brahmacharin-stage is the foundation of life's Sadhana. Next, the householders' life is the life of action and self-multiplication, the life of multifarious duties and responsibilities, and inwardly the life of preparation for transcending this worldly life and entering into the higher life of exclusively spiritual duties and disciplines. As soon as any sign of old age appears on the physical body,—if not before

that,—it is the duty of a man to give up worldly connections as far as practicable and steadily advance in the direction of complete renunciation. This stage of Vanaprastha is a stage of higher moral and spiritual discipline and more perfect preparation for Sannyasa (complete renunciation). Thus the whole life of a man, according to the Hindu view, should be a life of steadily progressive approach towards complete renunciation of this world and complete spiritualization of the self or the ego. Hence a true Sannyasin sets up the ideal of human life and is therefore the object of the highest respect. If any man does not feel the necessity for such preparations by stages, and can at any earlier stage of life attain the qualifications necessary for becoming a Sannyasin, he is not only entitled to do it, but is regarded as worthy of higher esteem and admiration and reverence, since he attains the end so soon and so easily. To become a true Sannyasin,—to renounce all kinds of sensuous enjoyments and worldly aspirations, to attain complete mastery over all desires and passions, to resist all temptations and

court all sufferings, to live the life of pure spiritual contemplation and meditation, to practise the unification of the individual ego with the self of the universe—requires courage and strength of a much higher order than those of a great General, wisdom and far-sightedness of a much superior kind to those of a great statesman, whole-hearted devotion to truth, deathless determination to attain it, and undaunted patience, perseverance and self-confidence of such a nature as would be worthy of emulation by any great scientist. It is our want of capacity to embrace this Sannyasa-life, that compels us to submit to the bondages and limitations of worldly life.

It is this Hindu view of life that lies at the root of the Varna-Vibhaga and Ashrama-Vibhaga—called, in short, Varnashrama-dharma—of the Hindu social system. The Hindus, in spite of their differences in habits, manners and customs, in spite of various changes through which they have passed, have remained true to this ideal from the earliest times to this day. It is however undeniable that in the actual state of things the forms have in most cases taken the place of the spirit, the ideal has been left in the background and sometimes forgotten, while the outward distinctions have been sanctified and adored as constituting the essence of Hinduism, unfair advantage has been taken by interested parties of the institutions which came into being as means to the realization of the ideal, but which have afterwards been preserved and nourished as ends in themselves. Persons, who are Brahmans by birth, but have become Vaishyas or Shudras by training and occupation, have been claiming the honours and privileges associated with true Brahmanhood; people who are Sannyasins only by dress and external behaviour, and not by

culture, renunciation and spiritual discipline, demand from the householders the worship and reverence due to true Sannyasins; and such claims are naturally resisted by those other sections upon whom they are made. Thus various kinds of conflicts have arisen in the society, and these can be made up and harmony re-established only by a proper appreciation of the spirit, by a thorough adjustment of the forms in strict accordance with the spirit, by a systematic effort to regulate the actual in conformity to the ideal. Rights must be, as it had been, based on duty and culture. Adhikara, in the Hindu system, always lays greater emphasis upon culture and corresponding duties and responsibilities, than upon rights and privileges.

(d) Regard for chastity of women

Next to the respect for Brahmanhood and Sannyasa, another important common feature of the social organizations of the Hindus attracts our attention, viz., the regard for the moral character of women. To the Hindu mind it appears to be an established truth that the moral purity and the steady development of the society depend to a great extent upon the chastity of womanhood. Women are by nature entrusted with the most sacred and onerous duty of bearing and rearing efficient children for the society, which depends for the continuity and progress of its multiform culture in a very large measure upon the birth and growth of such fit persons within it. For the achievement of this object, it appears to be the imperative duty of the social institutions to pay careful attention to and make proper arrangements for the physical, temperamental and moral fitness of the mothers. The proper execution of a mother's sacred responsibility, which is of such fundamental importance to the health and

welfare of the society, demands that she should be a faithful and loving wife devoted physically and mentally to one husband, with whom she should be inseparably united by a strong moral and spiritual tie, and not chiefly by the tie of sexual and economic necessity of animal life. For the fulfilment of her life's sacred mission it is considered necessary that she should be a devoted member of a healthy family, to the culture and traditions of which she should be faithful throughout life and with the material, social and spiritual interests of which she should wholeheartedly identify herself. The members of a family are not to consider themselves as related to one another only during the few years of the present bodily existence. The life of a family is to be regarded as extending from the time of the earliest ancestors to that of the remotest descendants and also as organically related to the life of the society as a whole. Every member of a family is to remember that he or she is responsible for the faithful performance of his or her duties, and for the contribution of his or her quota to its material, cultural and spiritual advancement, to the past, the present and the future generations of male and female members of the family, as well as to those of the whole society. This consciousness of expanded life and magnified responsibility has to be awakened and developed in every mother and through her in every child. There are suitable periodical rites and ceremonies in every family for keeping this consciousness effectively alive. Various precautions are taken by the Hindu society, so that every mother may be fully imbued with the valued ideals and traditions of the family, and may learn to think of her own life as inseparably bound up with the glorified life of the family and the society, whose

future prospects so largely lie with her.

With a view to enable women to keep true to these glorious ideals of motherhood and wifehood, the Hindu society has thought fit to relieve them, as far as circumstances allow, of all sterner and more complicated duties of the outside world, of all labours for earning their livelihood, of all thoughts and anxieties about the political and economic concerns of the family and the society, so that there may be the least possible hindrance in the way of their fulfilling the sacred mission of creating healthy, brave, high-souled, patriotic manhood for the race. To be an ideal wife in order to be an ideal mother is regarded as the most worthy ideal of a woman's life, and the Hindu social organizations have everywhere and always attempted to offer her as much opportunity as possible for the realization of this ideal. Here again I refrain from making any comments from my point of view on the merits of this highly valued ideal of the Hindus, or the rigid customs that have been enforced in different places and the restrictions that have been imposed upon women as a class under the pretext of this ideal. I must also refrain from casting any reflections upon the standard of rebellion that has been raised at the present age, not only against the customs and restrictions, but also against the ideal itself.

(e) *Respect for the cow*

To these we may add another—and not a very weak—bond of social unity among the Hindus. I mean the belief in the sacredness of the cow. The cow has been regarded as the most sacred animal from a time when beef had not yet become a prohibited food for all Hindus. History has not yet definitely ascertained the date, since which the respect for the life and comforts of this noble animal has continued to be one

of the important articles of faith among Hindus of all sects and all social organizations. In ancient India the cow represented the wealth of the country and it was even the means of exchange. It then came to be regarded as an indispensable member of every family in a settled condition of life. Parents, children and cows—these three together constituted a complete family. When a man wants to enter into household life, he must take a lawfully married wife, and a woman also in order to be a real member of a family must unite herself with a husband. But the husband and the wife feel themselves incomplete, till they are blessed with a child. The family remains still incomplete, unless there is a fourth member in it in the shape of a cow. The Hindu sentiment about the cow has gradually developed so far that the cow is looked upon by all classes of Hindus as the living representative of Mother Earth, and regularly worshipped by them as a deity. There are religious festivities in connection with special worship of the cow. In an agricultural country like India, the economic importance of the cow is realized even by the most modern-minded men free from all religious scruples, and is not questioned even by the beef-eaters. But in the mind of the Hindus the solicitude for the life and comfort of this useful and innocent domestic animal has through the culture of centuries acquired such a deep spiritual significance that not only do they regard it as sacrilegious to do anything disrespectful or injurious to a cow but they are even prepared to sacrifice their own life for protecting it from any harm that may be done to it by anybody.

(f) Common socio-religious rites and ceremonies

Last of all I may mention that all

classes and sections of Hindus have got to observe certain socio-religious rites and ceremonies, which, though differing among different sections and communities and in different places and times in respect of important details, are based on some common fundamental principles and are identical in point of their significant central features. There are ceremonies connected with the prospect of the birth of a child, and then with the birth, with the taking of the staple food for the first time in life, with the beginning of the educational career, with the taking of the sacred thread as a symbol of initiation into sacrificial and other religious duties in the case of twice-born classes, with marriage as implying initiation into real worldly life full of various obligations and responsibilities, with death as the end of this present physical existence, and so on and so forth. After a man or woman is dead, his or her children and in their absence other near blood-relations are in duty bound to observe some ceremonies, called Shradha, in the hope of and with the prayer for his or her peace and happiness and higher spiritual advancement in that disembodied state. Analysis of the various kinds of social functions and socio-religious festivities shows that there is a fundamental identity of outlook underlying them and a considerable agreement in their essential features. They exercise a great influence upon popular imagination and serve as a bond of heart-to-heart union among the diverse classes of Hindus.

IDENTITY OF MORAL AND SPIRITUAL
IDEAS AND IDEALS

I shall now pass on to a brief discussion of a few fundamental points of community among all classes and sections of Hindus in respect of their moral

and spiritual ideas and ideals. The first most noticeable feature in the moral outlook of the Hindus is their inherent belief in the moral government of the world,—the belief in the principle of justice underlying and determining the distribution of happiness and misery, power and weakness, wealth and poverty, dignity and indignity, liberty and bondage, high aspirations and low propensities, noble and ignoble feelings and tendencies, and all desirable and undesirable circumstances among the living creatures of the world. Every individual is believed to be enjoying or suffering the inevitable consequences of his own virtuous or vicious deeds. Physical causation, which is actually experienced in the sphere of living beings, and particularly in the sphere of human beings, is believed to be wholly subordinate to moral causation. Every Hindu thinks that for every agreeable or disagreeable fact in the life of an individual there must have been a moral cause in the shape of some action or actions performed by himself in his past life, and conversely for every voluntary actions, mental or physical, performed by an individual, there must inevitably be a moral effect in the shape of his own enjoyment or suffering, advancement or degradation.

(a) *Law of Karma*

In actual experience, however, we find in every individual's life enjoyments and sufferings, virtuous and vicious propensities, favourable and unfavourable circumstances, which cannot be adequately explained by reference to the good and bad actions performed during his present bodily existence. Similarly many noble and ignoble deeds of particular individuals are found not to produce the expected moral effects during their lifetime. Such

facts, however conspicuous and embarrassing they may be to others, do not in the least weaken the fundamental belief of the Hindus. In strict logical consistency with their faith in the moral government of the world, they believe in the continuity of the individual soul's existence from time without beginning to time without end, through innumerable births, lives and deaths. The law of the exact correspondence between Karma (action) and its fruits vindicates its authority without any break throughout the continuous span of the life of the soul passing through different forms of bodily existence. Between the death of one physical body and the assumption of another, there are, it is believed, states of disembodied existence or existence in subtle non-physical bodies, in which also intense enjoyments and sufferings are possible. This faith in the Law of Karma and the corresponding faith in the Law of Re-incarnation (Janmantar) are universal amongst all sections of the Hindus.

(b) *Conception of Mukti*

Submission to the Law of Karma and passing through repeated births and deaths do not however constitute the whole destiny of the individual soul. The soul is regarded as having an inherent capacity and right to transcend this changing world and all the physical and moral laws governing its course. This state is called Mukti (liberation). It is the state of liberation from all bondage—bondage of Karma and its fruits, bondage of desires and passions, bondage of ignorance and error, bondage of likes and dislikes. It is a state, in which the soul is completely free from all changes and limitations, all enjoyments and sufferings, all imperfections and hankerings. The soul is then

above time and space, above duality and plurality, above individuality and morality. It is a state of absolute bliss. This is the ideal which every Hindu is taught to aspire after realizing through the moral and spiritual discipline of as many births as may be necessary to accomplish this ultimate purpose of life. There are divergences of opinion with regard to true nature of this ultimate ideal; philosophers quarrel among themselves in their philosophical attempts at accurately describing this indescribable state of being; but there is very little difference regarding the general character of the ideal, and even the most uncultured sections among the Hindus have a general idea about it and recognize in their heart of hearts the necessity of attaining this highest end in order to get rid of all kinds of troubles and anxieties of the changing world.

(c) *Relation between the soul and the world*

The practical bearing of this spiritual ideal on the whole perspective of the Hindus with regard to their worldly life and its duties is immense. Every Hindu, rich or poor, educated or uneducated, high-born or low-born, to whatever sect or community he may belong, knows in his heart of hearts that this ever-changing world cannot give ultimate satisfaction to the demand of his soul; it rather stands between him and the ideal of his life. Attachment to the enjoyments of this world is the principal source of bondage and limitations to the human soul. So long as the soul is attached to this phenomenal world and regards itself as the agent or patient in relations to the actions and their consequences, it is bound down to its wheels and has to undergo the penalty of repeated births and deaths. The soul is in its inherent nature pure, changeless,

free and blissful, but it has in some mysterious way been entangled with the impurities, changes, limitations, joys and sorrows of this ever-moving world of phenomena. Connection with this world is therefore considered to be the source of misfortune to the soul. It must get rid of this entanglement, in order to be itself again, in order to shine in the inherent glory of its essential self.

For this purpose, a man must make systematic efforts to be free from ignorance and egoism, desire and aversion, passions and inclinations, narrowness and bigotry, attachment to actions and their consequences, and such other forces as tie the soul to the wheels of the world. This is the supreme duty of man, the supreme demand of the true self of man upon his actual self. All the duties and obligations of the worldly life, all the disciplines of moral life, all the rites and practices enjoined by the Shastras, the discharge of all domestic, social and political responsibilities, even the preservation of this bodily existence, should be subordinated to this supreme demand of the soul. All these are to be regarded as obligatory, only so far as they are consistent with and conducive to the fulfilment of the supreme spiritual mission of human life. This spiritual outlook has naturally led to an attitude of indifference, more or less conspicuous, towards the affairs of transitory interest of life. It always puts a check upon the people's worldly ambitions,—upon the spirit of self-aggrandisement of individuals and materialistic forwardness of the nation.

(d) *Spiritual standard of values*

The moral and spiritual attitude of mind is also evident in their estimation of the values and utility of things. All kinds of objects with which people have to deal,—even those which are outward-

ly considered to serve only the physical requirements of life—are looked upon by the Hindu from the moral and spiritual point of view. They measure the purity of water, purity of food, purity of atmosphere, purity of the local environments, not principally by reference to their physical purity or their hygienic utility, but by reference to their helpfulness in the discipline and purification of body, mind and spirit. The latter, in their view, includes the former. The rules of health and cleanliness, the duties of domestic and social life, the behaviours under special political and economic circumstances,—all these are prescribed for the Hindus as matters of moral and spiritual discipline. Not that the immediate ends served by them are ignored, but these ends themselves are viewed as means to the higher spiritual end, which every Hindu is taught to bear in mind in all the concerns of his life.

(e) *Different systems reconciled*

I wish to conclude this bird's-eye view of the unity-in-plurality character of Hinduism by putting in a word with regard to its most complicated and controversial aspect, *viz.*, religion. I have noted in the beginning that Hinduism has, in all the stages of its zigzag course of life, presented a variety of forms of worship, a variety of conceptions about divinity, a variety of religious faiths and sentiments and practices. There are numerous religious sects within its loving arms, and numerous systems of theology expounded with great enthusiasm and dialectic skill by the illustrious teachers of these different sects. But in the heart of an ordinary unsophisticated Hindu, a remarkable amalgamation has always taken place. In his mind there is no dogmatism about any theological doctrine. In his life there is found something like an intui-

tive reconciliation of the truths of Theism, Deism, Pantheism and Polytheism. Every Hindu believes in a general way that there is only one God, who is the creator, sustainer, ruler and destroyer of the world, from whom everything has come, in whom everything resides, to whom everything returns after its worldly career, by whose will the growth and decay, the movement and rest, the rise and fall of all beings, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, great and small, are ultimately determined. He has also an inherent idea that it is God and God alone who is absolutely real, and all the objects and phenomena of his worldly experience have got not only transitory, but mere apparent reality. He believes that God is immanent in all things, He resides in the heart of everybody, He is the self of all selves, He is the ultimate substance of this boundless universe, He is all in all, and at the same time He is eternally transcendent, He is untouched by the changes and impurities, actions and their consequences in this world. He knows in his heart of hearts that Mukti or absolute liberation from all bondages and limitations is the final goal of his life, and this he has to attain by getting rid of all attachments to the affairs of this phenomenal world and being united with God in deep spiritual experience.

These ideas, though almost inherent in the deeper consciousness of every Hindu, do not in the least stand in the way of his offering worship to the variety of duties, Vedic, Tantric and Pauranic and even local. These duties are conceived as supernatural personalities, possessing specific characteristics and powers, lording it over different departments of the physical and the mental worlds, rousing distinct kinds of sentiments of the physical and mental worlds, rousing distinct kinds of senti-

ments and aspirations in the hearts of the worshippers, and fulfilling different demands of their physical, moral and spiritual life. A Hindu finds no inconsistency between the conception of and self-surrender to one immanent and transcendent God and the homage to and worship of many particular gods, because in the innermost core of his heart he knows that all these gods represent particular aspects of the infinite power and unfathomable greatness of the one undivided, unconditioned, all-pervading absolute God. It is the Formless who appears in many forms; it is the true Self of all, that appears outside as the glorious objects of adoration; it is the Inconceivable One that reflects Himself upon the finite hearts and understandings and so manifests Himself to them with many conceivable names and forms with inspiring associations of power and glory, beauty and goodness. Even a most thorough-going theistic or pantheistic Hindu philosopher finds no

inherent disharmony between his philosophical doctrine and the worship of many gods in diverse forms. The sectarian Hindus, such as those whose creed is to worship the one absolute God in the particular name and form of Shiva or Krishna or Rama or Kali or Ganesh or Sun and to adopt the corresponding particular mode of religious discipline, readily offer worship, without being false to their creed, to other deities, whom they regard as partial manifestations of their own highest object of worship.

Thus in spite of the presence of a large number of sectarian religious systems within the fold of Hinduism, there is no inherent seed of disunion among them, and making allowance for the narrowness and bigotry of over-zealous individuals and groups, condemned by all authoritative religious scriptures and teachers, we may safely assert that all sects of Hindus have got a distinct consciousness of an essential spiritual unity among them all.

MEMORIES OF INDIA AND INDIANS

BY SISTER DEVAMATA

(*Yoginma*)

Yoginma always seemed to me one of the noblest of Sri Ramakrishna's disciples. She possessed an uplifted, heroic quality which reminded me of Brunnhilda in the Norse Sagas. As Brunnhilda, though betrayed by Siegfried, yet cast herself on his funeral pyre that she might enter Walhalla, the heaven of heroes, with him; so Yoginma, cheated of fortune, threw herself on the flaming pyre of her worldly grandeur, to raise out of its

ashes a Sannyasini. She did not abandon her householder life, but no nun in a cloister was more rigid in her spiritual observance than she. When I knew her, her fortune was long gone; her husband, who had swept it away, was also gone; and her two daughters were married; but she continued to follow her dual routine. Her householder life was lived with her aging mother in a modest home within walking distance of Holy Mother's quarters.

She was punctiliously faithful in fulfilling her duty to her mother. No service was ever omitted, no care neglected. Her loving thought was constantly on her. But with more lingering persistence did it rest in the memory of her blessed association with Sri Ramakrishna. Since her first contact with him, her supreme interest had been centred in her spiritual life. This, as I saw it, was lived at the Udbodhana Office in Mukerji Lane where, on the second story, Holy Mother was housed. These two parallel lines of living never crossed or clashed. Each seemed rather to strengthen and sweeten the other.

Her day was too well organized to permit of conflict. She rose before night had lifted and at four went for her bath in the Ganges. She never failed. Sometimes when she was not well, Swami Saradananda would remonstrate with her and beg her to consider her health; but she remained firm. The early bath in the Ganges with its prayer and sacred chanting was a religious duty and should not be put aside. The bath over, she returned to her home, gave her mother the necessary care, and at seven o'clock she was climbing the stairs at the Udbodhana office to carry a morning greeting to Holy Mother. This done, she went below to a room underneath the stairs. Here she decided on the purchases to be made at the bazar and cut the vegetables for the noon meal. She regarded this as her special privilege. At about eleven she returned to the upper room to conduct Puja. As she walked along the narrow second-story verandah on the inner side of the court, her hair hanging in curls over her shoulders, her head thrown back, her whole body erect, there was that in her bearing which reminded me once more of Brunnhilda. I could almost imagine she had just thrown aside shield and helmet and had come

to seek the quiet of a woodland glade. Something of the warrior lay hidden in Yoginma's nature. Hers was not a passive spirit. It required no hard blow of the flint to strike fire in her. But when the flame leaped, it was always for a lofty cause. She was a Kshatriya through and through. It was apparent in her manner, in her speech, in her step, in her whole temperament.

The hour of prayer in that upper chamber where the Shrine was, counted among the most precious in the day for me. Yoginma and I were alone,—she before the altar, I beside an inner window opening on the court. Holy Mother came and went. Others entered the room. It was all essentially informal, but Yoginma's thought remained fixed on the Puja. She was very strict in conforming with all the usages and traditions of worship. She would never speak while she was worshipping and it seemed at times as if Holy Mother was teasing or testing her, for she would go up to her and ask her a question. Yoginma would give a monosyllabic answer behind closed teeth without moving her lips. Mother would smile and walk away. In a little while she would return with another question. Perhaps she was trying to break down a certain rigidity in clinging to rites.

The Puja was a long one, because the Shrine was a double one. When Yoginma had taken over the daily worship from Holy Mother, not long before my coming, she had brought her holy pictures and images to Mother's shrine. Her picture of Sri Ramakrishna, faded and worn, stood on the throne beside Holy Mother's picture of him, much better preserved. On the two steps leading up to the throne were various sacred images and symbols. In the near corners of the sanctuary were two little beds where at night the two

pictures on the throne were laid to rest. New India laughs at these time-hallowed customs and calls them childish, but we must not forget that beneath the heroism of the Indian woman of to-day lies the long habit of this worshipful play with holy toys. A rationalistic age is never a heroic age. Heroic impulses do not spring out of calculation or reasoning. They are born of lofty dream and of loftier aspiration, which is only another form of prayer. The real hero, even a military hero, is never a scoffer or unbeliever. During the World War General Foch was seen daily before the altar in some village church and he avowed openly that without the hour of prayer he was unequal to the hour of battle. True art, true letters, true heroism, find their highest expression in an age of religious feeling, it matters not what outward form that feeling may take.

After the Puja Yoginma served the noon meal—to the ladies in the front rooms near the Shrine, to Swami Saradanada and the Udbodhana staff in a large dining-room at the rear of the second story. When the meal was eaten, she went to her mother; but in the late afternoon she was back once more in the room under the stairs conferring with Swami Saradananda. This was the one hour of real recreation in all the day; for when they had disposed of immediate questions, they lived over again and yet again the blessed days with Sri Ramakrishna. They told each other stories of the Master they had heard a hundred times; they talked of Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) and the other disciples who had gone; they spoke tenderly and devoutly of Holy Mother. It was a cherished hour—that hour spent together in the little room underneath the stairs. Arati seemed but the culmination of it and Yoginma passed

half in dream from the memory of the Master to his worship in the Shrine. With her heart aglow she waved the incense and burning camphor before his picture; then with the same warmth of love she turned, when Arati was over, to distribute the offered food to his children. I always watched her do this and I noticed that while she gave bountifully to others, she put a very small portion on Holy Mother's tray, saying, each night as she laid it there, "Mother eats so little." It seemed to cause her genuine distress.

Yoginma was most loving to me always. It troubled her apparently that I was born in America instead of in India. Often she would say to me: "Devamata, I wonder why Thakur sent you so far away to be born. You belong here. You are one of us." Although I sat near her while she worshipped, while she served the meal, or performed some other task, she never made me feel that I was in the way. I learned many things by observing her. Her ignorance of English and my very primary knowledge of Bengali proved no barrier. By look and gesture and primer-like sentences we exchanged our thought. Her manner told me more vividly than words could that she felt a deep affection for me. Occasionally she brought me a gift. Once she sent the Brahmacharin who did the buying for the Holy Mother's household to purchase for me a Benares incense burner and an image holding the tiny cups for the five lights and the camphor. On another day she laid in my hand a small bag for my Rudraksha beads. It was a crude piece of workmanship, made of heavy dark cloth, coarsely sewn. Evidently Yoginma was not a skilled seamstress. Yet with all its crudeness I have cherished it through the years as a precious treasure, not only because it came to me as a token

of love from one for whom I had great reverence and admiration, but even more because it was made by a hand that had touched Sri Ramakrishna's feet.

Sometimes when Yoginma and I were together, there was another present who could interpret for us and widen the avenues of communication between us. One afternoon especially rises in my memory. It was the day of my first visit to the Temple of Dakshineswar. Swami Saradananda had offered to take me and Yoginma asked to go with us. She said it had been a long time since she had been to the Temple and she did not wish to lose this opportunity, although she preferred to go by land. That she was timid on water there could be no doubt, for every time the boat lurched even a little, she gave a start. Soon however she lost herself in memories of the Master and forgot whether she was on land or water. She related incident after incident of Sri Ramakrishna's life

at Dakshineswar, and the slow boat-ride up the river passed all too rapidly. In those days there were no ferries plying quickly from ghat to ghat. When we reached the Temple, Yoginma left us. Evidently she wished to be alone with her thoughts; and when she joined us again she was silent and indrawn. Words, in that mood, would have seemed almost an affront.

As I look across the years at this noble figure, clear-cut against the skyline of a past that is ever present, and remember her steadfastness, her loyal devotion, the spiritual continuity of her life, these words of the Spanish mystic, Alonzo de Orozco, rise in my mind as aptly descriptive of the way she met the turn of circumstance: "If dryness is as sweet to thee as devotion because the Lord wills, if in sickness thou dost find the joy of health, if poverty is as sweet to thee as riches, if in dishonour thou dost find the savour of honour, thou hast profited greatly."

ASHTAVAKRA SAMHITA.

BY SWAMI NITYASWARUPANANDA

क स्वप्नः क सुषुप्तिर्वा क च जागरणं तथा ।

क तुरीयं भयं वापि स्वमहिम्नि स्थितस्य मे ॥ ५ ॥

स्वमहिम्नि स्थितस्य मे For me abiding in my own glory स्वप्नः dream क where सुषुप्तिः deep sleep क where वा or तथा as also जागरणं wakefulness च (expletive) क where तुरीयं fourth state क where भयं fear अपि even (क where) वा or ?

5. Where is dream, where is deep sleep, where is wakefulness, where is the fourth state, and where is even fear for me who abide in my own glory?

[¹ Fourth etc.—The word *Turiya* literally means fourth. So long as ignorance prevails, the self is conditioned by three states, wakefulness, dream and deep sleep. With the dawn of Knowledge it attains the fourth state of transcendental bliss. This is said to be the

fourth only with reference to the previous three states, otherwise the Absolute is beyond any relational determination.]

क दूरं क समीपं वा बाह्यं काभ्यन्तरं क वा ।

क स्थूलं क च वा सूक्ष्मं स्वमहिम्नि स्थितस्य मे ॥ ६ ॥

स्वमहिम्नि स्थितस्य मे For me who abide in my own glory दूरं distance क where समीपं near क where वा or बाह्यं exterior क where अभ्यन्तरं interior क where वा or स्थूलं gross क where सूक्ष्मं subtle च and क where वा or ?

6. Where is distance or proximity, exterior or interior, grossness or subtlety, for me who abide in my own glory?

क मृत्युजीवितं वा क लोकाः कास्य क लौकिकम्

क लयः क समाधिर्वा स्वमहिम्नि स्थितस्य मे ॥ ७ ॥

स्वमहिम्नि स्थितस्य अस्य मे For me who abide in my own glory मृत्युः death क where जीवितं life क where वा or लोकाः worlds क where लौकिकं worldly relation क where लयः inertia समाधिः concentration क where वा or ?

7. Where is death or life, where the worlds or the worldly relations, where diffusion¹ or concentration, for me who abide in my own glory?

[¹ Diffusion—Laya is the lapse of the mind into sleep without resting on the Absolute. It is one of the four obstacles to Samâdhi, the other three being Vikshepa (distraction), Kashâya (torpidity) and Rasâsvâda (enjoyment of Savikalpa Samâdhi).]

अलं त्रिवर्गकथया योगस्य कथयाप्यलम् ।

अलं विज्ञानकथया विश्रान्तस्य ममात्मनि ॥ ८ ॥

आत्मानि In Self विश्रान्तस्य reposing मम my त्रिवर्गकथया of talking about the three ends of life अलं needless योगस्य of Yoga कथया of talking अपि even अलं needless विज्ञानकथया of talking about wisdom अलं needless.

8. For me who am reposing in Self, there is no need of talking about the three ends of life, about Yoga and about wisdom.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

Difficulties and obstacles carry with them a clarion call to awaken the best in man. Will not the present crisis all the world over serve that purpose?—this is what is asked in *A Challenge, an Opportunity and a Privilege*. . .

Prof. Nicholas Roerich, an artist of international reputation, has not confined his attention to art only. He is also an inspiring writer. His appeal is to the whole of humanity and his love for mankind is never narrowed down by any geographical limitation. A great

idealist as he is, various conflicts and fights with which the present-day world is torn weigh heavily upon his soul, and one of his earnest strivings is to unite all men through the medium of culture. *Armour of Light* is a searching enquiry as to why man becomes an enemy of man. Last year also Prof. Roerich presented two essays to our readers. . . . Was Sankara a prophet, a mystic or a philosopher? *Sankara and His Modern Critics* is an answer to that. We specially commend this article to the attention of our readers. For few have suffered so much from misconception as Sankara. He has been the constant subject of thoughtless criticism even from those who ought to have known better. . . . In this issue is concluded the series of articles from Dr. Maria Montessori. In publishing these writings we had a great hope that they would greatly serve the cause of education in India. It is not for us to say how far we were right in our expectations. In this connection we record our thankfulness to Dr. Montessori, for sending us these articles for the benefit of both 'the Adult and the Child' in India. . . . *The Easier Path* has been taken from the notes of discourses given by Swami Sharvananda in Simla. Another instalment was published last March. In response to the eagerness from many, these discourses will be soon brought out in book-form. . . . We are glad that Prof. Akshoy Kumar Banerjee's writings on Hinduism have attracted wide attention. This was not unexpected. . . . Sister Devamata has written to us of her intention to continue the *Memories of India and Indians*, which we hope to publish from time to time according as the instalments come from America. Our readers may remember that Sister Devamata belongs to the Ananda Ashrama, California.

A NOVEL SUGGESTION

Throughout the world unemployment has been a great problem. At present there are few countries, where the question of unemployment has not been so keen as to perplex even the economic experts. If the condition of the unemployed labourers is bad, that of the unemployed educated is worse; for they have to keep up appearance and traditional social dignity. Everywhere the middle-class people are worst hit by unemployment.

It is admitted on all hands that one of the principal reasons of the world-wide unemployment is that production has increased, due to the application of machinery to industry, much more than the demand. Due to the industrial application of science, the work of fewer and fewer people is needed to satisfy our normal wants and in consequence many are thrown out of employment. The solution of unemployment lies in the fact of our creating new demands for work. "Your science has been too effective already in cheapening production. Cannot you now apply it somehow, not to production, but to consumption, and solve this terrible unemployment situation?"—This is indeed the crux of the problem.

Robert A. Millikan, who is universally recognized as one of the greatest scientists of the world, offers a good suggestion in the *Atlantic Monthly* regarding the possibility of new demands for work, as far as the educated people are concerned. According to him, let new educational institutions be started and the unemployed educated be employed in them. This will serve a double purpose: the pressure of unemployment will be relieved and the spread of education will be ultimately of great benefit to the country. This will be the "way of increasing altogether wholesomely the

consuming capacity of a people. And note that the principle is capable of indefinite extension, for there should be no saturation point whatever to the demand of the public for education . . .”

Mr. Millikan is speaking of America. If the demand for public education is great in America, how much more is the demand for that in India, where the percentage of literacy is barely 10? Cannot our educated youths, whose condition has reached the climax of misery, be engaged in the cause of widely diffusing education in the country? Here lies the possibility of giving work to an infinite number of hands.

The great scientist is not blind to the fact that simply a literary education will not be of great avail in this respect. For even in America there has been much overdoing the whole business of higher education. So he wants people to turn their direction towards vocational courses. It is everywhere seen that the skilled labour is better paid than the mediocre university graduate and “we can scarcely overdo the training of the carpenter, the barber, the bricklayer, the typist. . . .”

Thus the spread of education in all its branches is the society's best answer to the unemployment problem. If that be true of America, how infinitely true is it of India!

CASTE OR QUALITY?

In an illuminating article on the above subject, Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, C.I.E. observes in the *Indian Review* that the Aryan invader into India had no caste system. He was priest, warrior, etc., all in one. There was not the least idea of division of functions. A three-fold occupational division arose before the Indian and the Iranian Aryans separated. At first, there were no impassable barriers be-

tween these divisions. He gives a summary of the conclusions that he has arrived at by a critical study of our sacred scriptures on the system of castes, which has come down to us through various changes for the last three to four thousand years, in the following:

“In the Krita or the first age of the world there were no castes; all were Brahmanas as they all came from Brahma; division of functions and into castes came into the world in the later ages. The father's *varna* determined the *varna* of the son; a Brahmin's son was a Brahmin whoever was the mother. A Brahmin's son was a Brahmin only if the mother was Aryan, not if she was a non-Aryan. The father's caste was retained if the mother was of the same or the next lower caste. Lastly came the rule of marriage within the caste.

Successive marriages of girls in each generation in a superior caste raised the issue to the higher caste at the end of a number of generations.”

EXPERIENCE OF THIRTY YEARS' WORK FOR THE VILLAGE

Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch, a young settlement worker, gives the startling results of her work for a period of thirty years in Greenwich village. Before she took up her work in 1902, the condition of the village was extremely primitive. Streets were not asphalted, rickety tenements were everywhere. There were no tea rooms, nor speakeasies, no modern public school, nor library or public bathhouse. Some of the saloons were most objectionable. The principal object of the settlement workers was to secure from landlords or by law an amelioration of the vile conditions under which the poor had to live.

“The first effective way to counteract these dreadful conditions,” said Mrs.

Simkhovitch, "was to provide places for the children to play, places where they could get away from sordidness. To secure these, space had to be obtained. Not only we, but settlement workers throughout the city were active in agitation. Gradually old slums were torn down, public baths were built, streets were widened, gymnasiums installed in the public schools and small parks laid out. Here in this neighborhood old Trinity Burying Ground was converted into Hudson Park."

The marvellous changes that have been worked out in the village are chiefly due to the genius, skill and industry of this noble lady. The lesson that one can learn from such a great endeavour is, according to her, "the best way to serve the poor is to work with them rather than for them." Cannot this example be followed in our village-work?

EDUCATION OF INDIAN WOMEN

It is a fact that our women have been woefully neglected by us, so far as their education is concerned. We can guess the appalling amount of ignorance among our women, if we visit the villages and small towns of India. No amount of our progress in any direction can regenerate India, if our women lag behind. A nation can thrive only if there be educated mothers. Although it is admitted that the present system of education has lots of defects, we send our boys to schools and colleges for some amount of education instead of keeping them in complete ignorance. If that be our attitude to the boys, what fault have our girls done so that they should be deprived of the bless-

ings of education? Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee at the Convocation of the Indian Women's University in Bombay has given a very thoughtful address on the education of our women. "Many people," said he, "inveigh against institutions which, in their opinion, impart 'Western' education to our girls. I am not enamoured of anything which is peculiarly Occidental and, therefore, unsuited to our country. But knowledge is neither of the East nor of the West, just as air and sunlight are neither oriental nor occidental. Our girls and women have as much right to knowledge as anybody else. As for the training of character, which is a major part of education, our children of both sexes should certainly be brought up to value the best traditions and ideals of India and to make them a part of their spiritual constitution as it were. But we should not be narrow in our mental outlook."

Even if we leave the question of our best traditions and ideals, the vast majority of our women ought to have education of the present day to some extent, so that they may not remain quite ignorant of such important things as laws of hygiene and sanitation, the methods of nursing and the rearing up and training of children. Besides, in these days of keen struggle for existence, women must by all means acquire a general knowledge of the modern world. The domestic peace and comfort largely depend on it. In the face of the evils with which is beset the present system of education, our women must be made to make headway. At the same time, they must keep up the noblest traditions of Indian womanhood.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE FOUNTAINHEAD OF RELIGION. By Ganga Prasad, M.A., M.R.A.S. *Published by Pandit K. Jnani, Aryan Missionary, the Aryasamaj, Madras. 247 pp. Price Annas 8.*

This is a comparative study of the principal religions of the world and an attempt to show that they have their common origin from the Vedas. The treatise does not aim at an exhaustive treatment of the important problems of the principal religions. It tries to establish that the germs of religious knowledge were vouchsafed by God to man in the beginning of creation; and those germs are to be found in the Vedas alone, which are the oldest records of mankind. The author endeavours to show that the principles of Mahomedanism and Christianity are derived from Judaism, those of Christianity being partly traceable also to Buddhism, that the doctrines of Judaism can be deduced from Zoroastrianism and further that both Zoroastrianism and Buddhism are directly traceable to the Vedic religion. The book evinces much scholarship and the arguments set forth therein deserve a careful and serious study.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ISLAM. By Khan Sahib Khaja Khan, B.A. *Printed by the Hogarth Press, Mount Road, Madras. 120 pp. Price Re. 1-4-0.*

This is a compendium of Islamic Philosophy—its cosmology, psychology and ethics. It discusses at length how the idea of God has developed in different Islamic scriptures. The book does not give a systematic treatment of various doctrines in the Philosophy of Islam. It simply places before us a number of sayings and utterances culled out from the scriptures and the Sufi literature. It contains theories and doctrines, some of which seem to be distant echoes of Vedanta.

THE ART OF CONTEMPLATION. By J. C. Winslow, M.A. *Published by Association Press (Y.M.C.A.), 5, Russell Street, Calcutta. 57 pp. Price Annas 8.*

The booklet tries to set before us a picture of the way of union with God. In doing so, it has followed the method of Yoga, as propounded by Patanjali. Although the author differs from Patanjali, so far as

the aim of Yoga is concerned, he takes up his methods of discipline as an art of contemplation. He discusses at length about Christian mysticism and unitative life. The book contains some useful hints for spiritual life.

IN THE LAND OF MY BIRTH. By S. Thurai Raja Singam. *Printed by S. Lazar & Sons, 13, Scott Road, Kuala Lumpur. 56 pp. Price 50 cents.*

This is a short study of the Indian cultural affinities of Malaya in its life, literature, religion and art with its enrichment by Hindu, Buddhistic, Chinese and Islamic civilizing forces. The author has very ably shown Malaya's cultural debt to India. The book is full of information on the subject. It will, we hope, be highly interesting and profitable to those who are in any way concerned with Indian culture.

MODERN INDIA THINKS. Compiled by Keshavjee R. Luckmidas. *Published by D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co., "Kitab Mahal," Hornby Road, Bombay. 298 pp. Price Rs. 6.*

This is a symposium of suggestions on problems of Modern India by eminent men and women. The suggestions of master minds have been culled by the compiler with a careful eye on the burning questions of the day. The book may serve as a very useful reference volume and, as such, it will be of much use to people who like to consult valuable opinions on different problems of India.

RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF KHADI. By Verrier Elwin. *Published by M. R. Seshan, Triplicane, Madras. 32 pp. Price Annas 2.*

The brochure dwells upon the inner spirit of the Khadi Movement. It shows that Khadi not only solves the economic problem of the poor, but also the moral and social problems of the country.

THE OUTLINES OF THE ARYA SAMAJ. By Pandit K. Jnani. *Published by the Arya Samaj, Madras. 27 pp. Price 1 Anna.*

The pamphlet gives in a nutshell the faith and creed of the Arya Samaj.

THE DYNAMICS OF PEACE. By Swami Dhirananda. *Published by Raja-Yoga Sat-sanga Society. Studio E, 940 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, California. 8 pp. Price not given.*

This is a reprint of the article from the *Cultural World Magazine*. The writer drives his arguments home to show that Peace is locked within one's own self, as the Kingdom of God is within.

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE DRAMA OF LIFE. By the same as above. The article, reprinted from the *Cultural World Magazine*, is an attempt to solve the problem of Desire from various psychological standpoints.

BENGALI

JIVAN-LAHARI. By Harendranath Ghosh, Vidyabhushan, B.A. *Published by S. K. Ghosh, 30, Asak Lane, Dacca. 234 pp. Price Re. 1-8.*

The book aims at giving practical guidance regarding conduct in life so as to bring the best out of it. The author in his humility claims no originality of thought. But very few thoughts are original in the world. As such the value of any writing lies in making the old ideas instinct with life. The author has got that capacity. By the touch of his masterly pen, even things, which have been heard many times before, are clothed with a new message and significance. His pithy and suggestive words sometimes remind one of Marcus Aurelius and sometimes his poetic prose lends an additional charm to what he says.

The book covers all phases of life. The old and the young, men and women—all will equally profit by reading it. In these days when the country is flooded with sensational literature of doubtful utility, a book of this nature has got a distinct mission to fulfil. But this is not a book which one can afford to finish at one stretch. In order to derive full benefit from it, it should be read slowly and reflected upon from time to time; for it is a piece of writing about which it can be truly said, it should be "chewed and digested."

HINDI

BHAJAN-KIRTAN. Compiled by Keshav-dere Jnani. *Published by the same, Arya-Samaj, China Bazar, Madras, 82 pp. Price 0-1-3.*

This is a collection of some sacred hymns from the Vedas and various Hindi songs.

TULNA. By Pandit Jaiwant Ram, B.A., B.T. *Published by the same, State High School, Chamba, Punjab. 84 pp. Price As. 6.*

It gives in an interesting way a comparative study of materialistic and spiritual civilizations. It establishes the superiority of the latter. The style of the book and the treatment of the subject are admirable.

The following books are published by the Gita Press, well-known for its religious publications in Hindi:—

SRIKRISHNA-VIJNANA. By Purohit Rampratap. *260 pp. Price Re. 1, bound Re. 1-4.*

It contains the original texts of the Bhagavad-Gita and side by side gives their translation in nice Hindi poetry. It is undoubtedly a happy and useful attempt, crowned with great success. The paper, printing and get-up of the book are praiseworthy.

DEVARSHI NARADA. By Chaturvedi Pandit Dwarakaprasad Sharma, Sahityabhushana, M.R.A.S. and Pandit Indranarain Divedi. *230 pp. Price As. 12, bound Re. 1.*

The treatise gives in elegant Hindi a detailed account of the divine sage Narada's life and character together with his teachings. It contains some nice illustrations of the sage in connection with his various activities. It is full of devotional sentiments and as such it will be a profitable reading for the devotees.

APAROKSHANUBHUTI. By Munilal. *41 pp. Price As. 2-6.*

The brochure contains Sri Shamkara-charya's Aparokshanubhuti in original and gives a literal Hindi translation of the same.

PARAMARTHA PATRAVALI. By Jai-dayal Goendka. *140 pp. Price As. 4.*

In it there are 51 epistles of the author translated in Hindi. They are instructive and inspiring.

MATA. By Laksman Narayan Garde. *61 pp. Price As. 4.*

This is a free Hindi translation of Sri Aurobindo Ghose's *Mother*.

BHAKTA-BHARATI. By Pandit Tulsi-ram Sharma 'Dinesh.' 121 pp. Price As. 7, bound As. 10.

It tells the stories of seven great devotees,

e.g., Dhruva, Prahlad, Gajendra, Shavari, Ambarish, Ajamil and Kunti. It is nicely illustrated and written in a popular style.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE FIRST HINDU MISSIONARY IN SOUTH AMERICA

In response to the eager request from Academia Internacional "Schmidt" of Buenos Aires, Argentine Republic, for a teacher of Vedanta, the Ramakrishna Mission chose Swami Vijayananda for that work, who left Howrah on the 15th August last. He goes via Europe and will stop for a few weeks in Germany. Perhaps he is the first Hindu Missionary that goes to South America and his work will require the knowledge of Spanish language.

Swami Vijayananda joined the Ramakrishna Mission in 1919 and since then he has served it in various capacities. He has done many flood and famine relief works; for a considerable period he assisted in the internal management of the Headquarters at Belur and lately he was made a member of the Working Committee of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. He has done also much preaching work in Bengal and outside, and everywhere his influence has been deeply felt. For some time he was in the editorial staff of the *Prabuddha Bharata* and the now defunct *Hindi Monthly, Samanway*.

A forceful speaker, an impressive personality, a loving soul, Swami Vijayananda will be able, we are sure, to give spiritual impetus to many in his new field of activity. We can imagine that the Mission will keenly miss him for its work in India. But we hope that the Swami will come richer with his experience in the West to be of greater service to his motherland.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KANKHAL, HARDWAR

The thirty-first annual report for 1931 shows the activities of the Sevashrama under the following heads:

I. *Indoor Hospital Relief*

The total number of indoor patients during the period under review was 947. Of these 900 were cured and discharged, 11 left during treatment, 18 died and 18 were under treatment at the close of the year.

II. *Outdoor Hospital Relief*

During the year, altogether 41,618 patients, of whom 23,049 were old cases or repeated number and 18,569 new ones, were treated in the outdoor dispensary. The daily average number of the local poor people treated was 114.02. Besides medical aid, 140 patients were also supplied with diet and necessary clothings.

III. *Night School*

A free night school attached to the Sevashrama was maintained for imparting primary education to the depressed classes of the locality. There were 35 boys on the roll. A paid teacher was engaged for teaching the vernaculars of the province.

IV. *Library*

At the end of the year 1931, the total number of religious books in the Library was 1,521. Besides these, 19 monthly magazines, 12 weekly and 2 daily newspapers were also received regularly and kept on the table for the benefit of the public.

The Sevashrama is contemplating to extend its work also to Hrishikesh, where many Sadhus fall victims to various diseases without any adequate treatment. For this new work there will be need for:—

(1) A piece of land suitably located.

(2) A hospital building consisting of 4 rooms accommodating 4 patients each, and verandah.

(3) An outdoor dispensary consisting of one consultation room, one store and dispensing room, one operation and dressing room, and verandah.

(4) Workers' quarters consisting of 4 rooms and verandah.

(5) A Kitchen consisting of 2 rooms, one for store and the other for cooking.

(6) A well and a latrine.

(7) Funds sufficient for the establishment and for carrying on the work.

The Sevashrama has been serving the suffering humanity for the last 31 years with untiring zeal and industry. It has been greatly handicapped for want of adequate funds, for which it finds difficulties in extending its work in proportion to its various demands. Any contributions, therefore, may be forwarded to the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal P.O., Saharanpur Dt., U.P.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, SINGAPORE

The Annual Report of the above covers the period from July, 1930 to December, 1931. It shows that the threefold activities, namely, Missionary, Educational and Charitable, have been started by the Mission. During the period under review, the Resident Minister and the President of the local branch of the Mission conducted religious classes on Sundays, and lectures were delivered by him under the auspices of several local institutions. He made a tour in many places and impressed the people with the ideas and ideals of the Ramakrishna Order.

The small library attached to the Mission was utilized by members and outsiders. The Mission authorities are steadily trying their level best to provide scope for the realization of the ideals for which the Mission stands.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, BRINDABAN

The above has completed the twenty-fifth year of its useful existence. The annual report for 1931 shows that during the year under review the number of both indoor and outdoor patients exceeded those of the previous years. The total number of in-patients admitted was 381 against 303 in the previous year. Of this number, 293 recovered, 25 died, 7 left and 6 remained till the end of the year. At the out-patient department, there were 37,917 cases against 34,671 in the previous year. Of this number, 12,810 were new patients and 25,107, repeated cases. The Sevashrama spent about Rs. 162 during the year towards charity for a few extreme cases of privation.

The finances of the Sevashrama were hardly satisfactory. It had to solely depend on the precarious resources of subscriptions and occasional contributions. The total income derived during the year was altogether Rs. 10,373-11-3, and the total expenditure under different heads came up to Rs. 8,781-7-3, leaving a slender cash balance of Rs. 1,592-4-0 only.

The Sevashrama needs urgently a strong Permanent Fund for the upkeep of its maintenance. It requires a Surgical Ward, an Outdoor Dispensary Building, a Guest House and a Landing Ghat with an Embankment. To meet these demands, sufficient money is to be collected from the generous public. Any contributions may be forwarded to the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Brindaban, Dt. Muttra.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, MYSORE

STUDY CLASS

It was the great desire of Swami Vivekananda to present Vedanta to the modern world from the standpoint of Scientific thought. For this purpose, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama in Mysore has started a Study Class with the kind help and encouragement from His Highness, the Maharaja of Mysore. The object is to acquaint Sannyasins of the Ramakrishna Mission with the Scientific and Philosophic knowledge of the West. Some of the Professors of the Mysore University and Pandits of the Maharaja's Sanskrit College have kindly agreed to help the Sadhus in their studies and take classes in the Ashrama. The course of the study includes Comparative Religion, Psychology and Philosophy of Religion, Logic, Scientific Method, Western Philosophy and Vedanta in all its phases. The classes began on the 16th of May with blessings from Srimat Swami Shivananda, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission. The Course is expected to cover a period of about two years. The Ashrama cannot sufficiently thank His Highness, the Maharaja of Mysore for the uniform sympathy evinced by him in matters relating to the activities of the Ashrama from its very inception. It is a source of the highest gratification that such institutions have grown under the spiritual auspices of an Indian ruler, so exceptionally good and godly.

STUDENTS' HOME

Ever since the Mysore branch of the Ramakrishna Math was started seven years ago, its work has been mainly among the students. Religious classes are being held by the members of the Ashrama in the hostels and educational institutions of the city. Many friends of the Ashrama have often urged the need for a Students' Home conducted by the Ashrama to which they could send their children, being confident that they would make the most satisfactory progress under proper supervision. With the generous gift of a building very near the Ashrama at Vontikoppal by Mr. M. S. Rangacharya, Advocate, Mysore, the donation of Rs. 1,000/- by Mr. M. S. Manjappa Gowda of Shimoga and Rs. 100/- by Mr. D. R. Manappa also of Shimoga for the above purposes, the Ashrama was able to start the Home on Monday, the 20th June, 1932. The daily routine and the rules of the Home have been so framed as to realize the objects with which it has been started.

KUMBHA MELA AT HARDWAR

Swami Kalyanananda, Secy., R. K. Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, has sent us the following :

The "Ardha Kumbha Mela" comes off at Hardwar in April, 1933, after a lapse of six years. Considering the modern facilities of communication and the recent "Kumbha Melas" at Allahabad and Ujjain, we expect that a far larger number of pilgrims will congregate at Hardwar during the ensuing Kumbha Mela.

The Sevashrama will have to strain every nerve to alleviate the sufferings of the sick, and helpless pilgrims both high and low, in all possible ways on this occasion. In order to meet the exigency properly and successfully, pre-arrangement is imperatively necessary. Consequently we are preparing ourselves beforehand to cope with it.

Our work will comprise the following items :—

(i) PERMANENT HOSPITAL RELIEF SECTION—
This section will be composed of 1 Doctor, 2 Compounders, 1 Dresser and several

Nurses. They will be in charge of our Permanent Hospital both indoor and outdoor, except the Cholera Section.

(ii) TEMPORARY RELIEF SECTION—This section will have 1 Doctor, 1 Compounder and 2 Nurses, who will go round every day from camp to camp to find out patients who are unable to come to the Sevashrama and treat them there.

(iii) SPECIAL CHOLERA RELIEF SECTION—The activities of this section undertaken by different batches of volunteers will be directed as follows: (a) to nurse Cholera patients in a special ward, (b) to bring in Cholera patients on ambulance cars and to burn the dead bodies, (c) to disinfect the places wherefrom the Cholera patients will be brought.

(iv) KITCHEN SECTION—The workers of this section will take charge of kitchen and Store Department and prepare food for the patients, workers and guests.

But to carry out these activities successfully we have to bring several trained workers and doctors from outside, as the Sevashrama with its small number of workers will find great difficulty in handling the permanent hospital alone. Moreover, medicines, diet and other necessities will be needed specially for that occasion. Besides, many guests are expected to come and live with us during that time. To meet the situation in a proper way, a sum of Rs. 10,000/-, at least, will be required. We therefore earnestly appeal to the generous public, and to our friends and sympathisers to take into consideration our coming difficulties and extend their helping hand without delay, inasmuch as it will not be possible to carry out the aforesaid activities unless adequate fund is forthcoming.

Any contribution, in kind or coin, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by—

(i) Swami Kalyanananda, Hony. Secy., Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal P.O., Dt. Saharanpur, U.P.

(ii) The President, Ramakrishna Mission, Belur Math P.O., Dt. Howrah, Bengal.

(iii) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.