

Prabuddha Bharata

OR AWAKENED INDIA

* * * *

JUNE, 1933



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत

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

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ADVAITA ASHRAMA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON THE MASSES OF INDIA

WORLD'S INDEBTEDNESS TO THEM

Those uncared-for lower classes of India—the peasants and weavers and the rest, who have been conquered by foreigners and are looked down upon by their own people, it is they who from time immemorial have been working silently, without even getting the remuneration of their labours ! . . . Ye labouring classes of India, as a result of your silent, constant labours Babylon, Persia, Alexandria, Greece, Rome, Venice, Genoa, Baghdad, Samarkand, Spain, Portugal, France, Denmark, Holland and England have successively attained and supremacy and eminence ! And you ?—Well, who cares to think of you ! My dear Swami, your ancestors wrote a few philosophical works, penned a dozen or so epics, or built a number of temples—that is all, and you rend the skies with triumphal shouts ; while those whose heart's blood has contributed to all the progress that has been made in the world,—well, who cares to

praise them ? The world-conquering heroes of spirituality, war and poetry are in the eyes of all, and they have received the homage of mankind ; but where nobody looks, no one gives a word of encouragement, where everybody hates—that living amid such circumstances and displaying boundless patience, infinite love, and dauntless practicality, our proletariat are doing their duty in their homes day and night, without the slightest murmur,—well, is there no heroism in this ? Many turn out to be heroes, when they have got some great task to perform. Even a coward easily gives up his life, and the most selfish man behaves disinterestedly, when there is a multitude to cheer them on ; but blessed indeed is he who manifests the same unselfishness and devotion to duty in the smallest of acts, unnoticed by all,—and it is you who are actually doing this, ye ever-trampled labouring classes of India ! I bow to you.

THEIR RELIGIOUS CULTURE

Look at this little phenomenon. There have been immense political changes within the last four or five years. Gigantic organizations undertaking to subvert the whole of existing institutions in different countries and meeting with a certain amount of success have been working all over the Western world. Ask our people if they have heard anything about them? They have heard not a word about them. But that there was a Parliament of Religions in Chicago, and that there was a Sannyâsin sent over from India to that Parliament, and that he was very well received, and since that time has been working in the West, the poorest beggar has known. I have heard that our masses are dense, that they do not want any education, and that they do not care for any information. I had at one time a foolish leaning towards that opinion myself, but I find experience is a far more glorious teacher than any amount of speculation, or any amount of books written by globe-trotters and hasty observers. This experience teaches me that they are not dense, that they are not slow, that they are as eager and thirsty for information as any race under the sun; but then each nation has its own part to play, and naturally, each nation has its own peculiarity and individuality, with which it is born. . . . Touch him (Hindu mind) on religion, on God, on the soul, on the Infinite, on spiritual freedom, and I assure you, the lowest peasant in India is better informed on these subjects than many a so-called philosopher in other lands.

. . . . I pointed out the fact that a peasant in India has, in many respects, a better religious education than many a gentleman in the West, and to-day, beyond all doubt, I myself am verify-

ing my own words. There was a time when I did feel rather discontented at the want of information among the masses of India, and the lack of thirst among them for information, but now I understand it. Where their interest lies, there they are more eager for information than the masses of any other race that I have seen or have travelled among. Ask our peasants about the momentous political changes in Europe, the upheavals that are going on in European society, and they do not know anything of them, nor do they care to know; but the peasants, even in Ceylon, detached from India in many ways, cut off from a living interest in India—I found the very peasants working in the fields there, were already acquainted with the fact that there had been a Parliament of Religions in America, and that an Indian Sannyasin had gone over there and that he had some success.

THEIR TYRANNIZED CONDITION

In India, especially, we meet with old fogies all over the land. They want to keep everything secret from the masses. These people came to the very satisfying conclusion, that they are the *crème de la crème* of this universe. They believe they cannot be hurt by these dangerous experiments. It is only the masses that can be hurt by them!

Aye, my friends, I must tell you a few harsh truths. I read in the newspapers, how, when one of our poor fellows is murdered or ill-treated by an Englishman, howls go all over the country; I read and I weep, and the next moment comes to my mind the question, who is responsible for it all. As a Vedantist I cannot but put that question to myself. . . . I therefore ask myself who is responsible, and the

answer comes every time, not the English; no, they are not responsible; it is we who are responsible for all our misery and all our degradation, and we alone are responsible. Our aristocratic ancestors went on treading the common masses of our country under foot, till they became helpless, till under this torment the poor, poor people nearly forgot that they were human beings. They have been compelled to be merely hewers of wood and drawers of water for centuries, so much so, that they are made to believe that they are born as slaves, born as hewers of wood and drawers of water. With all our boasted education of modern times, if anybody says a kind word for them, I often find our men shrink at once from the duty of lifting them up, these poor down-trodden people. Not only so, but I also find that all sorts of most demoniacal and brutal arguments, culled from the crude ideas of hereditary transmission, and other such gibberish from the Western world, are brought forward in order to brutalize and tyrannize over the poor, all the more.

Aye, in this country of ours, the very birthplace of the Vedanta, our masses have been hypnotized for ages into that state. To touch them is pollution; to sit with them is pollution! Hopeless they were born; hopeless they must remain! And the result is that they have been sinking, sinking, sinking, and have come to the last stage to which a human being can come. For what country is there in the world where man has to sleep with the cattle; and for this blame nobody else, do not commit the mistake of the ignorant. The effect is here and the cause is here too. We are to blame. Stand up, be bold, and take the blame on your own shoulders. Do not go about throwing mud at others; for all the faults you

suffer from, you are the sole and only cause.

The nation is sinking, the curse of unnumbered millions is on your heads;—those to whom we have been giving ditch-water to drink when they have been dying of thirst and while the perennial river of water was flowing past; the unnumbered millions whom we have allowed to starve in sight of plenty; the unnumbered millions to whom we have talked of *Ādvaīta* and whom we have hated with all our strength; the unnumbered millions for whom we have invented the doctrine of *Lokāchāra*;—to whom we have talked theoretically that we are all the same and all are one with the same Lord, without even an ounce of practice. “Yet, my friends, it must be only in the mind and never in practice!” Wipe off this blot. . . . Arise and awake and be perfectly sincere. Our insincerity in India is awful. . . .

And, Oh, how my heart ached to think of what we think of the poor, the low, in India. They have no chance, no escape, no way to climb up. The poor, the low, the sinner in India have no friends, no help,—they cannot rise, try however they may. They sink lower and lower every day, they feel the blows showering upon them by a cruel society, and they do not know whence the blow comes. They have forgotten that they too are men. And the result is slavery. Thoughtful people within the last few years have seen it, but unfortunately laid it at the door of the Hindu religion, and to them, the only way of bettering is by crushing this grandest religion of the world. Hear me, my friend, I have discovered the secret through the grace of the Lord. Religion is not at fault. On the other hand, your religion teaches you that every being is only your own self multiplied. But it is the want of practical application, the

want of sympathy—the want of heart. The Lord once more came to you as Buddha and taught you how to feel, how to sympathize with the poor, the miserable, the sinner, but you heard Him not. Your priests invented the horrible story that the Lord was here for deluding demons with false doctrines! True indeed, but we are the demons, not those that believed. And just as the Jews denied the Lord Jesus and are since that day wandering over the world as homeless beggars, tyrannized over by everybody, so you are bond-slaves to any nation that thinks it worth while to rule over you. Ah, tyrants! You do not know that the obverse is tyranny, and the reverse, slavery. The slave and the tyrant are synonymous.

No religion on earth preaches the dignity of humanity in such a lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism. The Lord has shown me that religion is not at fault, but it is the Pharisees and Sadducees in Hinduism, hypocrites, who invent all sorts of engines of tyranny in the shape of doctrines of Pâramâarthika and Vyâvahârîka.

Their nice little brown-studies of lives are never rudely shocked by the wail of woe, of misery, of degradation and poverty, that has filled the Indian atmosphere,—the result of centuries of oppression. They little dream of the ages of tyranny, mental, moral and physical, that has reduced the image of God to a mere beast of burden. . . .

If anybody is born of a low caste in our country, he is gone for ever, there is no hope for him. Why, what a tyranny it is! There are possibilities, opportunities and hope for every individual in this country (America). To-day he is poor, to-morrow he may become rich and learned and respected. Here everyone is anxious to help the poor. In

India there is a howling cry that we are very poor, but how many charitable associations are there for the well-being of the poor? How many people really weep for the sorrows and sufferings of the millions of the poor in India? Are we *men*? What are we doing for their livelihood, for their improvement? We do not touch them, we avoid their company! Are we men? Those thousands of Brâhmanas—what are they doing for the low, down-trodden masses of India?

Let each one of us pray day and night for the down-trodden millions in India who are held fast by poverty, priestcraft and tyranny,—pray day and night for them. I care more to preach religion to them than to the high and the rich. I am no metaphysician, no philosopher, nay, no saint. But I am poor, I love the poor. I see what they call the poor of this country, and how many there are who feel for them! What an immense difference in India! Who feels there for the two hundred millions of men and women sunken for ever in poverty and ignorance? Where is the way out? Who feels for them? They cannot find light or education. Who will bring the light to them—who will travel from door to door bringing education to them? Let these people be your God—think of them—work for them, pray for them incessantly—the Lord will show you the way. Him I call a Mahâtman (great soul) whose heart bleeds for the poor, otherwise he is a Durâtman (wicked soul). Let us unite our wills in continued prayer for their good. We may die unknown, unpitied, unbewailed, without accomplishing anything,—but not one thought will be lost. It will take effect, sooner or later. My heart is too full to express my feeling; you know it, you can imagine it. So long as the millions live

in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor, who having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them! I call those men who strut about in their finery, having got all their money by grinding the poor, wretches, so long as they do not do anything for those two hundred millions who are now no better than hungry savages! We are poor, my brothers, we are no-bodies; but such have been always the instruments of the Most High.

The one problem you have is to give to the masses their rights. You have the greatest religion which the world ever saw, and you feed the masses with stuff and nonsense. You have the perennial fountain flowing, and you give them ditch-water. Your Madras graduate would not touch a low-caste man, but is ready to get out of him the money for his education. . . . Our masses are gods as compared with those of other countries. This is the only country where poverty is not a crime. They are mentally and physically handsome; but we hated and hated them till they have lost faith in themselves. They think they are born slaves. Give them their rights, and let them stand on their rights. This is the glory of the American civilization. Compare the Irishman with knees bent, half-starved, with a little stick and bundle of clothes, just arrived from the ship, with what he is after a few months' stay in America. He walks boldly and bravely. He has come from a country where he was a slave, to a country where he is a brother.

A country where millions of people live on flowers of the *mohua* plant, and a million or two of Sadhus and a hundred millions or so of Brahmins suck the blood out of these poor people, without even the least effort for their amelioration—is that a country or hell? Is that a religion, or the

devil's dance? My brother, here is one thing for you to understand fully,—I have travelled all over India, and seen the country too—can there be an effect without cause?

HOW TO IMPROVE THEIR CONDITION

The one thing that is at the root of all evils in India is the condition of the poor. The poor in the West are devils; compared to them ours are angels, and it is therefore so much the easier to raise our poor. The only service to be done for our lower classes is, to give them education, to *develop their lost individuality*. That is the great task between our people and princes. Up to now nothing has been done in that direction. Priest-power and foreign conquest have trodden them down for centuries, and at last the poor of India have forgotten that they are human beings. They are to be given ideas; their eyes are to be opened to what is going on in the world around them, and then they will work out their salvation. Every nation, every man and every woman must work out their own salvation. Give them ideas—that is the only help they require, and then the rest must follow as the effect. Ours is to put the chemicals together, the crystallization comes in the law of nature. Our duty is to put ideas into their heads, they will do the rest. This is what is to be done in India. It is this idea that has been in my mind for a long time. I could not accomplish it in India, and that was the reason of my coming to this country. The great difficulty in the way of educating the poor, is this. Supposing even your Highness* opens a free school in every village, still it would do no good, for

*Written to the Maharaja of Mysore.

the poverty in India is such, that the poor boys would rather go to help their fathers in the fields, or otherwise try to make a living, than come to the school. Now if the mountain does not come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain. If the poor boy cannot come to education, education must go to him. There are thousands of single-minded, self-sacrificing Sannyasins in our own country, going from village to village, teaching religion. If some of them can be organized as teachers of secular things also, they will go from place to place, from door to door, not only preaching but teaching also. Suppose two of these men go to a village in the evening with a camera, a globe, some maps, etc., they can teach a great deal of astronomy and geography to the ignorant. By telling stories about different nations, they can give the poor a hundred times more information through the ear than they can get in a lifetime through books. This requires an organization, which again means money. Men enough there are in India to work out this plan, but alas! they have no money. It is very difficult to set a wheel in motion, but when once set, it goes on with increasing velocity. After seeking help in my own country and failing to get any sympathy from the rich, I came over to this country through your Highness' aid. The Americans do not care a bit whether the poor of India die or live. And why should they, when our own people never think of anything but their own selfish ends?

From the day when education and culture, etc. began to spread gradually from patricians to plebeians, grew the distinction between the modern civilization as of Western countries, and the ancient civilization as of India, Egypt, Rome, etc. I see it before my eyes, a nation is advanced in proportion as

education and intelligence spread among the masses. The chief cause of India's ruin has been the monopolizing of the whole education and intelligence of the land, by dint of pride and royal authority, among a handful of men. If we are to rise again, we shall have to do it in the same way, *i.e.* by spreading education among the masses. A great fuss has been made for half a century about social reform. Travelling through various places of India these last ten years, I observed the country full of social reform associations. But I did not find one association for them, by sucking whose blood the people known as 'gentlemen,' have become and continue to be gentlemen!

Education, education, education alone! Travelling through many cities of Europe and observing in them the comforts and education of even the poor people, there was brought to my mind the state of our own people and I used to shed tears. What made the difference? Education was the answer I got. Through education, faith in one's own self, and through faith in one's own self the inherent Brahman is waking up in them, while the Brahman in us is gradually becoming dormant.

The remedy now is, the spread of education. First of all, Self-knowledge. I do not mean thereby, matted hair, staff, *Kamandalu* and mountain caves which the word suggests. What do I mean then? Cannot the knowledge by which is attained even freedom from the bondage of worldly existence, bring ordinary material prosperity? Certainly it can. . . . From the highest God to the meanest grass, the same power is present in all—whether manifested or not. We shall have to call forth that power by going from door to door.

Secondly, along with this, education has to be imparted. That is easy to

say, but how to reduce it into practice? There are thousands of unselfish, kind-hearted men in our country, who have renounced everything. In the same way as they travel about and give religious instructions without any remuneration, so at least half of them can be trained as teachers, or bearers of such education as we need most. For that, we want first of all a centre in the capital of each Presidency, from whence to spread slowly throughout the whole of India. Then, the greater part of the education of the poor should be given orally, time is not yet ripe for schools. Gradually in these main centres will be taught agriculture, industry, etc., and workshops will be established for the furtherance of arts. To sell the manufactures of these workshops in Europe and America, associations will be started like those already in existence.

My idea is to bring to the door of the meanest, the poorest, the noble ideas that the human race has developed both in and out of India, and let them think for themselves.

My whole ambition in life is to set in motion a machinery which will bring noble ideas to the door of everybody, and then let men and women settle their own fate. Let them know what our forefathers as well as other nations

have thought on the most momentous questions of life. Let them see specially what others are doing now, and then decide. We are to put the chemicals together, the crystallization will be done by nature according to her laws. Work hard, be steady and have faith in the Lord. . . . Keep the motto before you,—“Elevation of the masses without injuring the religion.”

Remember that the nation lives in the cottage. But, alas! nobody ever did anything for them. Our modern reformers are very busy about widow remarriage. Of course I am a sympathizer in every reform, but the fate of a nation does not depend upon the number of husbands their widows get, but upon the *condition* of masses. Can you raise them? Can you give them back their lost individuality without making them lose their innate spiritual nature? Can you become an occidental of occidentals in your spirit of equality, freedom, work and energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts? This is to be done and *we will do it*. You are all *born to do it*. Have faith in yourselves, great convictions are the mothers of great deeds. Onward for ever! Sympathy for the poor, the down-trodden, even unto death—this is our motto.

(To be continued)

THREE STAGES

BY THE EDITOR

I

Man has got an inveterate tendency to take to the rôle of a teacher. One will be more eager to give advice to

others than to follow that oneself. One will more easily find fault with others than with oneself. At the bottom of all these will be found the common de-

sire that we want to be a guardian more of others than of ourselves. And in that, we seldom pause to inquire what is the real nature of the man whom we want to guide. In the very nature of things, it is very difficult to penetrate through the mind of a man to find out what he really is. But generally we do not make an attempt even. Rarely do we try to understand the real nature of a man before we give him advice and guidance, or sometimes thrust our ideas on him. The result becomes as tragic as will be that of our endeavour to bring apples out of a fig tree or see figs grow on an apple tree.

In one sense, so much preponderance of books in the present system of education all the world over, may be attributed to the abnormal desire in man to guide others—to save the world, as they say, as if the world will not be saved but for one's self-constituted leadership. How does a book come into being?—From the desire of the author to give some suggestion and advice to the reading public. The more superficial the life one lives, the easier is the conscience with which one gives advice to others or embodies that in print. The result is, that the modern world is flooded with books. But if one analyses them, it will be found that three-fourths of them contain thoughts and ideas which are simply the echoes and repetition of what one gets in the remaining one-fourth, and of the latter also half the number contain scarcely anything which the world did not know beforehand.

Then, what is the use of burdening the brain and memory of a boy with so much reading material? What is the use of wasting valuable time by browsing on an infinite variety of books?

There may be a kind of pleasure in seeing the shifting scenes while travelling post-haste by a train. But as a

matter of fact nothing of them do we see deeply and in such a way that any lasting and beneficent impression will be left behind. Similar is the case, most often, with our reading. Reading too many books is like enjoying a play in cinema, of which we afterwards remember nothing except the mere names and the plot. To judge from this standpoint, the production of so many books in the modern age is but a doubtful blessing to the world, if not a positive curse. The circumstances of the present world are such that people have to live a very hurried (we shall not call it busy, because they are very often not profitably busy) life; so that they have no time to think leisurely or consider anything deeply. As such, the press naturally caters to the taste rather than to the necessity of the reading public. The result is, that the demand for deep and thoughtful literature is everywhere becoming less and less.

Three centuries back, the great English thinker Francis Bacon deplored that what the world had been trying for two thousand years to do for the education of man was wholly wrong and as such the world's stock of knowledge had been infinitesimally small in comparison with what would have been the case otherwise. It is very doubtful whether the world has been any the wiser since the days of Bacon. Bacon's idea was that a man should be encouraged to think for himself and not be obsessed with thoughts and ideas from outside; and that by following this method, one would be able to seek knowledge at its original source and arrive at truths more easily.

But what actually happens now? A child has a free mind at first; but as he begins to grow, his thoughts are coloured and moulded by the thoughts of others. And by the time he is fully

grown up, the child becomes a fixed pattern, like the uniform goods coming out of a manufacturing establishment; he loses himself in the thoughts and ideas with which he is surrounded in the environment.

II

To get a real education, according to Bacon, one must free oneself from four kinds of prejudices or "idols," as he would call them. These are: (1) the "idols of the tribe," *i.e.* prejudices common to all races due to the following of common methods; (2) "idols of the cave or den," *i.e.* personal prejudices and predilections; (3) "idols of the market place," *i.e.* what are the outcome of imperfect expression in words; and (4) "idols of the theatre," *i.e.*, the unreliable traditions of men. Freed from these prejudices, when a man can think for himself, he can more easily get a better type of education, or arrive at a more correct estimate of things.

Now, what is the value of books in our education? They have got but a secondary utility. Stuffing the mind with information contained in the books is no education at all. This is as good as keeping the books in a library, unless the reading sets our mind a-thinking. Books have got an importance to the extent they supply us with suggestions for new ways of thinking and give us new avenues of thoughts.

Even in the matter of reading books how much is a man hampered! In the likes and dislikes of books one is tied down by the common tendencies of the time or the common opinion of a society. Hardly will there be found one who can give an opinion about a book which is different from that held by the general public. The teacher

tries to make his students see in the book what he himself sees. Parents will force their children to read those books which they themselves read or consider 'safe' for the latter. Instances are not rare of persons, who afterwards left their impress upon the thought of the world, but were persecuted in their early days because they could not subscribe to the opinions of their parents, teachers or fellow-students.

If education means the preparation for life, one must not be supplied with ready-made advice or "labelled" thoughts for guidance contained in print,—for, life is not a fixed path; on the contrary, it is a fresh adventure for each individual—but one should be trained to develop judgment and resourcefulness to deal with diverse changing situations one is inevitably to be faced with in the world.

III

Man is a mystery. We do not know what he really is. But this is sure that there is infinite possibility, strength, power and knowledge hidden within every human being. Knowledge is manifest from within and does not come from outside. The outside agencies serve at best as an indirect cause to bring out the knowledge that is within, just like a moving pin which brings out the music from a gramophone record. By coming in contact with the outside world, when we meet with varying situations, our mind turns inward as a reaction and discovers each time a nugget of truth. The falling of an apple turned the mind of Newton inward, and from the depth of his being he came out with the explanation why the apple falls, and the world got to know the Law of Gravitation. So the best form of education and the best asset and preparation for life should be

to find out the means by which we can come in touch with the infinite source of knowledge within everyone of us.

According to the Oriental philosophy this can be done only by the concentration of mind. A man, with an ability to focus his mind at will, will know the truth of everything very easily. So at the back of the Eastern system of education was the idea to develop the power of concentration, and minute processes were discovered as to how the power of the concentration of mind could be developed. Swami Vivekananda once said, "If I had to do my education over again, and had my voice in the matter, I would not study facts at all. I would develop the power of concentration and detachment, and then with a perfect instrument I could collect facts at will."

That the concentration of mind plays the most important part in education is illustrated by the fact that the world has seen from time to time persons who had little of book-learning, but whose contribution to the stock of human knowledge was nevertheless immense. What education did Christ get? But even at the age of twelve he could beat the Jewish priests in argument and give them new light on the problem of life. Mahomet also had no schooling. The world around him was found too much for him. He began to think and think of the meaning and significance of the universe, and the result of his success is that he has become the Light of Life for the one-fifth of humanity for thirteen hundred years. Buddha discovered truths by diving down within himself, and what he taught in simple language, intelligible even to a man in the street, has been the subject of learned discussion by profound scholars and philosophers for more than two thousand years. Every country fur-

nishes illustrations of saints and seers who had little or no education, in the popular sense of the term, but whose words of wisdom have been the invaluable treasures of humanity.

The same thing holds good in the field of science, art, philosophy, etc. It is said of the great poet Kalidas that he was a dunce in his early days and that it was due to the sudden grace of the Goddess of Learning that he got his dramatic genius developed. Does not this story symbolize the fact that the great poet was anything but learned, yet getting at the mine of infinite knowledge within himself he discovered truths which have been the wonder of the world. Shakespeare also was but poorly educated. Socrates was the son of a sculptor and lived a sculptor. Still his thoughts coloured the entire Greek philosophy, and through that has greatly influenced the whole of Western civilization.

From all this it follows that the chief problem of education should be not to stuff the mind of a boy with facts, but to train him to think for himself. John Locke, whose ideas afterwards greatly influenced Rousseau's theory of education, was right when he said that the problem of education must be to learn by experience. Let each man have his own experience. By each experience his mind will be set a-thinking, and thereby he will get a knowledge which will help him to meet similar situations in life. And through the accumulation of knowledge this way, he will ultimately be able to solve the problems of his life.

IV

But how sad it is that a very negligible number of persons will be found, if we examine closely, who think for themselves and do not simply repeat

the opinion of others. Many want to be saved from the trouble of thinking for themselves, and there are many who cannot rise above or free themselves from the party-ideas or the ideas of the time and surroundings. Then, there is the inferiority-complex. In every society, one is trained from childhood to put implicit faith in the words of someone or other, to question whose words it would be as if an act of treason or blasphemy. The child is *forced* to take the words of his teacher or elders for granted, and this method afterwards gives rise to the tendency in man to take the words of his party-leaders, or of those reputed to be learned, on faith, without the least thought that the latter also are liable to err, as every mortal is. And this process deadens also the spirit of enquiry in man with growing years. Every child will be found to show signs of great curiosity regarding everything it meets with. It wants an explanation for everything it sees. But the growing man passes by many things unnoticed, which otherwise might have led to the discovery of many valuable truths. The origin of this sad tragedy lies in the fact that throughout the period of education, one is supplied with ready-made conclusions and solutions. How magnanimous was Buddha that he asked his disciples not to believe in anything because he himself said so, or the scriptures told so, but to try to discover the truth for themselves. "O Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye refuge to yourselves . . . And whosoever, Ananda, either now or after I am dead, shall be a lamp unto themselves . . . it is they, Ananda, among the seekers after Bodhi, who shall reach the very topmost height," declared the Enlightened.

This, however, does not preclude the profit one may gain from believing in

the wisdom of the scriptures or following the teachings of the Seers. We should not, from the very outset, set aside as false or untrustworthy what the scriptures say or the Prophets have taught. What is necessary is to make them part and parcel of our being, by passing them through the process of our own thought. In the training of wrestling, a neophyte is asked to combat with an expert, however incompatible may be the match; but it is in this way that the former grows gradually to be a mighty wrestler. In the same way, if we think and reason about what we hear from the teachers or read in the scriptures, we derive greater benefit. The world contains so many scriptures, has witnessed so many Prophets; how is it that we have derived little profit from them? We read so many religious books, hear invaluable truths from so many teachers; why is it that they leave no lasting impression on our minds? It is because we do not think of those teachings deeply and in their practical relation to life. "Manana" or the act of constantly reflecting on the words of the teachers is one of the most important items of *sadhana*. But 'Manana' denotes the enquiry to find out the *deeper* meanings, underlying them, and not the act of rejecting them as invalid and unreliable. This fact must be particularly noted. Self-reverence is not synonymous with self-conceitedness. Thinking for oneself does not mean developing any feeling of self-sufficiency. We must keep our mind always alert and wide awake to receive new knowledge and to profit by the experience of others. What is required is, that what we receive from outside must serve only as a light to discover what is within ourselves. In that case only, truths will be our own, and they will give us sustenance of life.

V

However great may be the importance of independent thinking as a factor of education, its value is small in comparison with what experience one gains from action. A man may pass through a military college for ever so many years, but the real military training he gets in the thick of the fight in an actual battlefield. Thinking furnishes the mind with *directions* as to how to face life, but it is when one has to actually fight out the battle of life that one knows the real significance of its problems, its obstacles and difficulties and the ways and means to overcome them. It is in the laboratory of the world that one gets a real education and practical training. Till then, one is at best like a man who knows in theory the art of swimming, but has never been in water.

Scientific truths are discovered through observations and experiments. Both these factors are necessary. A scientist comes to some conclusions from observations, and then he has to test the truth of his conclusions through experimentations. Similarly one may have a confidence that one has some or all the virtues and qualities which one should possess, but the real test comes when one plunges into life. While living a comfortable life, many can very easily show happy indications of many admirable qualities, but when adversity comes, few can keep them up. It is in the school of adversity that life is tested and character is built. Working up imagination, living to himself, a man may think that he has developed self-control or universal love, but perchance he will behave worse than any one, when he meets the world and gets the slightest rebuff or opposition in life. Sometimes it is found that an unlettered mechanic, only through experience, turns out work much better than one

who has got a brilliant university career in engineering. Similarly, a man may be a good thinker, he may fully know the solutions of all the intricate problems of life and give sound advice to others; but he cannot be compared with one who has got the ripe experience of life and passed through the fiery ordeal of the world.

A man may have a full, intellectual grasp of the meaning of the Gita, he may write learned commentaries upon it; but he is a better student of the Gita, though not at all learned, who devoutly seeks and derives the sustenance of life from the immortal teachings of that sacred book. And a third man is still better, who, though not knowing the whole of the Gita, makes an earnest attempt to put even a single precept contained therein into actual practice in life. It is said that an almanac sometimes foretells that there will be a great flood in the year, but if the book is squeezed, not a drop of water will come out. Theories and ideas avail nothing in life; it is the practice that counts. A patient may have a medical knowledge of his disease and the drug that will cure him; but that is of no practical use. He will have to go to a druggist, get the medicine and take it before he can expect to recover.

From that standpoint it matters little, if a man does not know much; but if he can put into practice what little he knows, he will be a much better man. A biographer of Ignatius Loyola has said that few gentlemen had so few ideas as the founder of the Jesuit Order, but that still fewer had been more earnest in the practical realization of these ideas. And Loyola, through his life and teachings, brought about almost a revolution in the whole Catholic world and left his marked influence upon the European culture and civilization. Many live an ignoble life not owing to

any want of knowledge regarding how to live well, but because they make no attempt to translate a single good idea into action; because their will is not strengthened through action and their character is not developed from the interaction of success and failure in a constant endeavour to reach any particular ideal. As such, they find, when old, that it is too late to mend, even if they wish to.

According to the Bible, it is not they who offer lip-worship to God, but those who do the will of the Lord, that will be saved. In the same way, it is not those who build good theories, but those who try to put them into practice, that will get the most out of life. Were not people blind to this simple fact, there would have been less of controversy and more of peace in the world, and humanity would have made a greater progress.

WISDOM AND IGNORANCE

BY SWAMI ATULANANDA

I

Whenever we study, no matter what it may be, we have a certain object in view. That object is, in all cases, the requirement of knowledge. It is the thirst for knowledge that makes us study. Knowledge gives us pleasure. Therefore we are willing to make certain sacrifices, to go through a certain amount of trouble, to gain knowledge. Every sincere effort to gain knowledge we may call study, and the object of our study will naturally be that in which we feel most interested, the knowledge of which, will give us the greatest satisfaction.

Knowledge does not come of itself. It requires effort on our part. Knowledge will come regarding *that* subject only, towards which our effort is directed. The scientist wants to acquire knowledge about nature and her laws; to gain that knowledge is his object. So, he engages himself in the study of the laws of nature and their workings, simply because the acquirement of such knowledge makes him happy. It gives him satisfaction and enjoyment. The

artist studies art, that is, he tries to discover the beauty that lies hidden in all things. Whenever he discovers a new beauty, he is happy. Therefore he studies art.

So it is with all our studies. We find that it is always the acquirement of knowledge,—or to put it in other words, the acquisition of truth that makes us happy. Every new discovery that we make, thrills us with joy.

Ignorance is painful. We are not always conscious of this fact, but it is true. we discover this every time when we enjoy the happiness that comes with new knowledge, with new discoveries. So Vedanta teaches that the root of all evil, all pain and misery is Avidya, or ignorance and the only remedy for misery is Vidya or knowledge.

But when we speak of Avidya or ignorance in Vedanta, we do not mean only the negative state of being in want of knowledge. It includes much more. It means also the possession of wrong knowledge. Ignorance is a negative as well as a positive evil; it includes absence of knowledge as well as the

possession of wrong knowledge or of mistaken knowledge which makes a thing appear to be what in reality it is not. Vidya or wisdom is the removal of both these phases of ignorance.

Negative ignorance, that is, the want of knowledge may be removed by filling up the empty space in our mind with knowledge. Every study and investigation has this end in view. When ignorance regarding a certain subject makes us unhappy, all we have to do is to study that subject and get knowledge regarding it. If ignorance regarding science, or certain customs of a people, or their language, makes us unhappy, the road to happiness is clear enough. Study your subject, and the thing is done. But far more difficult is it to remove wrong knowledge. When once a wrong idea has taken hold of the mind, it is often very difficult to replace it by a true idea. It does not mean simply the filling up of an empty space. It means the uprooting of one idea and then replacing it by another. This is often most difficult and painful, for we cling to what we have. It is difficult to let old ideas go. It requires a great, strong effort of the will to uproot well-established, wrong notions, which we so long have embraced as truth.

II

Now according to Vedanta, the greatest ignorance under which the ordinary man labours, is ignorance regarding himself, regarding his own being, his own existence and his own true nature. It is a deep-rooted ignorance. It is not only absence of knowledge but it is a well-established, positive, wrong knowledge.

The ordinary man does not say : I do not know what I am, teach me the truth. He says, or at least all his actions show that he thinks, I am body and mind and nothing more.

Here is a positively wrong knowledge, the knowledge that man is only body and mind, and to replace this wrong notion by the knowledge that man is *not* body and mind, but spirit, pure and simple, is a long and painful process,—a transformation of ideas, most difficult to bring about.

That it is so, need not surprise us, if we consider that this body-idea dates back from the dawn of humanity ; that through thousands of previous lives man has established and strengthened and clung to this misconception that he is body,—flesh and bones and a bundle of appetites, desires and ideas. But man is *not* these. Man is spirit, the Atman.

How long have we been telling ourselves that we are matter only ! From the moment the soul clothed itself with body, this wrong idea has been growing. Through the mineral kingdom, through plant-life, through animal kingdom, man has slowly evolved to what he is. No one can say how many æons of time it has taken the soul to evolve into a human being. But certain it is, that through all these innumerable births, the soul has identified itself with the bodies through which it manifested.

Now in the human form, we still think that we are the body. We have not yet realized that the body is only the instrument through which the spirit manifests. All our knowledge, at present, comes through the senses. But the senses can teach us only about matter, about things relating to the material universe. Even the mind can go only as far as the subtle or mental world which is also matter. Neither the mind nor the senses can teach us about the spirit, the real man in each man. But man need not stop there.

It has taken the soul æons of time to evolve to the state of man. But once having come to this state of evolution, a new chapter in its course of progress

has opened up. For to man alone it is given to acquire higher knowledge, a knowledge not depending on the senses, a wisdom that the mind and the senses cannot reach. This knowledge that comes through intuition, or soul-perception. It is direct knowledge, direct perception of one's true being.

This knowledge flashes in the soul without any external medium. It is self-revelation,—soul or spirit, realizing spirit. This direct and unadulterated knowledge is the highest knowledge that can come to man; it is the revelation of Absolute Truth. To know this Absolute Truth is the highest knowledge. As all knowledge brings pleasure to man, this highest knowledge, Truth, brings the highest enjoyment. This enjoyment, to distinguish it from sense-enjoyment, is called Anandam or Bliss. Bliss is what every being is really striving for. We all want the highest happiness, we all want bliss. This bliss comes, when ignorance goes and Divine wisdom takes its place.

The effort to attain that Divine wisdom, is the path of religion. Religion brings man the highest bliss, absolute satisfaction and contentment.

III

Now we must remember that Hindu scriptures do not speak of wisdom and ignorance (Vidya and Avidya) alone, but they speak also of two kinds of knowledge namely the Para and the Apara, the higher and the lower knowledge. To the lower knowledge belong science, astronomy and all knowledge connected with the external universe. But the highest knowledge is the knowledge of man's true nature, the knowledge of God and the soul. To attain this knowledge must be the end and aim of our lives, if we desire to get true, everlasting happiness. Therefore the study which brings us this knowledge

is the highest study. And that is the study of philosophy or religion.

When we speak of the study of philosophy or religion, we deal with soul-study. The word study then assumes a much wider meaning than it ordinarily has. All study includes practical application. What we have learned we must apply. Then only knowledge will become established in us. Not only this, but unless we apply what we have learned, we shall not be able to acquire further knowledge. We know what an important place application and demonstration hold in education. The youth is told certain rules of Arithmetic and then he is put to working out problems; he is taught Grammar and words in a foreign language, and then he is given exercises, so that he may apply and establish his newly acquired knowledge. The same is true of religion. Religion does not mean merely studying scriptures, gaining knowledge and right understanding, it also means the application of what we have learned and understood. That is, religion is the practical philosophy of life. In the religious life, practice is far more important than precepts.

When we study agriculture, we have to take the plough in hand, we have to become acquainted with the handling of different implements. Otherwise our book-learning will have no practical result. So it is in religion. We must apply in our everyday life that which the scriptures teach us. Our understanding must take a practical form. It must express itself in our life, on our daily acts, in our mode of thinking, in our relationship and behaviour with others.

IV

Religion is the acquirement of the highest wisdom. But how is that wisdom acquired? As we proceed, we

shall see that the religious life, from beginning to end, is a process of driving out ignorance by the introduction of wisdom or Truth. Wrong conceptions must be removed; they must be rooted up, so that the germ of truth may sprout and flourish.

With this uprooting of ignorance will be destroyed its fruit, namely suffering, pain, sorrow, nay, death itself. Ignorance is death; wisdom is life eternal. As the fruit of ignorance is bitter, so the fruit of knowledge is sweet and wholesome. It is the translation from darkness into light, from the false into the true, from death into immortality. "One result is predicted of ignorance," says the Isha Upanishad, "and another of wisdom. Thus we have heard from the wise who taught us both regarding ignorance and wisdom." They fall into blind darkness who follow ignorance, but into light eternal do they enter who follow the path of wisdom. The worldly life is the path of ignorance, the religious life is the path of wisdom. The first is pleasant in the beginning, but the end is sorrow, while the latter is painful in the beginning but blissful in the end.

The religious life is painful in the beginning because we have to fight our old passionate nature; we have to change our habits; we have to abandon sin. But once the first stage is gone through, it is all happiness, all satisfaction, peace of mind and the highest joy. All beginning is difficult, but the brave and the strong do not mind the obstacles. They are ready to fight a valiant battle against their own depraved nature. And when the victory is obtained, it is realized that the prize is worth the labour.

It is the ignorance, the cause of all evil, that we have to combat,—the belief that this universe is the only reality, that man is a being that perish-

es for ever when death steps in. Truth tells us that man is spirit, soul, without beginning and without ending.

This immortality of the soul must not only be believed in, but it must be realized as a fact; it must become a conviction, based on experience. That is what Vedanta calls Para Vidya, the highest wisdom. It is the realization of Truth. First we must hear or learn about the Truth; then we must think about it, meditate on it, and realize it. And after this we must practise what we have realized. As step by step the conviction of truth is formed, we must make it strong and lasting by carrying out that conviction, in every act of our lives. That is the study of religion.

As every bad habit can be removed by practising the opposite habit, as speaking untruth is corrected by strictly adhering to truth, as the habit of greediness is cured by the practice of charity, as hatred is cured by the practice of love, so the habit of wrong thinking is corrected by the constant practice of right thinking. Ignorance is cured by the thinking of truth. This is the first practice on the path of freedom. Doubt must be removed by belief, resulting from study and thinking and meditating on Truth, and what that Truth is, we find stated in the scriptures or we learn from the wise men who have followed this path and thereby come into direct contact with Truth. If we want the highest, we must strive for the highest. If we want to enjoy the blessedness of liberation, we must seek after Truth. "Ye shall know the Truth and Truth will make you free," said Jesus. And that freedom can come only with wisdom. So we must strive for wisdom.

V

There is a lower and a higher wisdom, as we have seen. We can get only

what we sincerely desire. If material science satisfies our thirst for Truth, then we shall remain scientists. If the knowledge of rituals and ceremonies satisfies our religious aspiration, then we shall halt at external worship and rites. But this is not the highest wisdom and therefore cannot lead us to freedom, the goal of life. The performance of meritorious deeds, alms-giving and other benevolent works, done with a desire for a happy hereafter, will, no doubt, have its results. The fruit must come. But this fruit is not the highest. It is good Karma and will bring us happiness hereafter. But that happiness cannot be lasting, because according to deed will be the merit. The deed being limited, the merit must also be limited. In other words, good works may take us to heaven, but, after the result has worked itself out in the form of reward, we shall again have to come back to earth to earn new rewards. And so on, till we become wise and give up the idea of heaven for the higher ideal of freedom, Mukti. We must remember that going to heaven, is very different from attaining liberation.

Heaven is a temporary state of enjoyment. After the result of our good deeds is spent in that enjoyment, the soul will have to be born on earth again to carry on its process of evolution, until perfection is reached. But liberation means perfection and eternal freedom. That leads beyond all heavens, beyond all temporary enjoyment; it is eternal freedom and bliss. Then, we do not have to return to earth any more.

Our whole life is guided by desires. For whenever we desire a thing, we strive to obtain it. All our life-efforts are the outcome of certain desires. When we study our own life, or the life of others, we see that it is so. Desire is the motive, the driving power

in our lives. If I desire to become rich, my thoughts and actions will be directed towards the acquisition of riches. If I want to be learned, my principal occupation will be study. If I want to be healthy, my life will be regulated by the laws of health. So it is in every thing. From my life, you can judge what is the desire that is strongest in me, the desire that is uppermost in my mind. What we desire, we obtain, sooner or later, provided that desire is really strong.

Therefore Vedanta says that we must purify our desire; that we must long for the highest that can be attained, we must strive for freedom.

The desire for freedom, is the beginning of religion. Unless that desire is there, the religious life cannot begin in right earnest. That desire can arise only in a pure mind, in a mind that has tested all things and has found them wanting, as not productive of the highest good. The understanding must be trained and cultivated and purified. So it is said in the Chhandogya Upanishad, "When the intellect is purified, the whole nature becomes purified. When the inner nature is purified the mind can constantly think of the Divine Self. And then the ties that bind us to anything but the Self, are loosened."

Desires for fleeting enjoyment must pass away. Then, will come the longing for something that is permanent, for something that will last not only during this life, but through all eternity. All other desires bind the soul, but the desire for Truth, for self-knowledge gives freedom. Other desires make the mind restless and unhappy. But when man desires Truth, then the mind becomes calm. It is said in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, "Tranquil in mind, with the senses restrained, having given up all worldly desires, resigned

and patient and absorbed in meditation, let a man see the Self in the Self."

We must desire only one thing, namely, Truth. "Truth," says the Upanishad, "is that, beyond the gaining whereof, there remains nothing to be gained, beyond the Bliss whereof there is no higher Bliss, beyond the sight whereof there remains nothing to be seen, beyond becoming which there remains nothing to become, beyond knowing which there remains nothing to know."

When we see our true Self, the soul, the spirit in ourselves, then we realize that we have nothing more to desire. Then we care no longer for those desires which are connected with our bodily existence. The man who lives in the realization of the Self, is free from desires. He sees that all desires are but so many forms of ignorance. Truth cuts down all desires and freedom of desire is Bliss.

Desire is the outcome of dissatisfaction. So to remove that dissatisfaction we try to satisfy the desires. But what do we find? When one desire is satisfied, a hundred new desires spring up. Thus it goes on and the whole life is spent in vain attempts to satisfy our desires. But desires can be satisfied only by the knowledge that we are not body but spirit. The spirit is complete bliss itself. What then is there to desire? In the spirit there is nothing left to long after, for it is the highest, the most blissful existence. When we realize that we are spirit, then all desires end. The Kathopanishad says: "When all the desires of the heart are destroyed, then the mortal becomes immortal and he attains Brahman even here in this life. When all the knots of the heart are cut asunder (when ignorance is destroyed and with that, passion and pride and egotism), then man becomes immortal."

VI

The longing for freedom, for Truth, is not a desire in the ordinary sense. All other desires spring from the ego, the lower self and the fulfilment of such desires, strengthens the ego. But the longing for Self-realization kills the ego. That is the difference.

That longing for freedom must become strong in us. It must become the ruling desire, the one striving of our life. Unless we long for Truth, Truth will not reveal itself. Unless we want Truth above all else, we cannot put forth all our energy to attain it; we cannot direct our mind and actions towards the fulfilment of that divine desire. Unless a man is hungry, he cannot enjoy food. Unless a man hungers and thirsts for Truth, he cannot get Truth. Unless a man hungers for Truth, he cannot devote his mind, body and soul towards the attainment of Truth. His attempt will be half-hearted and there will be small results. But when the mind becomes mad after Self-realization, then Truth will reveal itself. Therefore a longing for divine wisdom must be cultivated and strengthened. This is done through religious practices.

Once a young man came to a sage and said: "Sir, I want to know the Truth." The sage replied "All right, my son, to-morrow I will instruct you." The next day the boy came and the sage took him for a walk. They came to a river and the sage proposed a swim in the river. They both plunged in when the sage took hold of the boy and pushed him beneath the water. The boy struggled to get free, but the sage held him firmly under the water for some time. Then he let the boy go and the latter came to the surface gasping for breath. "Well, my son," said the sage, "when you were under the water, what did you desire most?" "A

breath of air, sir," replied the boy. "Quite right," said the sage. "Now, listen. When your desire for Truth is as strong as your longing for a breath of air while you were under the water, then you will find Truth and not before that."

But how can we get such a strong desire for Truth, for God, for Self-realization, for divine wisdom? That is the all-important question. The scriptures answer: "Worship Truth alone as the object to be attained. Truth has to be sought after, Truth has to be desired and known. Verily, my dear, Truth must be seen, Truth must be understood, on Truth one must reflect, on Truth one must meditate. Unless a man turns away from bad conduct, unless he abandons sin and controls his senses, unless he collects his mind, he cannot attain to freedom."

VII

First, then, we must learn about Truth. What is the highest wisdom? How can we realize it? Vedanta answers that the highest wisdom is the knowledge of God. And what is God? The Vedas say: "He who exists in one, sages call Him by various names." There is but one real existence. And that is God, pure consciousness. He is existence and bliss. The consciousness permeating every atom of matter, is but a ray of the omnipresent consciousness which is God. God alone exists eternally; all else is subject to change and death. God is the spirit, the pure consciousness in man—that which is immortal in man. The real man cannot die. The body must perish sooner or later. But the real man is beyond birth and death. God, the only consciousness, is but one, but that one consciousness, expresses itself through different mediums. So it appears to us

as split up into so many different souls and beings. In substance we are all one, the whole universe is one. On that one, all manifestation is superimposed. Remove the Universe, dissolve it, destroy it, and God, the consciousness of the Universe, remains.

To understand this, is wisdom. This wisdom must become a reality to us, then all ignorance will vanish. To think that man is body, subject to death, and a separate, independent being, is wrong. It is not true. It is man seen under delusion. Man is God. But when we see God under the veil of ignorance, we are deluded and see the limited man. This idea that we are bodies, is the great disease of which we must be cured. We are body-worshippers; we must become God-worshippers, worshippers of the Real, of the One True Existence which manifests itself as the soul of man.

How can we know that this is true? First we must listen to the Vedanta teaching. Then, we must become thoughtful. We must consider what we have heard. We must test it, argue about it, try to grasp it; and meditate upon it.

Now, what is meditation? It is the lengthened carrying on of an identical train of thought. We must take up one train of thought and carry it through without interruption, till we have reached its conclusion. It is a difficult process and requires practice. The mind is whimsical, restless and uncontrolled. It cannot stick to one train of thought for a long time. All kinds of thoughts will fly into the mind and disturb our meditation. But we must try to keep out all thoughts except the subject of our meditation. "As oil poured from one vessel into another, flows without a break, so," the Gita says, "our meditation must be one flow of thought." When the mind

flies off in other directions, we must bring it back to our meditation. Patiently we must practise, again and again. At last we shall succeed.

Meditation is constant remembrance. And constant remembrance is devotion. To think of God always, to remember all the time that He is the soul of our soul, our real being, our pure consciousness, is the highest devotion. When we love Truth, then we shall be devoted to Truth and it will dwell in our mind constantly. As a loving wife always remembers her husband, so the loving aspirant after Truth, always remembers Truth. We must love our soul, and not our body. We must repeat again and again, I am the spirit; I am one with that Ocean of Infinite Bliss, which is God. I am not the body, nor the mind, nor the ego. But I am He, the blissful One, the One Only Existence.

That meditation must be carried on through our whole life. In misfortune and in prosperity, in joy and in sorrow, in disease and in health, we must remember that we are the soul. Joy and sorrow are states of mind. Health and disease affect the body, but the soul is ever free, beyond all change, beyond all conditions. To remember this always, is the path of wisdom, the sure cure for the disease of ignorance and delusion. This thought must be with us always. And through meditation we must make it strong, so that it is impressed on the mind very firmly.

Ignorance is so firmly established in our mind, that it requires strong, concentrated thought to displace it and destroy it.

The thought of our innate divinity, of our oneness with God, is the cure for all evil. It cures the restlessness of mind, hatred, envy, egotism and mental suffering. It establishes peace of mind and contentment. We are all One in spirit. Differentiation concerns only the external man, the lower man, the manifestation, but not the soul, the real man.

When this is realized, then love enters into our hearts. We learn to see beyond the manifestation, we learn to see the eternal, blissful soul in all nature and we realize the kinship of the soul. All nature is akin to us in its real being. There is nothing as high or low, good or evil in the soul of things. The garb may be soiled and the man be unclean. The body, the personality, may repulse us, but the soul is always clean and divine. He who has realized the Self, does not care much for the garb, the personality. He sees and loves divinity everywhere and in all beings. Everything becomes holy, everything becomes covered with Lord. All desire, all sin, all ignorance, is destroyed in him. No law can bind him, for he has become that which is beyond all law. Law can affect matter, but not the spirit. He is free, he is a Jivanmukta, free even in this life; for he has got the real wisdom.

Never mind the struggles, the mistakes. I never heard a cow tell a lie, but it is only a cow—never a man. So never mind these failures, these little backslidings; hold the ideal a thousand times, and if you fail a thousand times, make the attempt once more.

—Swami Vivekananda

A LIFE

BY LILA DEVI

Yesterday I was told,—
“You have a life to give, my child.”
A life to give
To a thousand things and yet one.
For to all that is Thee, my Friend,
I give—
And must therefore give to all.
Take my life—it is mine to give—
Yet that which givest it is part of Thee.
Take my life, O my Great Friend,
Place it in the lamp’s shallow hand.
Set the lamp before the altar of Thy Soul
And bring the torch of Truth near.
My life’s oil will flame alight
To burn an offering to Thy name.
Take my life, O Friend,
It is mine to give to Thee.
Let it flare bright with Thy Fire’s Eternity.
Take, O generous Friend,
That which the Thee in me gives back to Thee.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN THE ORIENT

BY DR. SUDHINDRA BOSE, M.A., Ph.D.

The Protestant Foreign Missions Commission of investigators sent out from America to India, China and Japan a year ago, has just submitted its report analysing missionary problems in the East. This report is embodied in a stout volume, entitled *Re-Thinking Missions*. The commission was financed by John D. Rockefeller and other heavy contributors to Protestant foreign mission propaganda.

As Bishop Fisher, the author of *That Strange Little Brown Man—Gandhi*, has

candidly pointed out, the fifteen members of the commission who sat on judgment on Oriental religions were all Western representatives of a Western country: all white and all professed Christians. There was not a place in the commission for a single Oriental, Pagan or Christian. In that respect it was not unlike the Simon Commission in India, which produced the *Simon Report*.

Christianity, it is claimed, is based above all upon peace and love. But the church has always given its sanction or

support to war, which is the negation of love and denial of morality. Indeed, no Western state has ever gone to war without receiving the blessing of the church. It has always identified itself with war-making activities of the state. How can then the religion of the church have any pretensions to moral leadership?

If the people of the East did not know how the teachings of the author of the Sermon on the Mount are actually carried out, how Christianity is practised in Christian lands, the late War for Civilization (1914-1918) certainly furnished them with ample first-hand material to judge of the fruits of two thousand years of Christianity in the Occident. It is true that after the moral debacle of the War, there was great confusion and disintegration in the ecclesiastical circles. Even the rev. clergymen became rather quiet, sober, and decent. But of late the embattled missionaries have put on the "amor of the Lord" and are asserting themselves feverishly. They are ready once more to "save" the tinted peoples of "the dark places of the earth."

There is in *Re-Thinking Missions* the inevitable Christian bias; but the book on the whole is revealing. It says that the majority of the missionaries are "of limited outlook and capacity." As become Christian zealots and lovers of Christian truth, they have narrow proselytizing aims and are too much occupied with Biblical mythology. It declares, however, that the foreign Christian mission is still vitally important and that its work needs to go on. It insists that "there is not alone room for change, there is necessity for change." What shall these changes be? What will be the new tactics which will make the pill more attractive?

The members of the commission have

been forced to recognize that certain principles within the religions of the East are sound. Having persuaded to abandon somewhat the religion of fear for a religion of beneficence, the commissioners feel that there is less urge to threaten the Hindu, the Moham-medan, or the Confucianist with hell-fire and more urge to direct him to "a better way of living." Moreover, the Eastern people will no longer tolerate the Western assumption of superiority in race and in religion. The Western brand of culture will not sell now in the East, as it once did. The Great War, it admits, has torn the veil from the eyes of the Orient: the shameless barbarity and the horrible immorality of the War have thoroughly exposed the fallacies in Western culture generally, and Western religion specifically. The commission therefore holds that the only forms of missionary endeavour which will be useful to-day to secure converts are the hospitals, schools, agricultural stations and the recreational establishments. These should be the instruments of aggressive evangelization. Through these institutions the Westerner is urged to lead the East to the baptismal font. In short, if the opportunity to proselytize is not to be scuttled when the Orient is still apparently appreciative of some of the Occidental institutions, the missionary must give up his arbitrary doctrines and a holier-than-thou attitude. More than that, he must use ruse and catch his prospects unaware. Will he succeed better?

Christian missions have been in existence in Asia for many, many years. Even the Protestant foreign missionary enterprise in the Orient is almost two centuries old. Christianity has been established on the Malabar Coast in India for a longer time than in the British Isles. Yet there is to-day not

one in a 100 of the people of India who has been converted to Protestant Christianity, and not one in 1,000 of the Chinese. As for Japan, where there is complete national independence, Christianity is a dead issue.

It is to be observed that I discreetly refrain from saying anything about Catholic Christianity. Catholicism, all Protestant Christians say, is unethical, unspiritual, anti-God, and socially and politically retrogressive.

Religion is not the passion of life, not a supreme source of living either in America or in Europe: religion is only a minor interest. Mahatma Gandhi said a few years ago that no matter what the Westerners say, their real God is money. Mahatmaji has come nearer telling the truth on the subject than any other man that I can think of now.

As one on the side-lines, I find that modern Americans regard their religion as an extra baggage of out-worn theology and superstition, and are reluctant to carry the load much farther. I also see that missionary administrators are meeting with rapidly decreasing enthusiasm in the United States: they find fewer money givers to missions and still fewer men willing to be recruited for foreign mission. The current is running strongly not only against the church, but against the foreign mission. What does this portend? The question at once arises that if Christianity is dying and is about to be discarded in Christian America, why all such fuss about spreading Christian propaganda in non-Christian Asia?

After all, this business of sending emissaries to foreign lands as evangelizers is very costly. The Protestant churches of the United States alone spend for foreign mission 40 million dollars annually. (A dollar, in normal times, is worth about three rupees.)

Just how many American missionaries are operating in India and how many dollars they are spending, I am unable to say at present. But I do know that as China offers the greatest Oriental market for American goods, the American missionaries are spending more dollars to convert and baptize the Chinese "heathen" than any other people in the East. Flag follows the missionary. There are no less than 120 varieties of American Protestant sects represented in the Republic of China. Altogether they have spent, so far, the stupendous sum of half a billion dollars in that nation.

There were in China a few years ago about 8,000 Protestant missionaries in 700 cities; to-day there are about 5,000 in 400 cities. A short while ago the Roman Catholics had 4,000 missionaries in China; now they have been reduced by 2 or 3 hundred.

Then, too, converting the Chinese seems an expensive business. Dr. Clarence E. Miller, Treasurer of the Lutheran Church in the United States, reported recently that the cost of proselyting the Chinese was 1,300 rupees a head. On the basis of Dr. Miller's calculations, it would take 175 billion dollars to make China safe for Lord Jesus.

The missionary has always been an integral part of the imperialistic advance of the West. The evangelists are patriots first, and everything else in lesser measure. As an instance of the interrelation of the Western church with the Western state, one recalls the speech which President McKinley made to the delegation of Methodist bishops who called at the White House to congratulate him on his decision to annex the Philippines at the turn of the century. President McKinley assured the bishops that his decision to annex

came "through direct leading from God, after continued nights of prayer, and was inspired by a desire to Christianize the Filipinos as our brothers for whom Christ died." It was a call from Jehovah that the Filipinos, who had already been converted to Catholicism by the Spaniards, should now be "Christianized" by the American missionaries and be made American subjects! The church press gave the message of Mr. McKinley a wide circulation and it was generally accepted, among the church-going members of the United States, as one more evidence that the war with Spain had been ordained by God.

Even to-day the missionaries in India are allied with the powers that be. They accept financial favours from the Delhi government for the maintenance of many of their institutions, and thus obligate themselves in advance to support the British position. Few indeed are the missionaries who feel that they are compromising their moral standing. Apparently they are incapable of moral and ethical insights.

The missionary has always been a tool of imperialism and economic exploitation. He tries to pass the running wolves of imperialism for the brother-lambs of the "natives." The authors of *Re-Thinking Missions* are conspicuously silent regarding the tragic, evil effects of imperialism, particularly in the Orient, and the responsibility which morally rests upon missions and missionaries for the aboli-

tion of this anti-Christ philosophy of life. Do they realize that men cannot be made whole or saved apart from the political or economic system in which they live? How can they ignore the wicked mental and spiritual effects upon a people who live under a foreign imperialistic bondage?

As a matter of fact, our authors have joyously surrendered themselves to a hackneyed slogan of imperial psychology in saying, "it is not the business of the mission to meddle in politics, least of all in the politics of a foreign country in which it is a guest." How can the missionaries in countries like India, Ceylon and Burma be the guests of the government? The government is just as alien as are the missionaries themselves. It has been rightly pointed out in some of the American papers that missionaries in subjected nations of the Orient are no more the guests of a ruling government than they are of the great historic Hindu, Buddhist or Moslem religious communities. The fact that the holy men of the Christian mission try to keep company with imperialism and with moral integrity at the same time is an evidence of their ignorant naivete, to say the least.

Indeed, some of the strange thoughts and ideas of this latest report of missionary activities are of a kind to worry a Socrates, and I am not one. But its fallacies partly account for the futility, weakness and frustration of much of the Christian mission work in India.

THE ATMAN IN ITS TWOFOLD ASPECT—I

(From Shankara's Commentary on the Brhadâraṇyaka Upanishad)

BY SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

As a spider moves along the thread (it produces), and as from a fire tiny sparks fly in all directions, so from this Self emanate all organs, all worlds, all gods and all beings. Its secret name (Upanishad) is, 'The Truth of truth.' The vital force is truth, and It is the truth of that. (II. i. 20.)

The next two sections will be devoted to explaining this last sentence.

Question : Granted that the next two sections will be devoted to explaining the secret name. The text says, 'Its secret name.' But we do not know whether it is the secret name of the individual self, which is the subject under discussion, which awoke through pushing, is subject to transmigration, and perceives sound etc., or whether it refers to some transcendent principle.

Reply : What difference does it make?

Question : Just this : If it refers to the relative (transmigrating) self, then that is to be known, and by knowing it (identity with) all will be attained; further it alone will be denoted by the word 'Brahman,' and the knowledge of it will be the knowledge of Brahman. But if the transcendent Self is meant, then the knowledge of It will be the knowledge of Brahman, and from that identity with all will be attained. That all this will happen we know on the authority of the scriptures. But according to this view (if the individual self and Brahman are different) the Vedic texts that teach their identity, such as, 'The Self alone is

to be meditated upon,' and 'It knew only Itself as, "I am Brahman," ' will be contradicted. And (if they are identical) there being no relative self different from the Supreme Self, spiritual instruction will be useless. Since this (unity of the self) is a question that has not been answered and is a source of confusion even to scholars, therefore in order to facilitate the understanding of passages that deal with the knowledge of Brahman for those who seek after It, we shall discuss the point as best as we can.

Prima facie view : The transcendent Supreme Self is not meant, for the text states the origin of the universe from a self which awoke on being pushed with the hand, which perceives sound etc., and which is possessed of a distinct state (profound sleep). To be explicit, there is no Supreme Self devoid of the desire for food etc., which is the ruler of the universe. Why? Because the Shruti, after introducing the topic, 'I will tell you about Brahman,' then mentioning the rousing of the sleeping man by pushing with the hand—thereby showing him to be the perceiver of sound etc.—and describing his transition through the dream state to that of profound sleep, shows the origin of the universe from that very self possessed of the state of profound sleep, by the two illustrations of sparks of fire and the spider, in the passage, 'So from this Self,' etc. And no other cause of the origin of the universe is mentioned in between, for this section deals exclusively with the

individual self. Another Shruti, the Kaushitaki Upanishad, which deals with the same topic, after introducing the beings who are in the sun etc., says, 'He said : He, O Bâlâki, who is the maker of ~~these~~ beings, and whose handiwork this universe is, is indeed to be known.' This shows that the individual self roused from sleep, and none other, is to be known. Similarly by saying, 'But it is for one's own sake that all is loved,' the Shruti shows that that self which is familiar to us as being dear, is alone to be realized through hearing, reflection and meditation. So also the statements made while introducing the topic of knowledge, such as, 'The Self alone is to be meditated upon,' 'This (Self) is dearer than a son, dearer than wealth,' etc., 'It knew only Itself as, "I am Brahman," ' etc., would be consistent if there were no Supreme Self. It will also be said further on, 'If a man knows himself to be the Self.' Moreover in all Vedanta it is the inner self which is put forward as the object to be known, as 'I am Brahman,' and never any external object like sound etc., in the words, 'That is Brahman.' Similarly in the Kaushitaki Upanishad, in the passage, 'Do not seek to know about speech, know the speaker,' etc., it is the agent (the individual self) using speech etc. as instruments, which is put forward as the object to be known.

Objection : Suppose we say that the individual self in a different state is the Supreme Self? It may be like this: The same individual self which perceives sound etc. in the waking state, is changed into the transcendent Supreme Self, the ruler of the universe, on getting into the state of profound sleep.

Tentative answer : No, this is contrary to experience. We never find anything having this characteristic out-

side of Buddhist philosophy. It never happens in life that a cow standing or going is a cow, but that on lying down she becomes a horse or any other species. It is contrary to logic also. A thing that is known through some means of knowledge to have a certain characteristic, retains that characteristic even in a different place, time or condition. If it ceases to have that characteristic, all functioning of the means of knowledge would stop. Similarly the Sâmkhyas, Mimâmsakas and others who are skilled in logic adduce hundreds of reasons to prove the absence of a transcendent Self.

Objection : Your view is wrong, for the relative self too lacks the knowledge of how to effect the origin, continuity and dissolution of the universe. To be explicit : The position you have advocated so elaborately, viz., that the same relative self which perceives sound etc. becomes the ruler of the universe when it attains a different condition, is untenable. For everybody knows that the relative self lacks the knowledge, power and means to effect the origin, continuity and dissolution of the universe. How can a relative self like us construct this universe in which the earth etc. are located, and which it is impossible even to conceive with the mind?

Tentative answer : Not so, for the scriptures are in our favour. They show the origin etc. of the universe from the relative self, for example, 'So from this self,' etc. Therefore our view is all right.

Objection (by the believers in an Absolute Ishwara) : There is a transcendent Supreme Self, and It is the cause of the universe, for such is the verdict of the Shruti, Smriti and reason. Witness hundreds of Shruti passages such as, 'That which knows things in a general and particular way,'

'That which transcends hunger and thirst,' 'Unattached, It is not attached to anything,' 'Under the mighty rule of this Immutable,' etc., 'That which living in all beings is the internal ruler and immortal,' '(That Being) who definitely projects those beings and is at the same time transcendent,' 'That great, birthless Self,' 'It is the bank that serves as the boundary to keep the different worlds apart,' 'The controller of all, the lord of all,' 'The Self that is sinless, undecaying, immortal,' 'It projected fire,' 'In the beginning this universe was only the Self,' 'It is not affected by human misery, being beyond it.' Also the Smṛiti passage, 'I am the origin of all, and from Me everything springs.'

Tentative answer: Did we not say that the text, 'So from this self,' shows the origin of the universe from the relative self?

Objection: Not so, for since in the passage, 'The Akâsha that is in the heart,' the Supreme Self has been introduced, the text, 'So from this self,' should refer to the Supreme Self. In reply to the question, 'Where was it then?' the Supreme Self, denoted by the word 'Akâsha,' has been mentioned in the text. 'It lay in the Akâsha that is in the heart.' That the word 'Akâsha' refers to the Supreme Self is clear from texts such as: 'With Existence, my dear, it is then united,' 'Every day they attain this world that is Brahman, but they do not realize this,' 'Fully embraced by the Supreme Self,' 'Rests on the Supreme Self.' That the Supreme Self is the topic further appears from the use of the word 'Self' with reference to the Supreme Self, which has been introduced in the passage, 'In it there is a little space.' Therefore the passage, 'So from this Self,' should indicate that the universe springs from the Supreme Self alone.

And we have already said that the relative self has not the power and knowledge to project, maintain and dissolve the universe.

Objection: In the passages, 'The Self alone is to be meditated upon' and 'It knew only Itself as, "I am Brahman,"' the topic of the knowledge of Brahman was introduced, and this deals with Brahman as its subject. This section too opens with sentences such as, 'I will tell you about Brahman,' and 'I will teach you about Brahman.' Now the transcendent Brahman, which is beyond hunger etc. and is eternal, pure, enlightened and free by nature, is the cause of the universe, while the relative self is the opposite of that; therefore it would not (in its present state) perceive itself to be identical with Brahman. On the other hand, would not the inferior relative self be open to censure if it identified the Supreme Self, the self-effulgent ruler of the universe, with itself? Therefore it is unreasonable to say, 'I am Brahman.'

Hence one should wish to worship Brahman with flowers, water, folding of the palms, praises, prostration, sacrifices, presents, repetition of Its name, meditation, Yoga, etc. Knowing It through worship one becomes Brahman, the ruler of all. But one should not think of the transcendent Brahman as the relative self; it would be like thinking of fire as cold, and the sky as possessed of form. The scriptural passages too that teach the identity of the self with Brahman should be taken as merely eulogistic. This interpretation will also harmonize with all logic and common sense.

Advaitin's reply: That cannot be, for from Mantra and Brâhmana texts we know that the Supreme Self alone entered. Beginning with, 'He made bodies,' etc., the text says, 'The Supreme Being

entered the bodies,' 'He transformed Himself in accordance with each form; that form of His was for the sake of making Him known,' 'The Wise One, who after projecting all forms names them, and goes on uttering those names,'—thus thousands of Mantras in all recensions show that it is the transcendent Ishwara who entered the body. Similarly Brâhmana texts such as, 'After projecting it, the Self entered into it,' 'Piercing this dividing line (of the head) It entered through that gate,' 'That deity (Existence), penetrating these three gods (fire, water and earth) as this individual self,' etc., 'This Self, being hidden in all beings, is not manifest,' etc. Since the word 'Self' has been used in all scriptures to denote Brahman, and since it refers to the inner Self, and further the Shruti passage, 'He is the inner Self of all beings,' shows the absence of a relative self other than the Supreme Self, as also the Shruti texts, 'One only without a second,' 'This universe is but Brahman,' 'All this is but the Self,' it is but proper to conclude the identity of the individual self with Brahman.

Objection: If such is the import of the scriptures, then the Supreme Self becomes relative, and if it is so, the scriptures (teaching Its transcendence) become useless; while if It is (identical with the individual self and yet) transcendent, then there is this obvious objection that spiritual instruction becomes redundant. To be explicit: If the Supreme Self, which is the inmost Self of all beings, feels the miseries arising from contact with all bodies, It obviously becomes relative. In that case those Shruti and Smriti texts that establish the transcendence of the Supreme Self, as also all reason would be set at naught. If, on the other hand, it can somehow be maintained that It is not connected with the miseries

arising from contact with the bodies of different beings, it is impossible to refute the charge of the futility of all spiritual instruction, for there is nothing for the Supreme Self either to achieve or to avoid.

To this dilemma some suggest the following solution: The Supreme Self did not penetrate the bodies directly in Its own form, but It became the individual self after undergoing a modification. And that individual self is both different from and identical with the Supreme Self. In so far as it is different, it is affected by relativity, and in so far as it is identical, it is capable of being ascertained as, 'I am Brahman.' Thus there will be no contradiction anywhere.

Now, if the individual self be a modification of the Supreme Self, there may be the following alternatives: The Supreme Self may be an aggregate of many things and consist of parts, like the earth, and the individual self may be the modification of some portion of It, like a jar etc. Or the Supreme Self may retain Its form, and a portion of It be modified, like hair or a barren tract, for instance. Or the entire Supreme Self may be modified, like milk etc. Now in the first view, according to which a particular thing out of an aggregate of a great many things of the same category becomes the individual self, since this particular thing is only of the same category, the identity is but figurative, not real. In that case it would be a contradiction of the verdict of the Shruti. If, however, (as in the second view) the Supreme Self is a whole eternally consisting of parts inseparably connected together, and, while It remains unchanged in form, a portion of It becomes the relative individual self, then, since the whole inheres in all the parts, it is affected by the merit or defect of each

part; hence the Supreme Self will be subject to the evil of transmigration attaching to the individual self. Therefore this view also is inadmissible. While the view that holds that the whole of the Supreme Self is transformed, disregards all the Shrutis and Smritis, and is therefore unacceptable. All these views contradict reason as well as Shruti and Smriti texts such as, '(Brahman is) without parts, devoid of activity and serene,' 'The Supreme Being is resplendent, formless, including both within and without, and birthless,' 'All-pervading like the sky and eternal,' 'That great, birthless Self is undecaying, immortal, undying,' 'It is never born nor dies,' 'It is undifferentiated,' etc. If the individual self be a portion of the immutable Supreme Self, then it will find it impossible to go (after death) to places in accordance with its past work, or else the Supreme Self will, as already said, be subject to transmigration.

Objection: Suppose we say that the individual self is a portion of the Supreme Self, detached from It like a spark of fire, and that transmigrates.

Reply: Yet the Supreme Self will get a wound by this breaking off of Its part, and as that part transmigrates, it will make a hole in the assemblage of parts in another portion of the Supreme Self—which will contradict the scriptural statements about Its being without any wound. If the individual self, which is a part of the Supreme Self, transmigrates, then, since there is no space without It, some other parts of It being pushed and displaced, the Supreme Self will feel pain as if It had colic in the heart.

Objection: There is nothing wrong in it, for there are Shruti texts giving illustrations of sparks of fire etc.

Reply: Not so, for the Shruti is merely informative. The scriptures

seek not to alter things, but to supply information about things unknown, as they are.

Objection: What difference does it make?

Reply: Listen. Things in the world are known to possess certain fixed characteristics such as grossness or fineness. By citing them as examples the scriptures seek to tell us about some other thing which does not contradict them. They would not cite an example from life if they wanted to convey an idea of something contradictory to it. Even if they did, it would be to no purpose, for the example would be different from the thing to be explained. You cannot prove that fire is cold, or that the sun does not give heat, even by citing a hundred examples, for the facts would already be known to be otherwise through another source of knowledge. And one source of knowledge does not contradict another, for it only tells us about those things that cannot be known by any other means. Nor can the scriptures speak about an unknown thing without having recourse to conventional words and their meanings. Therefore one who follows convention can never prove that the Supreme Self really has parts or stands to other things in the relation of whole to part.

Objection: But do not the Shruti and Smriti say, 'Tiny sparks,' and 'A part of Myself'?

Reply: Not so, for the passages are meant to convey the idea of oneness. We notice in life that sparks of fire may be considered identical with fire. Similarly a part may be considered as identical with the whole. Such being the case, words signifying a modification or part of the Supreme Self, applied to the individual self, are meant to convey its identity with It. That

then by means of illustrations and reasons the universe is shown to be a modification or part etc. of the Supreme Self, and the conclusion again brings out the identity. Here, for instance, the text begins with, 'This all is the Self,' then through examples illustrating the origin, continuity and dissolution of the universe, it adduces reasons for considering its identity with Brahman, such as the relation of cause and effect, and it will conclude with, 'Without interior or exterior,' and 'This self is Brahman.' Therefore from that introduction and conclusion it is clear that the passages setting forth the origin, continuity and dissolution of the uni-

would be a break in the topic. All believers in the Upanishads are unanimous on the point that all of these enjoin on us to think of the identity of the individual self with the Supreme Self. If it is possible to construe the passages setting forth the origin etc. of the universe so as to keep up the continuity of that injunction, to interpret them so as to introduce a new topic would be unwarrantable. A different result too would have to be provided for. Therefore we conclude that the Shruti passages setting forth the origin etc. of the universe must be for establishing the identity of the individual self and the Supreme Self.

A PARIAH ?

BY DEVENDRA NATH BOSE

Rasik was a sweeper of the Temple of Goddess Kali at Dakshineswar. He was a follower of a religious sect at Ghoshpara. He wore round his neck beads of sacred Tulsi plant. In his house there was a small garden of Tulsi plants, where he would sing the praise of God every evening.

One day Sri Ramakrishna was going towards the rows of Tamarisk trees to attend the call of nature. Ramlal Chatterjee, his nephew, was with him. Rasik stood aside respectfully at the sight of Sri Ramakrishna. When Sri Ramakrishna was returning after a while, Rasik bowed before him most devoutly, having a piece of cloth wound around the neck.

Sri Ramakrishna cast his look at him

and asked, "Look here, Rasik, are you going on well with your duties of sweeping the Temple-compound?"

"Yes, papa," replied Rasik.

It may be mentioned here that none but Rasik and Mathur Babu, a son-in-law of Rani Rasmani, the proprietress of the Temple, was given the privilege of addressing Sri Ramakrishna as "papa."

Uttering only the above two words Rasik remained standing before Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna asked him endearingly, "What do you want?"

Rasik replied, "Papa, in consequence of many sins it is that I have been born in a sweeper family. Will a person like me get salvation?"

"Oh yes, most surely. But not just

now—at the last moment of your earthly life.”

“What should I do for that, papa?”

“Go on doing just what you have been doing till now. What else need you do? Why do you call it a vile and detestable work? Just consider what a great thing you have been doing. This is the place where devotees of the Divine Mother, of God Radhakanta, of Twelve Sivas congregate. You are working here. Many are the holy men and devotees, the dust of whose feet you have to sweep. There is a saying, ‘The queen has got that too easily which even the saints do not get in their meditation.’ What else do you want? Do what you have been doing.”

Rasik replied, “Papa, when you have given assurance, I am at rest. You have said, and so it will come true.”

Sri Ramakrishna rejoined, “Yes, it will come true, most surely it will. But then, not now; at the last moment of your life.”

It was about two years after the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna that Ramlal one day found that Rasik’s wife was sweeping the Temple-compound. On enquiry it was known that Rasik was ill. A doctor was called in, but Rasik would not take any medicine.

“What is his illness? And why will he not take any medicine?” asked Ramlal.

“It is a case of cold and fever, with much phlegm in the throat. He refuses to take any medicine saying, ‘What is the use of taking medicine? They have brought me the Ganges water and the holy Tulsi plants; these are a great medicine to me’.”

About a week after this, it was found that neither Rasik nor his wife came to do the sweeping. A few more days passed when, one day, Rasik’s wife came and began to weep.

Ramlal asked, “Well, what’s the matter? Why do you weep? How is Rasik?”

Rasik had passed away.

Ramlal remembered the assurance of Sri Ramakrishna to Rasik that he would have his desires fulfilled at the last moment of his life. And so he asked, “What was the nature of his death?”

Rasik’s wife began: “On that day when I returned from my duties at about 10 in the morning, he asked us to take our dinner immediately and to spread his bed near the Tulsi garden. At this we remarked, ‘Are you in delirium that you talk this way?’

“But he began to scream, and insisted on our having done that.

“Preparing a bed near the Tulsi plants, we carried him there and laid him on the bed.

“Then he asked for his rosary and the Ganges water. When they were given to him, he with his own hands sprinkled the Ganges water on and around the bed and began telling his beads. That done for a while, he suddenly burst out into a fit of cry, and the next moment there was a laugh. After this he became completely motionless and began to murmur, ‘Here you are, papa; you have at last come. I was thinking that you had given me assurance. And on that I depended so long. Ah, how beautiful! how nice! how charming!’

“So saying he slowly closed his eyes and was as if fast asleep. There was no spasm—no convulsion. How strange!”

Ramlal said, “With regard to Rasik Sri Ramakrishna remarked that he was born as a sweeper due to some curse in his previous birth.”

(Translated from the original Bengali by Akshoy Kumar Roy)

THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

BY PROF. H. L. KAJI, M.A., B.Sc., I.E.S., J.P.

There is to my mind no single movement so calculated to transform the conditions of a country, to build up the nation, and to lead to its prosperity, as the Co-operative Movement. Germany has experienced the welcome transformation by the magic touch of Raiffeissen and Schulze Delitsche and the organization of Co-operative Credit for the small man in the town and the village. Denmark owes the prosperity of her dairying trade to the Co-operative organization of the marketing of her products. In England, the Co-operative Stores culminating in the great C. W. S. at Manchester have done wonders for the consumer. The principles of Big Business as applied co-operatively to the marketing of wheat, fruits and other produce of the land have achieved marvellous success in the United States of America. In India too, the Co-operative Credit Movement was expected to lead to the emancipation of the agriculturist from the clutches of the Village Sowcar and thus to the regeneration of the countryside. These expectations have not been realized fully so far. But the deficiencies in execution do not detract from the potentialities of any cause and if we can but probe down into the realities of the situation and not attempt by a patch here and a patch there to merely improve matters, we shall arrive at a true understanding of the problem and a true solution and a full realization of our hopes.

Co-operation is but a method, not a technical doctrine or science. The method is based on the highest moral

principles that are antagonistic to the individualistic propensities, natural to human beings. The subordination of the individual to the common good, the elimination of the idea of personal aggrandisement, the mentality that revolts at exploitation of the weak and the helpless, association and co-ordination with others so that each works for all rather than for himself, the expansion of the connotation of "I" into an ever widening "we"—these are the principles that form the bases of the Co-operative Movement. Ordinary people however will not subscribe to such principles; personal advantage, they cannot bring themselves down, to let go: while protesting at exploitation of themselves, people are not by any means averse to exploiting others, should the opportunity offers itself. The principles of competition and individualism have a far greater appeal than the principles of co-operation and collective action. It requires a higher, a nobler man, to understand, appreciate and adopt co-operative principles. In the moral governance of the world and its peoples, neither the individualism and capitalism of Europe and America, nor the State controlled Communism of Bolshevist Russia, can approach the voluntary association of the people in societies, in groups, in communities for common good and for mutual help through the Co-operative Movement.

The Co-operative Movement therefore cannot thrive where a higher intelligence and a higher moral tone do not pervade the nation. With a popula-

tion predominantly of agriculturists and with these, illiterate and ignorant, with hardly anything more than bare means of subsistence, due to their complete dependence on the Sowcar for credit and also for marketing, and with a well-developed listless and fatalistic attitude, it is almost impossible to expect the seeds of Co-operation to fall on fertile soil and shoot up into trees with luxuriant foliage and flowers. A group of persons acutely alive to their economic weaknesses and therefore inclined to join forces for their collective betterment and sufficiently intelligent to realize that in this collective betterment lies the individual good of all composing the group—that is what Co-operation needs. The wonder therefore is not why in India the Movement has not yielded the results as fully as we expected but rather how in spite of the sterile soil, the Co-operative tree has blossomed forth at all. The workers, officials and non-officials alike, who have laboured at the cause deserve unstinted praise for all that they have done not only to inaugurate the Movement but also to instil into the minds of the rural population what the Movement stands for. Propaganda has been wisely mingled with training and education. And yet, what has been done is not enough.

Co-operation is at the parting of ways indeed. State initiative, an army of honorary workers, a number of credit and financing institutions, a host of auditors and inspectors and supervisors, cannot now suffice. The superstructure suffers from a very weak foundation. An ignorant and illiterate rural population is a terrible handicap to the development of a true co-operative spirit and the realization of full efficiency, as also to the achievement of a higher status in politics and in every other movement. Nothing is so needed at

present, in my opinion, as earnest efforts towards reorganizing the rural economy in this ancient land and preparing the raw material—the toiling masses—to shoulder the new burdens of political reform as also to manage and develop their own co-operative institutions. I wish it were possible, when the Co-operative Credit Societies Act was first passed in 1904, for intense rural reconstruction and adult education work to have been undertaken seriously and pushed on vigorously and earnestly and for the organization of Credit Societies to have waited for a decade or so till the people were made ready to receive the new gospel.

Committees and Commissions have within the last ten years peeped and probed into the Co-operative Movement in India and they all vigorously advise concentration on rectification and consolidation rather than on expansion and earnestly emphasize the urgent need of the training of the Co-operative worker, departmental as also of the societies—primary and central. But I feel, enough stress has not been laid on the urgency of the need for training and education of the members of the primary societies, without which no amount of efficiency in the secretaries, inspectors and auditors can hope to achieve any perceptible results. Overdue debts are not going to be paid; land mortgage banks are not going to be any better than the ordinary Credit Society and Central Bank. It is high time that the Departments, the Provincial and Central Co-operative Banks and the Provincial Co-operative Institutes and Federations pooled efforts and resources to launch rural reconstruction and adult education on a nation-wide scale through the Co-operative organizations which have already been established throughout rural India and otherwise.

It is true that village uplift work has

been recognized as being very important now and several sincere workers are giving their best to the cause at selected centres in various parts of the country. Thus we have the well-known centre of Gurgaon where Mr. Brayne laboured to such good purpose; there is Alamaru in the Madras Presidency where good work is being done under the auspices of the Madras Provincial Co-operative Union; there is Rabindranath Tagore's centre at Vishwa Bharati; there is also in Bombay excellent work being done for the backward classes of the Bhils at Dohad in the Panch Mahals District by Mr. Amritlal Thakkar of the Servants of India Society; there are good efforts in the same direction in the Benares District undertaken under the initiative of Mr. V. N. Mehta. But these are examples or models of what could be done by the singleness of purpose that actuates the individuals sponsoring the schemes at these centres; they cannot lead to village uplift on a mass scale. I am convinced that it is now for the Co-operative institutions to step in and undertake this work on a country-wide scale and instil in the village population high ideas and higher ideals, ambition towards progress and desire for development. There is now the opportunity and privilege as it is also their self-interest to accept this work as the most important of their tasks and push forward vigorously a campaign of adult education, better sanitation, improved medical relief, better farming, better business and better living, all the items that we associate with the reorganization and re-forming the rural economy of India.

In this work the primary society is the vital unit. It should not confine itself to mere sanctioning of loans and trying to get the instalments back in proper time. It should undertake other functions as well. It should serve as a

centre of village life from which would permeate currents in all directions. There is no need to have a multiplicity of Co-operative institutions in the village. A credit society, a purchase society, a seed society, an implements society, a sale society, a better living society, as so many separate units, are likely to act as so many separate forces, not making for that unity and that influence on village life, which ought to be the aim of a Co-operative organization. One Society, a whole village society—functioning as a Better Living Society—gradually taking on different functions of credit, purchase, sale and so forth, is likely to be the focus of the whole village life. Adult literacy is a different thing but adult education ought to be within fairly easy range of accomplishment by the efforts of the primary society. In old times, there used to be itinerant Brahmins, moving from one village to another, retelling the stories of the Mahabharat and the Ramayan for an hour daily at night for a month or two, receiving in return payment in grain and food-stuffs from the interested audience. There is no reason why the same old institution of the *Kathabhats* should not be revived so as to suit modern conditions. The Co-operative authorities of a Province could and should enroll a band of workers—Rural Scouts or Life Workers for villages—who could be the modern Kathabhats, and much more than that. These scouts need no drilling and parades and jamborees; they work for God, King and country no doubt but all the drilling they need is the missionary spirit, that inner urge which recognizes that the uplift of their Motherland is bound up with the uplift of the rural population and that the stature of India among the nations of the world is determined not by the achievements of a Tagore or a Bose or

a Raman, not by the divine glamour and saintliness of Mahatma Gandhi but by the level attained by the Indian Rustic, the truest representative of the country. The Scouts should settle down in a village, be the guiding spirits of the village society, and initiate reforms in village life, be the teachers giving knowledge of what is going on in the world to-day to the villagers in the evening sitting round the camp fire. During a few months' residence such a Scout can, if he is of the right type, train up a few people of the village to continue his work while he moves round to the neighbouring village, returning off and on for an occasional visit to the first. In this way, I believe, one village scout would be able to reform a Taluka in the course of his life.

The trinity of Co-operation—the Department, the Federation and the Provincial Bank—with the assistance of the smaller gods—the Central Banks, should without any delay embark on this venture above all others and start recruiting a body of life workers, Rural Scouts, for this village service. These cannot be expected to work absolutely without any pay; but a modest pay—say, Rs. 50 rising up to Rs. 100, would be enough to enlist the seriously minded of the educated youths of the country to this supremely important task of moulding the destinies of their motherland through the regeneration, economic and moral, of the Indian Rustic. If the finances of the trinity do not immediately permit the provision of one such scout per Taluka, it does not matter; within a few years, with the improvement in a few villages, with the prosperity of the rural people, with trained persons available from the villages, and with the cloud of overdue debts decreasing it will be possible to

find funds enough for posting one man per Taluka. To enable these Scouts to function properly, the Provincial Federation under whom they would work, should prepare detailed instructions and prepare handbooks of general information on a variety of subjects, tales, biographies, sanitation, medical relief, Co-operation, its aims and ideals, Co-operative methods, modern developments, in economics, trade, industry and agriculture in the advanced countries of the West and in India and Japan and so forth. The labours of the scouts could be seconded by tours, visits and lectures (or call them talks) of various officials of different departments as also of the higher gods of the Co-operative hierarchy and these could further be supplemented by arranged visits to the villages of college students during their vacations.

In thus providing friends, philosophers and guides to the village population, lies the greatest safety and success of the Co-operative Movement and in this therefore lies the best hope of rural India, and in this therefore lies the growth of the Motherland to its full stature as a progressive land with the urban and rural population, no longer ignorant, illiterate, conservative, weighted down by high loads of debts and by hoary traditions, but quite wide awake, imbibing and eager to imbibe modern knowledge and adopt modern methods, prepared and fit to assume their proper rôle as good citizens of the federation or the United States of India, which is about to appear on the horizon. May Co-operators realize this and may they concentrate on this all important task is the fervent prayer, to my fellow workers in the Cause, with which I conclude this short article.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

BY SISTER DEVAMATA

(Contemporaneous Conditions)

The conditions prevailing at the time of the coming of Sri Ramakrishna and of St. Francis were strangely analogous. St. Francis found a Europe dismembered and at war with itself. Nearly every city of Italy was an armed fortress with its own government. Within the city itself party warred with party. The religious world was drunk with dialectic and theology. At the University of Paris, which since the 11th century when Guillaume de Champeaux and his pupil Abelard drew the eyes of all Europe by their brilliant dialectic, discussions on points of doctrine continued for days and grew so intricate that when they ended, no one knew what the conclusion was. To remedy this, they evolved the system of dropping a dried pea in a bowl every time a negative was used. When the argument had come to a close, they counted the number of peas in the bowl. If there was an even number, since two negatives make an affirmative, the decision was affirmative; if the number was odd, the decision was negative. By such mechanical device was the faith of Christendom protected or attacked.

In Italy and throughout Europe spirituality was dormant. Religion was commercialized; ambition and greed had struck at its very heart. There was no lack of devout men and women who by their holy living kept the torch of Truth kindled and aflame; but overwhelmed by the disorganization of society and religion, they had fled to the seclusion of a convent cell or to an isolated hermitage. That complete dis-

integration did not take place was due to them. Among them were a few who through their prayer and meditation evolved a remedy for existing ills and were cried down as makers of heresy. Religious Orders multiplied in such numbers that in France alone, during the 12th century, seven hundred and two monasteries were founded and there were already eleven hundred and eight established there. But in most of these houses religion was a formal practice, not a living reality.

The lack of co-ordination in India in the early 19th century, when Sri Ramakrishna came, may not have been so acute or so apparent as in Europe at the time of Francis; but it was no less real. The country was in largest part under foreign rule. There remained a few Indian and a few Mahommedan rulers; this brought division in governmental interest and allegiance. Society was crossed and recrossed by an imprisoning web of social restrictions and caste distinctions. One could scarcely move without offending against some regulation or tradition or custom. The lofty ideals of the Vedic Scriptures were veiled by innumerable forms and ceremonies. Religion had become mere ritualistic observance and, as is always the case when the ceremonial prevails, greed and commercialism had seized upon those who performed the ceremonies. Reforms arose, as heresies arose in mediæval Europe. They were honest and effective in their interest and effort, but like all reforms they uprooted where they should have pruned

only. They were destructive rather than constructive. They tore down not altogether unwisely, but they were not able to rebuild anything as lofty or as beautiful as what they had destroyed. Similar to the time of St. Francis, there were still exalted souls leading holy lives but they were isolated in their effort and aspiration.

Most potent of all the disuniting elements which threatened the social and religious structure of India, was the silent, relentless inflow of Western thought and custom. An alien tradition is always a menace. The ideals, the culture, the civilization of a people must all spring from the same root and that root must be planted deep in the soil indigenous to that people. No other civilization or tradition can attain the same fullness of growth as that natural to the cultural soil of the race. It is strengthening to a people to study other civilizations; it is weakening to transplant them. In India the effect was to create a generation of agnostics. The younger minds lost all confidence in themselves, in their traditions, in their religion and in their ideals. No substitute offered seemed better, so they lapsed into numb unbelief.

Such were the conditions confronting both Sri Ramakrishna and St. Francis at the outset of their mission. How did they meet them? In identically the same way. They did not protest, they did not denounce, they did not tear down, they did not try to change even. They threw themselves into line with conditions as they were and lived out their vision. They took the materials at hand, they kept the same foundation, and in the heart of the destructive elements existing everywhere they began to reconstruct. They used the old to make the new. St. Francis remained always an obedient son of the Church. The irresistible originality of his being

led him to overstep its barriers again and again; but when he was reminded of the fact, he drew back in unquestioning obedience. He made more than one journey to Rome to seek the sanction of the Vatican. His Gospel Rule was declared by the authorities to be too austere; reluctantly he tried to formulate one less severe. That was not satisfactory and he wrote another and still another. He made every concession he could possibly make and not betray his ideal, and all the time his influence was overlaying whatever he touched, giving it a nobler quality, a new value. He transformed where he yielded; he purified and renewed that to which he conceded.

Sri Ramakrishna was equally obedient to custom. He never ceased to be an orthodox Brahmin. He was careful in caste observance. When his experience and practice gained a momentum that carried him beyond the bounds of custom and tradition, he endeavoured not to let it be an offence even to the most rigid. His power was too mighty, his vision too universal to allow him to accept any limitation; yet in expanding to the greater, he treated the lesser with deference, kindling within it a fresh flame. He did not eliminate any phase of religious or social expression, but he transfused them with new meaning. Discarded traditions grew sacred once more, unbelievers regained their faith, forgotten ideals took their place again in the daily life. A new spirit was born in India and the world.

The change was effected almost imperceptibly. The only weapon used was a humble life lived in a quiet temple garden; but so potent was that life that garden walls could not hold it confined; the stretch of a continent was not wide enough for it. In a few years its influence had encircled the

earth. The same is true of St. Francis. The force gathered through nights of prayer and communion in a rude hut of branches at Portiuncula could not be resisted. So charged with holiness was his life, that it changed the face of all Europe. The European world feared it more than they feared his words. It cheapened their learning, it shamed their ambition, it rebuked their greed. They protested that a man had no right to be so holy, so self-denying, so utterly poor and so cheerful in his poverty.

Opposition grew. Even the Brotherhood itself began to rebel. They desired an easier life, a less austere rule to guide them. Driven and harassed, at last St. Francis gave up his charge as Head of the Order and sat in obedience at the feet of Brother Elias, plucking humbly at his habit when he had something to say to the Brothers. "When I saw," he explained to one of them, "that without caring for my example or my teaching, they walked in the way you describe (abandoning simplicity and poverty) I confided them to the Lord and withdrew." Not long after, he borrowed an ass from a peasant and with two faithful companions rode out from the Brotherhood to preach and travel the highways as in the early days of his mission. It seemed a defeat, but in reality it was a victory; for every monk in the Order knew that the strength of the Order had gone out with him. He was its soul; and so afraid were they to lose him that as he lay dying they set a guard around him lest someone come and steal him away.

Thus even in death his life was triumphant.

Both St. Francis and Sri Ramakrishna were cosmic in their nature. They had realized oneness with cosmic Being and were open channels through which it found unhindered expression. This was the secret of their kinship, the secret also of their mightiness. A contemporaneous writer, Thomas of Celano, says of St. Francis that when he preached his simple sermons, "the whole country trembled, barren land bore a rich harvest and the withered vine sent forth blossoms." Sri Ramakrishna also more than once turned the whole course of a life by a single word. It was their complete union with the Infinite which gave them such power. On this also rested the fundamental unity of thought and feeling and experience which binds them together across the centuries that divide them. It was their conscious kinship with God which made them akin, as all true Saviours of men are akin.

If Sri Ramakrishna and St. Francis had never had a follower, if their words had never found a hearing, they would still be as great and as dominant. Their followers do not glorify them; they glorify their followers. A light shone within them which needed no kindling from extraneous sources. For St. Francis it has gathered splendour down the centuries; and future centuries promise to be more radiant because Sri Ramakrishna lived and taught in that temple garden on the Ganges. So long as such lives as theirs are lived on earth, it cannot be in darkness.

MYSTIC SYMBOLISM

BY NALINI KANTA GUPTA

The Mystics all over the world and in all ages have clothed their sayings in proverbs and parables, in figures and symbols. To speak in symbols seems to be in their very nature; it is their characteristic manner, their inevitable style. Let us see what is the reason behind it. But first who are the Mystics? They are those who are in touch with supra-sensual things, whose experiences are of a world different from the common physical world, the world of the mind and the senses.

These other worlds are constituted in other ways than ours. Their contents are different and the laws that obtain there are also different. It would be a gross blunder to attempt a chart of any of these other systems, to use a Einsteinian term, with the measures and conventions of the system to which our external waking consciousness belongs. For, there "the sun shines not, nor the moon, nor the stars, neither these lightnings nor this fire." The difficulty is further enhanced by the fact that there are very many unseen worlds and they all differ from the seen and from one another in manner and degree. Thus, for example, the Upanishads speak of the *swapna*, the *sushupta* and the *turiya* domains beyond the *jâgrat* which is that where the rational being with its mind and senses lives and moves. And there are other systems and other ways in which systems exist, and they are practically innumerable.

If, however, we have to speak of these other worlds, then, since we can speak only in the terms of this world, we have to use them in a different

sense from those they usually bear; we must employ them as figures and symbols. Even then they may prove inadequate and misleading; so there are Mystics who are averse to all speech and expression—they are *mouni*; in silence they experience the inexpressible and in silence they communicate it to the few who have the capacity to receive in silence.

But those who do speak, how do they choose their figures and symbols? What is their methodology? For it might be said, since the unseen and the seen differ out and out, it does not matter what forms or signs are taken from the latter; for any meaning and significance could be put into anything. But, in reality, it does not so happen. For, although there is a great divergence between figures and symbols on the one hand and the things figured and symbolized on the other, still there is also some link, some common measure. And that is why we see not unoften the same or similar figures and symbols representing an identical experience in ages and countries far apart from each other.

We can make a distinction here between two types of expression which we have put together indiscriminately, figures and symbols. Figures, we may say, are those that are constructed by the rational mind, the intellect; they are mere metaphors and similes and are not organically related to the thing experienced, but put round it as a robe that can be dropped or changed without affecting the experience itself. Thus, for example, when the Upanishad says, *आत्मनं रयिनं विद्धि* (Know that the

soul is the master of the chariot who sits within it) or इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुः (The senses, they say, are the horses), we have here only a comparison or analogy that is common and natural to the poetic manner. The particular figure or simile used is not inevitable to the idea or experience that it seeks to express, its part and parcel. On the other hand, take this Upanishadic perception : हिरण्यकेन पद्मेन सत्यस्य पिहितं मुखम् (The face of the Truth lies hidden under thy golden orb). Here the symbol is not mere analogy or comparison, a figure; it is one with the very substance of the experience—the two cannot be separated. Or when the Vedas speak of the kindling of the Fire, the rushing of the waters or the rise of the Dawn, the images, though taken from the material world, are not used for the sake of mere comparison, but they are the embodiments, the living forms of truths experienced in another world.

When a Mystic refers to the Solar Light or to the Fire—the light, for example, that struck down Saul and transformed him into Saint Paul or the burning bush that visited Moses, it is not the physical or material object that he means and yet it is that in a way. It is the materialization of something that is fundamentally not material : some movement in an inner consciousness precipitates itself into the region of the senses and takes from out of the material the form commensurable with its nature that it finds there.

And there is such a commensurability or parallelism between the various levels of consciousness, in and through all the differences that separate them from one another. Thus an object or a movement apprehended on the physical plane has a sort of line of re-echoing images extended in a series along the whole gradation of the inner

planes; otherwise viewed, an object or movement in the innermost consciousness translates itself in varying modes from plane to plane down to the most material, where it appears in its grossest form as a concrete three-dimensional object or a mechanical movement. This parallelism or commensurability by virtue of which the different and divergent states of consciousness can portray or represent each other is the source of all symbolism.

A symbol symbolizes something for this reason that both possess in common a certain identical, at least similar, quality or rhythm or vibration, the symbol possessing it in a grosser or more apparent or sensuous form than the thing symbolized does. Sometimes it may happen that it is more than a certain quality or rhythm or vibration that is common between the two : the symbol in its entirety is the thing symbolized but thrown down on another plane, it is the embodiment of the latter in a more concrete world. The light and the fire that Saint Paul and Moses saw appear to be of this kind.

Thus there is a great diversity of symbols. At the one end is the mere metaphor or simile or allegory ("figure," as we have called it) and at the other end is the symbol identical with the thing symbolized. And upon this inner character of the symbol depends also to a large extent its range and scope. There are symbols which are universal and intimately ingrained in the human consciousness itself. Mankind has used them in all ages and climes almost in the same sense and significance. There are others that are limited to peoples and ages. They are made out of forms that are of local and temporal interest and importance. Their significances vary according to time and place. Finally, there are

symbols which are true of the individual consciousness only; they depend on personal peculiarities and idiosyncrasies, on one's environment and upbringing and education.

Man being an embodied soul, his external consciousness (what the Upanishad calls *jāgrat*) is the *milieu* in which his soul experiences naturally manifest and find their play. It is the forms and movements of that consciousness which clothe and give a

concrete habitation and name to the perceptions on the subtler ranges of the inner existence. If the experiences on these planes are to be presented to the conscious memory and to the brain-mind and made communicable to others through speech, this is the inevitable and natural process. Symbols are a translation in mental and sensual (and vocal) terms of experiences that are beyond the mind and the sense and the speech and yet throw a kind of echoing vibration upon these lesser levels.

APAROKSHANUBHUTI

BY SWAMI VIMUKTANANDA

यस्मात् परमिति श्रुत्या तथा पुरुषलक्षणम् ।

विनिर्णीतं विमूढेन कथं स्याद्देहकः पुमान् ॥ ३४ ॥

विमूढेन (विगतीमूढभावोयच्चात्, तेन) By the wise यच्चात्परमिति तथा श्रुत्या by the *Sruti* texts like “(There is nothing) higher than Him, etc.” पुरुषलक्षणं the nature of the *Purusha* विनिर्णीतं is ascertained कथं, etc.

34. Wise men have ascertained the (real) nature of the *Purusha* (as all-pervading) from the *Sruti* texts¹ like “(There is nothing) higher than Him (*Purusha*), etc.” So how can, etc.

¹ From the *Sruti* text ;—The text occurs in the *Taittiriya Sruti* as follows :

“There is nothing higher, subtler or greater than this *Purusha* who stands in the luminous sphere supremely unique and immovable like a tree, and by whom all this (creation) is filled up.”

सर्वं पुरुष एवेति सूक्ते पुरुषसंज्ञिते ।

अप्युच्यते यतः श्रुत्या कथं स्याद्देहकः पुमान् ॥ ३५ ॥

यतः Because श्रुत्या by the *Sruti* पुरुषसंज्ञिते सूक्ते in the *Purusha Sukta* अपि also सर्वपुरुष एवेति “All this is verily the *Purusha*” उच्यते is declared (ततः so) कथं, etc.

35. Again the *Sruti* has declared in the *Purusha Sukta*¹ that “All this is verily the *Purusha*.” So how can, etc.

¹ The *Purusha Sukta*—It forms a part of the *Rig-Veda* (X. 90). Here we find one of the highest conceptions of the Cosmic Being wherefrom this universe has emanated. The text, here referred to, is this :

“The *Purusha* is verily all this (manifested world). He is all that was in the past and that will be in the future. He is the Lord of the Abode of Bliss and has taken this

transient form of the manifested universe, so that the *Jivas* may undergo the effects of their actions." (*Rig Veda* X. 90. ii).

असङ्गः पुरुषः प्रोक्तो बृहदारण्यकेऽपि ।

अनन्तमलसंश्लिष्टः कथं स्याद्देहकः पुमान् ॥ ३६ ॥

अपिच So also बृहदारण्यके in *Brihadaranyaka* पुरुषः *Purusha* असङ्गः unattached प्रोक्तः is said (ततः so) कथं how अनन्तमलसंश्लिष्टः besmeared with innumerable impurities देहकः, etc.

36. So also it is said in the *Brihadaranyaka* that "The *Purusha* is completely unattached."¹ So how can this body wherein inhere innumerable impurities be the *Purusha*?

¹ *The Purusha is completely unattached.*—It refers to such passages as, "The *Purusha* is not accompanied in the waking state by what he sees in dream, for he is completely unattached to everything." (*Brih. Up.* IV. 3. xv-vi).

तत्रैव च समाख्यातः स्वयंज्योतिर्हि पुरुषः ।

जडः परप्रकाशोऽयं कथं स्याद्देहकः पुमान् ॥ ३७ ॥

तत्रैवच There again पुरुषः the *Purusha* स्वयंज्योतिः self-illuminated हि (expletive) समाख्यातः is clearly stated (ततः so) कथं how अयं this जडः inert परप्रकाशः illumined by an external agent देहकः, etc.

37. There again¹ it is clearly stated that "the *Purusha* is self-illuminated." So how can the body which is inert (dark) and illumined by an external agent be the *Purusha*?

¹ *There again*—In the same *Brihadaranyaka* as: "Here (in dream) the *Purusha* is self-illuminated." (*Brih. Up.* VI. 3. vii).

प्रोक्तोऽपि कर्मकाण्डेन ह्यात्मा देहाद्विलक्षणः ।

नित्यश्च तत्फलं भुङ्क्ते देहपातादनन्तरम् ॥ ३८ ॥

कर्मकाण्डेन By *Karma-kanda* अपि also हि (expletive) आत्मा *Atman* देहात् from the body विलक्षणः different नित्यः permanent च also प्रोक्तः is declared (यतः as) देहपातादनन्तरम् after the fall of the body (i.e. after death) तत्फलं the results of actions भुङ्क्ते undergoes.

38. Even the *Karma-Kanda* declares¹ that the *Atman* is different from the body and is permanent as it endures even after the fall of the body and reaps the fruits of actions (done in the previous life).

¹ *Even the Karma-Kanda declares*—The *Karma-Kanda* is that portion of the *Veda* which inculcates the performance of religious acts, sacrifices and ceremonies laying down in details many rules and regulations for the guidance of its votaries. The followers of *Karma-Kanda* do not believe in an *Iswara* or God. Nevertheless they believe in a permanent individual soul which is quite different from the body and which survives the destruction of the latter as a support of *Apurva* (inevitable force of *Karma*).

So not only *Jnana-Kanda* (the *Upanishads*) but also *Karma-Kanda* asserts that the *Atman* is different from the body.

लिङ्गं चानेकसंयुक्तं चलं दृश्यं विकारि च ।

अव्यापकमसद्रूपं तत्कथं स्यात् पुमानयम् ॥ ३९ ॥

लिङ्गं The subtle body च even चानेकसंयुक्तं consisting of many parts चलं unstable दृश्यं an object of perception विकारि changeable च and अव्यापकं limited असद्रूपं non-existent by nature तत् so कथं how अयं this (subtle body) पुमान् *Purusha* स्यात् can be ?

39. Even the subtle body consists of many parts and is unstable. It is also an object of perception, is changeable, limited and non-existent by nature. So how can this be the *Purusha*?

¹ *The subtle body etc.*—It consists of seventeen parts such as the intellect, the mind, the five organs of perception, the five organs of action and the five vital forces.

एवं देहद्वयादन्य आत्मा पुरुष ईश्वरः ।

सर्वात्मा सर्वरूपश्च सर्वातीतोऽहमव्ययः ॥ ४० ॥

एवं Thus देहद्वयादन्यः different from these two bodies अहम् (the substratum of) 'I' (the ego) अव्ययः immutable आत्मा Atman पुरुषः *Purusha* ईश्वरः *Iswara* सर्वात्मा the Self of all सर्वरूपः all forms च and सर्वातीतः transcending everything.

40. The immutable Atman, the substratum of the ego, is thus different from these two bodies, and is the *Purusha*, the *Iswara* (the Lord of all), the Self of all, present in every form and yet transcending them all.

इत्यात्मदेहभागेन प्रपञ्चस्यैव सत्यता ।

यथोक्ता तर्कशास्त्रेण ततः किं पुरुषार्थता ॥ ४१ ॥

इति Thus आत्मदेहभागेन by (enunciating) the difference between the Atman and the body प्रपञ्चस्यैव सत्यता indeed the reality of the phenomenal world यथा as तर्कशास्त्रेण by *Tarkasastra* (उक्ता is said, तथा in the same way) उक्ता is ascertained ततः so किं पुरुषार्थता (सिद्धा) no ends of human life are served.

41. Thus the enunciation of the difference between the Atman and the body, has (indirectly) asserted, indeed, after the manner of *Tarkasastra*,¹ the reality of the phenomenal world. But no ends of human life are served² thereby.

¹ *Tarkasastra*—The science of logic (*Nyaya*), or the treatises like *Sankhya* and *Yoga* and *Loukayatikas* which mostly follow the methods of inference in arriving at their respective conclusions. Here it specially refers to *Sankhya* which with the mere help of *Tarka* (logic) tries to establish the final duality of *Prakriti* and *Purusha* where *Prakriti*, or the material principle that constitutes the phenomenal world, is eternal and coexistent with *Purusha*, the conscious principle.

² *No ends of human life are served*—There are generally four ends of human life, such as, *Dharma* "performance of duty," *Artha* "attainment of worldly prosperity," *Kama* "satisfaction of desires," *Moksha* "final liberation from the bondage of ignorance," of which the first three are but secondary as they are only helps to the last, which is the *summum bonum*. But this last one, the liberation from the bondage of ignorance, will never be attained unless a person realizes Non-duality and becomes one with it, and thus removes even the last vestige of duality from the mind. But the establishment of duality

is only an obstacle to such realization and drives persons away from the path of liberation. It, therefore, serves no real purpose in human life.

[But the object of showing the difference between the Atman and the body is not to prove the reality of the body and thus establish the duality of the Atman and the body, but only to meet the opponents who hold the view that this body is the Atman. It will be shown in the following stanzas that there is no such thing as body, it is the Atman that alone exists.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS NUMBER

The opening article, compiled from the letters, speeches and writings of Swami Vivekananda clearly brings out the position of the masses in India and suggests also methods regarding how to improve their condition. The article will be completed in the next issue. . . Last June Swami Atulananda wrote on 'Control of Mind,' which was reproduced, in original and translations, in different magazines in India and abroad. *Wisdom and Ignorance* was the subject of a discourse given to a circle of Vedanta students in America. . . . Lila Devi is a new contributor to the *Prabuddha Bharata*. . . . Dr. Sudhindra Bose must be familiar to many readers. He is a lecturer in the State University of Iowa, U.S.A. *Christian Missions in the Orient* is specially important as it represents the views of one who has been long in the West. . . . *The Atman in Its two-fold Aspect* is taken from the Author's forthcoming book—English translation of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad with Shankara's Commentary. . . . Devendra Nath Bose is an old devotee of Sri Ramakrishna and has written a biography of the Master in Bengali. . . . Prof. Kaji belongs to the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics, Bombay University. He is a Secretary

to All-India Co-operative Institutes' Association. Co-operative Movement is usually identified with Co-operative Credit Societies. But it denotes many other things. The present article shows how Co-operative Movement can help rural reconstruction in so many ways. The article has been written, at our request, for the interest of those who are engaged in village-work. . . . Sister Devamata concludes her study of Sri Ramakrishna and St. Francis of Assisi in this issue. . . . Nalini Kanta Gupta is a new-comer to the *Prabuddha Bharata*. He has an established name as a thoughtful writer.

MAHATMA GANDHI ON THE THEORY OF INCARNATION

There has been much controversy regarding the Hindu theory of Incarnation. "Can God take a human form?" is a question which troubles many hearts. Some will be busy with research regarding the historicity of personages who are regarded by many as Incarnations. And some will try to judge by their standard of right and wrong the characters which have been the solace of life to many devotees. Rama, Krishna, Buddha or Jesus may not be proved to have existed by historians, they may even be found wanting, according to the moral code of

some critics, but what does that matter to a devotee who has found peace by contemplating on them? There is nothing more authentic than direct experience. A devotee might be looked upon with pity by an ultra-modernist, but his experience is more valuable to him than any theory however seemingly sound. How will a man with limited intellect judge and evaluate Incarnations? The only criterion of whether they are Incarnations is, whether by worshipping and meditating on them, one develops spirituality. There is no difference between God and those by whose grace the knowledge of the Atman is attained and a sinner becomes a saint in a minute. And it is not given to all to recognize the Persons Who come to the earth as Incarnations. Sri Krishna says in the Gita: "Veiled by the illusion born of the congress of the Gunas, I am not manifest to all. This deluded world knows Me not, the Unborn, the Immutable."

The devotee in Mahatma Gandhi came out when, some time back, he replied to a critic who asked, "The person, whose image a Hindu adores might have committed some wrongs in his lifetime. Will not the adorer be harmed by copying those wrongs which he is likely to copy if he worships his image?" Mahatma said "that the correspondent has not taken the trouble of understanding the Hindu theory of Incarnation. For the faithful Hindu, his Incarnation is without blemish. 'Krishna' of the Hindu devotee is a perfect being. He is unconcerned with the harsh judgment of the critics. Millions of devotees of 'Krishna' and 'Ram' have had their lives transformed through their contemplation of God by these names. How this phenomenon happens I do not know. It is a mystery. I have not attempted to prove it. . . . I re-

cognize Truth by the name of 'Ram.' In the darkest hour of my trial, that one name has saved me and is still saving me. It may be the association of childhood, it may be the fascination that 'Tulsidas' has wrought on me. But the potent fact is there, and as I write these lines, my memory revives the scenes of my childhood when I used daily to visit the 'Ramji Mandir' adjacent to my ancestral home. My 'Ram' then resided there. He saved me from many fears and sins. It was no superstition for me. The custodian of the idol may have been a bad man. I know nothing against him. Misdeeds might have gone on in the temple. Again I know nothing of them. Therefore, they would not affect me. What was and is true of me is true of millions of Hindus."

Indeed, there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in philosophy.

ANTI-INDIAN PROPAGANDA

From time to time we have noticed how mischievous propaganda is being made against India in the West. Last December we commented upon an article published in the *Nineteenth Century and After* vilifying Indian religion. Strangely enough, that article was quoted in full in an American Magazine. Some time back we got information about a book published in German and translated into English containing libellous remarks against Swami Vivekananda. It seems that there has been going on a regular propaganda to discredit India before the eyes of the world.

Referring to the anti-Indian propaganda in the West, Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore says, in a statement to the "Association Press," "we do not know

the forces that are at the back of the propaganda against India, but that it is efficient, and has a sound financial power to support it, is evident."

The poet cites how he himself has on many occasions, fallen a victim to such propaganda against him. "During my visit in South America," says Dr. Tagore, "I was surprised to find twice within a few weeks information startlingly calumnious exploiting the ignorance of the readers in a well-known Argentinian paper.

"The 'authentic fact' was given with circumstantial details about a slave market in Calcutta, where Bengali girls are bought and sold.

"A few days later a photograph of a Parsee Tower of Silence was printed with a note below explaining that in these towers living bodies of heretics are offered by Hindus to kites and vultures, and that the British Government is trying to suppress this practice.

"These news significantly coincided with my visit to that country, where I was welcomed as representing India."

There should be a regular effort made by India to fight the anti-Indian movement; for nowadays the opinion and moral support of the world count not a little to determine the destiny of a country. In this respect, a great responsibility rests on those Indians who live abroad. Through lectures, talks and writings they may try to meet the influence of propaganda against India. And above all, it is the life that counts. If every Indian thinks that the foreign people will judge India through his individual character, and if he conducts himself accordingly, a permanent impression will be left upon a section of people which will not be lost by any amount of mischievous propaganda.

According to the Poet, "For fighting such a grave menace some mere sporadic oratorical displays or casual visits in

foreign lands by gifted individuals can never have any lasting effect. What is needed is to establish fully equipped Information Centres in the West, from where the organized voice of India may have the opportunity to send abroad her judgment and her appeal."

INDIAN IDEAL OF EDUCATION

The address delivered by Prof. Mahendra Nath Sircar at the last Convocation of Gurukul Kangri, Hardwar, deserves more than passing notice. In it the learned professor clearly brought out the Indian ideal of education and its relation to the modern life of the country.

"Education," according to Prof. Sircar, "is more the enkindling of the spirit rather than the acquiring of information. When life is touched, interest is created in education, and all secondary helps—information, observation, thinking—follow spontaneously." But life only can enkindle life. It was for this reason that in ancient India students lived with the teacher in forest retreats. For, thereby the students would find better opportunities to derive inspiration from the life of their teacher. This is not possible in our modern universities situated as they are in cities, where the demands of life are too many. Prof. Sircar rightly observes, "The voice of the soul, the free flow of ideas and the stirring of the creative instinct can be better heard, understood and felt in an atmosphere of silence and peace; and it is for this reason that in ancient India the call of inspiration and the fountain of wisdom reached us from the hermitage in the forest."

But the ideal of education depends on the spirit of the time. Modern outlook on life is quite different from what it was in ancient days. As such, people

do not care so much for the ancient ideal of education. But is this tendency for better or for worse? The learned speaker sounds a note of warning. "To-day the complexity of life," he says, "is mistaken for its richness, erudition for culture, information for insight. The positive side of our nature to-day has been so very dominant and its demand so very imperious that life exhibits conflicts, discords and clashing of interests which are welcome in the name of civilization. The watchword of modern civilization is life, but it does not exhibit the finer and deeper appreciation of it which can reveal the serene delight and the tranquil joy associated with the currents of life. The time is ripe when civilization should get its inspiration from the quiet chapter of life that lies deep down the bustle and noise raised by it. It should rise above the life of clamorous desires and find the music of life in nature and the soul."

The greatest bane of the modern education in India is, that it is out of touch with the pulse of the nation. A young man, after passing even a few years in the existing schools and colleges, more often than not, becomes a misfit to the ideals of his family, country and nation. By the time he finishes his education, he becomes a bundle of negatives. He is apt to find fault with everything indigenous. Dr. Sircar, it seems, is quite alive to this tragic situation. So he says: "Life cannot develop with the administration of ideas quite foreign to the soul. . . ."

"The history of India is really made up of seers and saints, Yajnavalkya and Janaka, Krishna and Rama, Buddha and Sankara, Ramanuja and Chaitanya, Dayananda and Ramakrishna—sages who have felt the touch of supra-mental life and truth, and

from time to time directed the attention of the race to them and filled it with the inspiration which they have drawn from such exalted heights.

"The Rishis of India have left us a heritage. Is it too much to ask to make it again living in our life and mould it in a way which will make it effective, powerful, sweet and dignified?"

After all, the ideal of life determines the ideal of education. Nowadays the modern ideal of life hardly recognizes anything beyond the earthly existence. As such, all higher virtues receive but a secondary importance, and great chaos, conflicts and confusion are the result. According to the speaker, "Life must attend to all immediate needs and formations, but unless we can see the face of truth in moments of exaltation, life has not its full blossoms and fruition. Life is a plant with its root in heaven and foliage on earth, and our earthly preoccupations should not blunt the soul to its divine birthright of Peace, Dignity, Beauty and Truth."

Dr. Sircar is intimately connected with the modern system of education. It would have been interesting to know his practical suggestions as to how to create an Indian atmosphere in modern institutions. Perhaps that was not the time and occasion for him to enter into such details.

RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY *VERSUS* HUMAN REASON

Dr. Barnes, the 'scientist' Bishop of Birmingham, some time back addressed the Modern Churchmen's Conference at Bristol in which he vehemently condemned the irrational beliefs of religion. "The man of science," said he, "rejects all authority save that of human reason. As I survey, on the one hand, the present state of the Churches, and on

the other hand the postulates which underlie the scientific movement of to-day, I see no reason to expect a reunion in which Catholics and Reformed Communions will be joined. Nor do I see any prospectus that Catholicism and Modern Science will come to terms."

He referred to magic, paganism and superstitions in religion. He did not believe that by the blessing of a priest, oil receives holy properties, or that through baptism an infant mechanically escapes God's condemnation, or that the bones of the saints have spiritual value or that disease is healed by visits to sacred shrines. These beliefs and dogmas were, according to him, completely against the principles of reason to which science is pledged. The Bishop raised a huge protest against these morbid growths of religion and observed, "I feel forced to agree that against religion so corrupted, science must for its own well-being wage war."

The postulates of faith can hardly be

reconciled with reasonings of science. It is true that science has not yet been able to enter into the realm of the spirit. When a pious man strongly believes in the efficacy of prayer and faith in baptism or in the saving grace of God and saints, he enjoys the fruits thereof which science cannot demonstrate in its laboratory. At the same time it must be said that false dogmas and superstitions which are utilized by the Church to exact undue privilege from people are always dangerous to religion. In many cases, they are created by Churchmen out of sinister motives. Religion, when based upon falsehood and deceit, can never be sanctioned by faith or reason. Apart from these, if religion bases its faith in supernatural phenomena which science fails to explain, the former cannot be rightly condemned. It is preposterous to say that because science cannot explain a thing, it must be irrational. Science is not all-knowing and human reason too is not almighty.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE BUDDHA AND THE CHRIST. By Canon B. H. Streeter. *Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London.* 365 pp. Price 7s. 6d.

This is a collection of Bampton Lectures for 1932 delivered by the author before the Oxford University. Canon Streeter is a professor in the University of Oxford and has written several books on Anglican Theology. He is to be thanked for his scholarly interest in and sympathetic view of Indian religion. The author points out in his book what a deplorable state has come over the modern intelligentsia owing to the materialistic outlook of science, and as the only remedy he suggests the comparative study of the great religions of the world, which, in his opinion, are the most significant objectifications of race-experience.

While embarking on the difficult task of considering the Enlightened and the Anointed, the author does not depend only on book knowledge, but also on the experience of his stay in India, Ceylon, China and Japan. In this book he compares critically the Mahayana or Japanese Buddhism with Anglican Christianity in many important details. He shows remarkable resemblance behind the contrast between the two great personalities—Buddha and Christ. "Buddha," he says, "resembles Christ in his moral teachings but differs from the latter by the doctrine of Karma and Maya."

Canon Streeter, however, betrays a bias for his own creed and a prejudice against Eastern view-points in many places. It is a pity that a learned Divine like him fails to understand the Indian standpoints. He

shows the superficiality of his knowledge of Indian religion when he remarks that the theory of Maya does not accept the reality of the phenomenal world and life, and, therefore, of sin. The fact is otherwise. According to the Indian doctrine the world has got a relative, though not absolute, existence. And as such there is need for the cultivation of ethical virtues.

However, the book is thought-provoking, and written in an elegant style. We recommend the book specially to orthodox Christians, for it will help to widen their outlook of life and religion. In the days when there is much talk of the Indianization or rather Hinduization of Christianity, there is a great need for the comparative study of Indian religions. The more Christianity absorbs Indian elements and becomes liberal, the better for it. For it will remain "foreign" to the soul of India unless and until it becomes a part and parcel of Indian culture.

S. J.

THE ESSENTIAL UNITY OF ALL RELIGIONS. By Bhagavan Das, *Published by the Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, 1932. xxi+279 pp. Price Bds. Rs. 3 ; Superior Edn. Rs. 4.*

The book under review was originally a paper read by the learned author at the All-Asia Education Conference held at Benares in December, 1930. The book, as the title indicates, is a laudable attempt on the part of the author at bringing out and establishing the essential unity that underlies the principal forms of religion in the world. It also tackles, as an offshoot of the main thesis, that vexed question of the modern age, "Is science contradictory to religion?" and tries to prove that ultimately "Science will shake hands with religion." Religion is the strongest cohesive force that cements human society and as all religions are one in essence and spirit, so also is humanity one at bottom. If this naked truth can, by any means, be brought home to the warring groups of human beings, torn asunder by sharp religious differences and conflicts, all the clashes of ideals, all hatred and disunion will vanish. It is a consummation devoutly to be wished for, and every effort, however humble, to further this ideal is worthy of being emulated. The author has done a great service indeed in pushing up this ideal.

Diversity is the law of the universe. So rightly there may be diverse modes of worshipping and realizing God, suitable to different types of mind. But due to arrogance and ignorance men are apt to overlook this undeniable fact and claim God as the patented property of a particular group or sect. Thus arise all sorts of sectarian quarrels and religious conflicts. The author, by copiously quoting parallel passages from the sacred books of all the great religions, has exposed the hollowness of such a claim and has spared no pains to establish once again the sublime Vedic truth that "Truth is one, but men call It by various names." Brushing aside all controversial dogmas, he has culled numerous beautiful verses replete with the highest wisdom from all the sacred books such as the Quoran, the Hadis, the Bible, the Gita, the Upanishads, etc., to prove that in respect of real substance, they have got a substantial measure of agreement, the difference being only more apparent than real. Belligerent people scramble for the husk only, whereas the kernel lies hidden under it. In fine, followers of different faiths can easily form a universal brotherhood in the spiritual plane if only they choose to change their narrow angle of vision.

The author admits that his is not the last word on the subject. He has only done the spade-work and he invites other competent hands to work it out to the finish. He has, however, offered one very nice practical suggestion. He suggests that the teaching of the universality of all religions should form a part of the curricula of the Universities. So he has appealed to the Universities and various seats of learning all over the world to form under their auspices learned active committees whose duty it will be to prepare and publish graded textbooks on Universal religion in similar lines. We would rather go further and appeal to the League of Nations at Geneva to direct its attention in this direction with a view to "achieve international peace and security" (in the words of the Preamble to the Covenant of the League).

If the considered opinions of such stalwarts in the field of science as Lodge, Jeans, Eddington count for anything, it has to be admitted that science no longer maintains an attitude of scepticism and disbelief towards religion. This is therefore a quite opportune moment for propounding a

synthetic and at the same time scientific religion, and we have no hesitation to say that Mr. Bhagavan Das's work will be hailed by the public as a very welcome publication of the hour. On one point, however, we respectfully differ with the author. Like many other over-zealous ultra-modern well-wishers of India, he twits and belittles the tendency of the Indians to excessive "other-worldliness," which "has been prominent," according to him (p. 8), "only during periods of political and economic depression." But this is far from the truth. Perhaps the author here confuses the stupefying inactivity born of Tamas with the true "inwardness" generated by a preponderance of Satwa-guna. Anyone who has read Indian history between the lines and who understands the nature and spirit of Indian nationalism must corroborate the fact that whenever India rose, it was due to her true inwardness and spirituality. We only refer to the glorious period of India under Asoka, the great Rajarshi. We hold that India will again reach the summit of her glory as soon as she accepts "renunciation and service" as her guiding principle.

The English rendering of the quotations is simply charming. The author confesses in the Foreword that he had to do the work "in the time left by many other distracting demands," and there are naturally a few faults of hasty execution. The method of transliteration employed should have been more simple. Moreover, the value of the work would have been enhanced if at least the most important original texts had been quoted alongside the translations. Then again, the author might have profitably cited, in illustration of the burden of his theme, the luminous example of Sri Ramkrishna Dev—"The Man-Gods," whose life is the only practical demonstration of the universality of religion in the modern age. This omission seems to be very glaring. We hope the author will try to remove these minor defects in the next edition.

The printing as well as the get-up of the book leave nothing to be desired.

BIDHURANJAN DAS

LIFE OF SRIS CHANDRA BASU. By PHANINDRA NATH BOSE, M.A., Ph.D. Published by Prabasi Press, 120-2, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta. 272 pp. Price Rs. 2-8.

Sris Chandra Basu was a great Sanskrit scholar, a writer, an educationist, a patriot and a social reformer. Many people know him to be a man of letters only from the various works edited and written by him. His private life and public activities are no less noteworthy. His manifold services for the cause of our country will ever be remembered by posterity. The present author has removed a long-felt want by publishing this valuable book. He has spared no pains to gather the minute details of such a glorious life. The treatment of the facts and incidents have been done in a masterly manner. The narrative is written in a simple and inimitable style. We congratulate the author on his notable success.

BENGALI

NAYA BANGLAR GODA PATTAN, PART II. By Benoy Kumar Sarkar. *Chuckerverty, Chatterjee & Co., Ltd., 15, College Square, Calcutta. 444 pp. Price Rs. 2.*

The present book is complementary to the volume which was reviewed last August in this journal. It is a collection of lectures and essays, discourses and interviews published in various journals. The book reveals how greatly eager is Prof. Sarkar to see his motherland march in equal speed with the other countries of the world. The author knows that our country lags much behind the European nations in many fields of activity, but he is not blind to the potentiality it has—nay, he has his eyes always fixed on the future when it will have an honoured place amongst the nations of the world. So he judges everything in our country in terms of world movements. And surely that is the one way to keep our aspirations high. But Prof. Sarkar is not simply a dreamer, though he is full of magnificent dreams. An economist as he is, he always looks at his dreams from the standpoint of the hard facts of life. As such, the book has many practical suggestions. The motive behind the publication of this volume, it seems, is not that Prof. Sarkar wants to be known as an author—for he has already established a name as a writer in several languages—but that he wants to place some observations before the public for the guidance of the nation.

There may not be a unanimity of opinions as to every statement Prof. Sarkar has

made, but no one will read this book, we believe, without much profit and pleasure.

SHRUTI-SAMGRAHA. By Swami Kamaleshwarananda. 86A, *Harish Chatterjee Street, Calcutta.* 96 pp. Price 6 As.

Swami Kamaleshwarananda has been trying much to popularize the study of the Vedas in Bengal. He has organized a Veda Vidyalaya in Calcutta. Now he has brought out a book with selections from the Vedas for the benefit of those Bengali readers who are not very proficient in Sanskrit. It contains SVADHYAYA-PRASHAMSA, NASADIYA SUKTA, HIRANYAGARBHA SUKTA AND PURUSHA SUKTA—the first one deals with the utility of the study of the Vedas,

and the remaining three give the Vedic theory of creation. The compiler has given a running as well as a word-for-word translation of the original. He has inserted also Sayana's commentary in Sanskrit with its translation in Bengali. The book contains a valuable introduction. We hope it will be warmly received by the reading public.

MAYAVADA. By Sadhu Shantinath. *Mangal Bhavan, Panchavati, Nasik.* 144 pp. Free of price and postage.

As the title indicates, the doctrine of Maya is the subject of discussion in the book. The arguments set forth have indicated much original thought, though differing from orthodox views.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE ANAGARIKA DHARMAPALA

We deeply mourn the loss of Rev. Anagrika Dharmapala who left his mortal coil on the 29th of April last at the famous shrine of Sarnath. Ceylon is deprived of one of its greatest souls and Buddhism suffers an irreparable gap in the galaxy of its best exponents. We hardly come across a second personality in modern India who can stand equal to him in his manifold efforts for the cause of Buddhism.

He was born of wealthy parents in Colombo in the year 1865. He received his early education in Christian schools. He was the best scholar in the Bible in his school career. He finished his studies and entered Government service. The philosophical bent of his mind and a profound religious urge compelled him to give up the service and take to the life of a Buddhist monk. First, he tried to revive Buddhism in Ceylon with untiring zeal. In 1890, he visited Buddha Gaya and felt an irresistible impulse to restore the sacred spot to the Buddhists. Although he failed in the attempt, he could found a Buddhist Dharma-sala and rest house there. In 1891, he founded the Maha Bodhi Society. He organized the International Buddhist Conference at Buddha Gaya in 1892. He was invited to the World's Parliament of

Religions in 1893. There he represented Buddhism, and along with his illustrious friend, the Great Swami Vivekananda he preached the religious ideals of the East. After this, he made a lecture tour in Honolulu, Japan and China. In Honolulu, he met Mrs. Mary Foster who afterwards became his staunch admirer. Her munificent gifts enabled him to erect the Sri Dharmarajika Vihara in Calcutta, the Mulagandhakuti Vihara at Sarnath and the Foster-Robinson schools in Ceylon. In 1912, he visited the Mahayana strongholds of China and Japan. In the closing years of his life, he spent all his efforts in the propagation of Buddhism among the Hindus.

In fact, he lived and died for Buddhism. His last words, "I would like to be born again twenty-five times to spread the religion of Buddha" are sufficient to show how the cause for which he laid down his life had penetrated into the depth of his soul. May he rest in peace and his spirit work for establishing love and fellow-feeling among mankind!

FURTHER ACTIVITIES OF SWAMI MAITHILYANANDA

A report of the preaching activities of Swami Maithilyananda was published in our March issue. After that he toured through

some other districts of U. P. Wherever he went, he created a great enthusiasm and interest in the activities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission and the ideals of Sanatan Dharma. He was much in demand for giving lectures and discourses. At Lakhimpur-Kheri he delivered two lectures—one on "The key-note of Religion" and the other on "The Religion of Love." He gave some talks also at this place. At Sajahanpur he gave a series of seven discourses in the presence of the elite of the town. Conversations were held also at the house of Mr. A. N. Sapru, I.C.S., District Magistrate of Sajahanpur. The Swami had to address also a public meeting, organized by the gentry of the locality and presided over by Mr. Sapru. The subject of the lecture was "Religion in Life." The meeting was attended by almost all the cultured people of the town, including some high Government officials.

At Moradabad he had an eager audience with whom the Swami discussed various problems of Religion and Religious life. He always talked from non-sectarian standpoints and laid emphasis on the universal principles of religion. We hope that the impetus to religious life which the Swami has given at different places will work even during his absence. The tour was completed by the end of April last.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, BRINDABAN

The above institution completed the twenty-sixth year of its existence in 1932. It gives mainly medical help to the poor and the needy. It has both Indoor and Outdoor Hospitals.

The total number of in-patients admitted during the year 1932 was 347, as against 331 of the previous year. 310 were cured, 18 died, 16 were otherwise discharged, and 3 continued treatment at the end of the year.

Altogether 34,074 cases were treated at the out-patients' department of the Sevashrama during this year, as against 37,917 of the year before. 14,955 were new patients and the rest repeated cases.

After the second Bana-Parikrama, Cholera broke out in an epidemic form at Brindaban. The Sevashrama had to cope with the disease with its full strength. More than 24 cases were treated in the Cholera ward, taxing its utmost capacity. Pecuniary help in the shape of monthly doles was also rendered in a few extreme cases of privation.

The finance of the Sevashrama has never been satisfactory, since it has so far had almost wholly to depend on precarious sources of income, viz., subscriptions and donations only. The Permanent Fund which has been created by some kind endowments yields too little an income.

The total income from these sources during the year was Rs. 14,071-15-6, and the total expenditure under different heads came up to Rs. 12,931-12-9, leaving a balance of Rs. 1,140-2-9 only.

The Sevashrama is a growing institution, and as such it has a multiplicity of wants, which await removal. The following are a few of the more pressing needs:

- (1) A Surgical Ward
- (2) An Outdoor Dispensary Building
- (3) A Guest House
- (4) An Embankment on the Jumna to protect the Sevashrama against the inroads of the river during floods.
- (5) A Permanent Fund to ensure the stability of the work.

Intending donors desirous of perpetuating the memory of their departed friends and relations may do so by contributing towards the removal of any one of the above stated needs in whole or part, by building one or more rooms at a cost of Rs. 1,000/- each or by making endowments to the Permanent Fund. Contributions may be sent to the Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Brindaban, Dt. Muttra.