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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

YEARNING AND GOD-REALIZATION

Sri Ramakrishna: ‘God cannot be realized unless the heart yearns for Him. And this yearning does not come until the desire for enjoyment has been satisfied. Those who are attached to lust and gold and whose desires for enjoyment are still unsatisfied, cannot have this yearning.

‘In that country (Kamarpukur) the son of Hriday used to spend the whole day with me. He was only four or five years old. He used to play before me with various things and forget everything else. But no sooner did evening approach than he would say, “I shall go to mammy.” In so many ways I would try to pacify him saying, “I shall give you pigeons and dolls,” but he would not be consoled. He would cry and say, “I shall go to mammy.” Play had no longer any attraction for him. I used to see his plight and shed tears.

‘One should weep for God like a child ! One should have this yearning ! Nothing in the world—play or food—

can then offer any attraction for him. This state of yearning comes when the desires for enjoyment have been satisfied.’

In speechless wonder do all listen to these words.

It is evening. A servant comes and lights the lamp. Keshab and the other Brahma devotees will take some refreshments before they leave. The arrangements for this are being made.

Keshab (with a smile): ‘Is it puffed rice that we are to take to-day also?’

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile): ‘Hriday knows.’

Leaves have been arranged to serve as plates. Puffed rice is served first, and then Luchi and curry. (All rejoice and laugh). It is 10 p.m. and everything is over. The Master is again talking to the Brahma devotees at the foot of the Panchavati.

Sri Ramakrishna (with a smile, to *Keshab*): ‘After God-realization one can live happily in the world. In the play of hide-and-seek, the player who has succeeded in touching the

“Granny” is free. Even so can you move after the realization of God.

‘A devotee who has attained the vision of God, becomes free from all attachment. He may be likened to a mud-fish which, though living in the mud, is never soiled by it.’

It is about 11 p.m. All are impatient to leave. Pratap says, ‘Let us spend the night here.’ Sri Ramakrishna invites Keshab to stay there for the night.

Keshab (with a smile): ‘We shall have to go. There is much work to be done.’

Sri Ramakrishna: ‘Why, don’t you get sleep unless there is the smell of the fish-baskets! One evening a fisherwoman was a guest at the house of a florist. She was asked to sleep in a room where flowers were kept; but she was getting no sleep. (All laugh). She became restless. Perceiving her condition the wife of the florist came and inquired, “Well, what is the matter? Why are you not sleeping?” The fisherwoman replied, “Yes, mother, the unpleasant smell of the flowers seems to disturb my sleep. Can you get my fish-basket here?” The fisherwoman then sprinkled some water on the empty basket and, the smell from that entering her nose, she fell fast asleep.’ (All laugh).

At the time of departure Keshab takes with him a bouquet that was offered at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna. He bows down to the Master and exclaims with the other devotees, ‘Glory be to Nava Vidhan (the New Dispensation).’

SRI RAMAKRISHNA AT THE HOUSE OF SURENDRA

It is a day in the Bengali month of Ashad. The English year is 1881. Sri Ramakrishna has come to-day to the house of Surendra. There are some devotees with him. It is almost evening. Before coming here, the Master

was taking rest in the afternoon at the house of Manomohan.

The devotees have assembled in the parlour room of Surendra’s house. It is situated on the first floor. Mahendra Goswami, Bholanath Pal and others of the neighbourhood are present. Srijut Keshab Sen was to come, but he could not. Srijut Trailokya Sannyal of the Brahmo Samaj and some other Brahmo devotees have come.

There is a cotton fabric spread over the floor of the parlour, which again has been covered by a large sheet of linen. Over the linen there is a fine carpet with a bolster placed on it. Surendra leads the Master to the room and requests him to take his seat on the carpet. The Master refuses to do so and sits by the side of Mahendra Goswami. Sri Ramakrishna used to attend every day the Pârâyanam¹ that was held in the garden-house of Jadu Mallick. The Parayanam was held for several months.

Mahendra Goswami (to the devotees): ‘I lived with him almost continually for several months. I have never seen a great man like him! His Realizations are not of the common order.’

Sri Ramakrishna (to the Goswami): ‘Don’t say like this. I am the lowest of the low, the poorest of the poor; I am the servant of His servants. Krishna alone is great.’

‘The undifferentiated Sachchidananda (Brahman) and Lord Sri Krishna are one and the same. The water of the sea looks blue from a distance, but go near it and you will find that it has no colour. He who appears as qualified is again beyond all attributes. He is both the Absolute and the relative.’

‘Why is it that Sri Krishna has three

¹The complete reading of any Purana, such as the Bhagavata, with due rituals and ceremonies.

bends in His body? It is due to His extreme love for Radha.

‘That which is Brahman is also called Kali, the Primal Energy, when It creates, sustains, and destroys. Krishna and Kali are identical. The ultimate Reality is one. All else is Its play or manifestation.

THE WAY TO GOD-REALIZATION

‘He can be seen. One with a pure heart can see Him. The mind becomes impure by its attachment to lust and gold.

‘Everything lies with the mind. It is like a white cloth fresh from the wash, and may be dyed in any colour you dip it in. Wisdom and ignorance are qualities of the mind. Such and such a man has gone astray means that his mind has been coloured by evil thoughts.’

Srijut Trailokya Sannyal and other Brahmo devotees come and take their seats now.

Surendra comes with a garland to put it round the neck of Sri Ramakrishna. The Master takes the garland in his hand, but throws it aside. With tears in his eyes, Surendra retires to the western verandah and sits there. Ram, Manomohan, and others follow him there. With wounded feelings, Surendra says, ‘I am really angry. A Brahmin coming from the locality that he does, how can he know the value of these things! The garland has cost me a good amount. In a fit of anger I said, Let the garlands be put round others’ necks. Now I realize my fault. God cannot be pleased with money. He is away from one under the grip of pride and vanity. I have got pride in

me and so, why should he accept my offerings! I have no desire to live.’ As he speaks tears roll down his cheeks and flood his chest.

Inside the room, Trailokya is singing and the Master is dancing in a state of divine ecstasy. He takes up the garland thrown off before and wears it round his neck. With the garland in one hand and the other hand waving, he sings and dances.

Surendra is beside himself with joy at the sight that the Master is dancing with the garland round his neck. Thinks he within himself, ‘The Lord is the destroyer of pride of the haughty, but is a friend of the poor and the lowly.’

The Master sings:

‘Behold, the two brothers have come
who shed tears while uttering the
very word Hari (God);
They offer love even to those inimical;
They go into ecstasies over the name of
God and throw others into the
same;
They embrace one and all in love—even
a pariah;
They are the two brothers of Brindaban
born again.’

Many of the devotees are dancing with the Master. All have now resumed their seats and are conversing on various spiritual topics. The Master says to Surendra, ‘Will you not give me anything to eat?’ He gets up and goes to the inner apartment of the house. The ladies of the house come and bow down to him in great reverence. The Master takes some refreshments and after a little rest, leaves for Dakshineswar.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND RELIGIOUS TOLERATION

Prophets have appeared in all climes and in all ages. Everyone of them held that he came to fulfil and not to destroy. They accepted the heritage that came down to them from the past and added their own quota to it. They also claimed a universality to their message. It was not to be confined to a single country or a single racial unit but was to be the possession of all mankind. Prophets were the exponents of spiritual truths. They were the mediators between heaven and earth. They justified the ways of God to man. In the early epochs of human civilization when mankind had not learned to differentiate between the various ways in which the human mind could approach the eternal problems of existence, the prophet, the poet and the philosopher were classed together. The mental and moral sciences were not differentiated from the objective sciences either. The wise man, the sage, was considered to be the repository of all wisdom. He was also the seer, who had the inner vision to discern things that lay outside the ken of the ordinary man. The highest truths were uttered in the rhythmic language of poetry. Poetry did not confine itself to the singing of earthly love and earthly beauty but rose high and sang of heavenly love and heavenly beauty. Heroes became demigods, and a passing episode which manifested the glory of a nation in war or peace was fashioned by the poets to something of permanent value to inspire the people ever after to noble deeds and high aspirations. Nations came to possess their Sagas, their Vedas, their sacred scriptures, in short their great national books which

contained records of their highest achievements in thought and action.

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Ancient Hebrew, Greek and Sanskrit, Chinese and Arabic, as well as Egyptian and Assyrian and such other languages which have now become obsolete have been acclaimed as sacred languages by their votaries for they contained some of the noblest utterances of humanity. The Great Spirit continues to reveal Itself through living tongues and many noble thoughts have been uttered and are being uttered through the languages which humanity is using to-day, but 'distance lends enchantment to the view' and humanity reveres the past and fails to see the beauty that lies close at hand. All great poetry is pregnant with thought, no matter in what age or in what country the poet lived. The plays of George Bernard Shaw and Henrik Ibsen reveal to us the hidden springs of human action quite as effectively as the plays of Aeschylus and Euripides, Sophocles and Shakespeare, Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti. Modern science is indeed more inspiring than the speculations of ancient natural philosophers. We happen to possess a more intimate knowledge of our planet and of the heavenly bodies than was possessed by the astronomers and geographers of ancient times. Traversing backwards in time the moderns have unravelled the records of the past and have a fairly accurate knowledge of the rise and growth of nations and also of the forces that brought about their decay and dissolution. In spite of all these great advances in the knowledge of the external world and notwithstanding the fact that the lessons of the past lie un-

ravelled before them, the nations of the modern world have not solved their social problems in any way better than the ancients. Class hatreds, racial jealousies, the exploitation of the weak by the strong, religious animosities, and such other anti-social tendencies are as rampant to-day as they were centuries ago. Why have men failed to be drawn closer together? What is it that drives nations to commit acts of aggression against other nations? In short, why is civilization drifting backwards to savagery by bombing itself out of existence? At this critical period of the history of the human race, it might be profitable to give some thought to this matter.

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What is the secret of that corporate life which would possess the potentiality to grow wider and wider until it embraces the whole of the human race? We have chairs in many universities to carry on investigations into problems bearing on human relationships. We have an army of specialists in the sciences relating to human life and human endeavour. There are the behaviourists, the gestalt psychologists, the psycho-analysts, the positivists, the humanists, the Darwinians, the Lamarckians and so forth. Our capacity for specialization has gone on endlessly in other directions also. Men of our age consider it worth while to give a whole life-time to the study of subjects such as the pigmentation on the wings of butterflies, the polychrome pottery of ancient Crete and so on. Our laws have developed to such an extent that in all countries, battalions of lawyers are ceaselessly engaged in fighting out cases and making fat incomes for themselves. Like the squirrel in the revolving cage the modern man has traversed far in the realms of knowledge, without getting

anywhere near the source of all knowledge. He even doubts the very existence of the source. Analysing endlessly he has seen the parts and has failed to see the whole. He has closely studied the phenomena of nature but the meaning behind the phenomena has escaped his attention. He often puts up a fight for the forms and empty conventions of religion but the spirit underlying the form has eluded his grasp. Poor deluded mortal! His greeds and ambitions are centred round the possessions and enjoyments of this world. He laughs at the saint or mystic who speaks of another, paying back the compliment by calling the man of religion, a vain chaser of shadows. Yet, the man of the world, whose valued possessions and enjoyments can only be secured in a harmonious corporate life here in this world, has not found it possible to solve that all-important problem.

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The modern man exhibits intellectual imbecility when he breaks into a bellicose mood and sings that blustering music-hall song ending with the refrain: 'We don't want to fight, but, by Jingo if we do.' He seldom realizes the fact that jingoism leads to mutual destruction. The daily paper announces the slaughter of one million Germans and a quarter of a million Russians. The man who reads his paper at the breakfast table gives no further thought to the matter. He may pass judgement on the million and a quarter of dead men by saying, 'It serves them right.' The present conflict in the West has clearly shown that it is not only nations that are at strife but also groups within the same nation. The Quislings were fully prepared to hand over their countries to the enemy. We have also seen friends becoming enemies and enemies becoming friends.

Surely we are a confused people living in an extremely chaotic world. Some of our elderly statesmen say that we have to re-establish a Christian civilization to make the human race settle down to peace and prosperity. Thereby, of course, they concede the fact that just at present the teachings of Christ have ceased to exert any tangible influence among the warring nations of the West. These statesmen probably think that Christianity will re-establish the old conditions and make the world safe for themselves and their children. 'Gentle Jesus meek and mild' is the nursery version of the personality of the founder of Christianity. The men who guided the Roman Empire in the early centuries of the Christian era knew what a powerful influence that personality wielded in overturning the established order, by raising the lowly and the oppressed and pushing down the privileged from their pedestals. Let us see briefly how that divine power worked for social justice and equality among men.

* * *

The early Christians lived a communistic life. They formed one family. The brotherhood of those who professed the faith was not a distant ideal but an immediate reality. The glorious example of the Master was before them. The new faith admitted the learned and the illiterate, the freeman and the slave, publicans and sinners as well as saints and anchorites, all on a footing of equality. They shared their worldly goods by handing over their possessions to the community and drawing from it their bare maintenance. Such an economic order brought about a social organization which recognized the equality of all the members. Every individual counted. Within the members who professed the faith, there were no class distinctions; neither was

there any racial prejudice. The Church sought no temporal power. Caesar's claims and God's claims were kept strictly separate. With the accumulation of wealth and the monopolizing of all learning, the Church found itself in conflict with the men who held temporal power. In some cases it compromised, elsewhere it set up a defiance. Schisms resulted and Christendom became divided. The Inquisition, the burning of the heretics at the stake, the persecution of the Roman Catholics by the Protestants and such other anti-social acts followed. Holy wars and Crusades were prompted by the hidden motive of uniting Christendom by turning it against the followers of another faith. Love gave place to hate. From being a universal religion, Christianity became transformed into a narrow dogmatism which subdivided itself into hundreds of warring creeds.

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Religious intolerance in the past led to the setting up of religious oligarchies. The Pope of Christendom had the power to make and unmake kings. The breaking away of whole countries from the Church may be traced to the exercising of this power. In the present day, the only country in which supreme temporal power is combined with supreme spiritual power is Tibet, where the Dalai Lama is the sovereign ruler of the country and also the spiritual father of all his subjects. The supreme pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church holds suzerainty over the narrow confines of the Vatican State. The millions of men who are his spiritual children owe allegiance to the governments of their own countries. All modern democratic countries give freedom of conscience to all citizens. In doing so they guarantee communal harmony and social peace. No social unit can isolate itself from its neighbours. This

necessitates that the citizens of free democratic countries should learn to respect the religious faiths of their neighbours. The individual citizen has the right to practise his religion in his own way provided he does not wound the susceptibilities of his fellow citizens. Men who grow up in democratic traditions come to realize that justice which is implanted in all human hearts is a better basis for social life than narrow religious doctrines and dogmas. Citizens of a democratic State have closer ties than men who are engaged in a co-operative commercial enterprise. The latter can break off their connection at will, whereas the former cannot. Hence arises the necessity for mutual understanding. All class-war is undemocratic. There should be true fellow-feeling among all the citizens. Minorities should be treated as part of the people. They should also behave as such and should not ask for, nor be given privileges which mark them off from their fellow citizens. The solidarity of the State can be maintained by dispensing justice and not by conferring favours. In all democratic States education and other nation-building activities are the concern of all the citizens. Civic and national consciousness can only be developed by all citizens meeting upon a common platform, rising above racial, linguistic and religious differences. Religious toleration is a necessary concomitant of the development of democracy.

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The rich, who as a rule send their children to expensive schools, often grudge paying the taxes meant for the education of the poor man's children. They fail to see the inter-dependence of the various social units until a war comes and the truth is brought home to them that the poor man's son has to march on to the battle-field for protect-

ing the interests of the nation as a whole. The measures taken for ensuring public health are directly beneficial to all classes of citizens; the incidence of taxation is, of course, heavier on the rich who own more houses and other taxable property. Charity, either organized or individual, is another means by which social justice is done to the less fortunate by those who possess more of the world's goods. Religion is a great equalizer. By enjoining charity and neighbourly love it makes the rich give away with good grace and the poor accept the gift with thankfulness. Where the religious spirit pervades violent revolutions in the social order do not take place. 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself,' gives the solution to all our social and religious problems. To practise the virtue of neighbourliness it is not necessary to reconstitute society on a class-less, caste-less basis; nor is there much advantage in introducing legislation to break down all existing barriers. What is wanted is a little widening of the heart. The good Samaritan, in the parable related in the Bible, had compassion on the wayfarer. He dressed his wounds, carried him to an inn and provided for his wants. Such fellow-feeling rising above caste and creed constitutes good neighbourliness.

* * *

The following prayer for all creeds appeared in the *Message of the East* about fourteen years ago.

'Almighty God—We who are of different races and faiths desire to realize together Thy Fatherhood and our kinship with each other. In our differences we find that many of our hopes, our fears, our aspirations are one. Thou art our Father and we are Thy children.

'We are heartily sorry for the mists of fear, envy, hatred, suspicion and greed which have blinded our eyes and thrust us asunder. May the light that comes from Thee scatter these mists, cleanse our hearts, and give health to our spirits. Teach us to put away all bitterness and to walk together in the ways of human friendship.

'Open our eyes to see that as nature abounds in variation, so differences in human beings make for richness in the common life. May we give honour where honour is due, regardless of race, colour or circumstance. Deepen our respect for unlikeness and our eagerness to understand one another. Through the deeper unities of the spirit in sympathy, insight and co-operation, may we transcend our differences. May we gladly share with each other our best gift and together seek for a human world fashioned in good under Thy guidance. Amen.'

This prayer was signed by three ministers of religions, belonging to the Roman Catholic, Jewish, and Methodist Episcopal persuasions. It is worth noting that differences in human beings make for richness in the common life and that we transcend our differences through the deeper unities of the spirit in sympathy, insight and co-operation.

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The immanence of God in all creation is accepted by most of the great religions. The Vedantist holds that the Atman is the Indweller in the bodies of all; the Christian speaks of the Church as the body of Christ who dwells in the inmost hearts of all the members; the Sufis among the Muslims interpret the unity of God by saying that He alone has being and the whole of creation is His manifestation. The higher thoughts of all great religions converge to the same point. Knowing the higher truths, the intellectually emancipated

man frees himself from all prejudices. Children and the pure in heart easily conceive of God as the common Father of all mankind and thereby rise above all narrowness. Men who possess neither intellectual emancipation nor purity of heart create discord by perceiving differences. We should learn to love and revere all great prophets and all disinterested workers who are builders of unity. The realization of the unity of mankind may come to us through philosophical knowledge, selfless service and friendliness and compassion that transcends the barriers of caste and creed. The fine arts and the sciences should become the handmaidens of religion. Comte believed that it will be possible to harmonize the idealism of the Greeks, the religious enthusiasm of the Middle Ages and the luxuriant naturalism of the Renaissance. The time is ripe for a wider synthesis. When the Caesars ruled in Rome, the West had scarcely any idea of the contemporary civilizations that flourished in the East. The East was also ignorant of the West. Such isolation was possible in the past. Now owing to the development of rapid means of communication, all parts of the world have been brought closer together. The East must understand Western culture and the West likewise should learn to evaluate the cultural treasures of the East. The mutual understanding can only be secured by sympathy, insight and co-operation. The prophets of all nations exhort us to rise above the entanglements of matter and realize our spiritual unity in God.

Life is a whole. The poet and the mystic who view it as a whole grasp the meaning of life. They proceed from lesser truths to greater truths by a method of synthesis. The man of intellect attempts to study the world around him by analysing it into parts; he loses

sight of the whole and thereby misses to comprehend the meaning of the whole. Is the universe a cosmos in which the parts have their significance only in relation to the whole or is it a chaos of conflicting forces that possess no definite aim or purpose? The perception of the fact that order pervades the universe and that the whole of creation is moving towards one ultimate goal invests individual life with a new meaning and a new significance. By an unconscious herd instinct, even the ignorant man develops a loyalty to the group to which he belongs. That very loyalty impels him to be inimical to other groups. The tribal god is a jealous god, for the infant societies which conceived the tribal god did not possess the vision of humanity as a whole. The prophets came and preached the brotherhood of man and the glorious destiny that is awaiting the race as a whole. The little tribal vanities which men developed in an earlier stage did not permit them to view the

whole. The Aryan and the Dasyu, the Jew and the Gentile, the Muslim and the Kafir, the Christian and the Heathen are the vestiges of old tribal vanities. These vanities based upon blind prejudice hide the face of truth and make men forget the universal teachings of the prophets. Hinduism preaches the divinity of man, perhaps much more emphatically than any other religion does. But, what do we see in practice? We see the votaries of this noble religion stultifying themselves before the public opinion of the world by branding one group of the adherents of their faith as untouchables. Can the tyranny of priest-craft go further? Renascent Hinduism should take immediate steps to remove the curse of untouchability and do social justice to all its adherents. It should also be tolerant to all religions and respect all religions not merely in theory but in practice.

MAYAVATI,
18 July 1941

INDIA'S EPOCHS IN WORLD-CULTURE

BY PROFESSOR DR. BENOY KUMAR SARKAR

(Concluded from the previous issue)

INDIA'S ADDRESS IN THE MODERN WORLD

I wish now to invite your attention to the ideological empire of the twentieth century which we Indians—Hindus and Mussalmans—have commenced establishing,—although for the time being on rather modest basis,—in Asia, Europe, Africa and last but not least America. This new empire is the second ideological contribution of India to world-culture. It is at present only in its rough, crude and humble beginnings. But I want to be perfectly

clear about the fact that even without political domination, nay, political freedom, it is possible to influence, convert, capture and conquer the world in ideas, ideals, arts and sciences.

In the twentieth century we are living under conditions of military-political subjection. Is it not ridiculous to think that a people that militarily and politically belongs to an alien empire should itself be credited with having established an ideological empire in the world? My answer to this and allied questions has already been furnished by the

experiences of ideological world-imperialism discussed above. We have historical evidences to the effect that ideological influence, conquest or domination is not necessarily a correlate of political activities.

We need not appeal always to the history of other epochs or other peoples in regard to human progress. Let us take the objective facts of India in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There is no doubt, let me repeat, that India is a subject country. And yet who, endowed with the objective sense, can doubt that the Indian people has been making progress in the same sense and along the same lines—although not perhaps to the same extent—as all the other peoples including the politically and militarily most dominant? The progress can be demonstrated by indices of all sorts.

It should be necessary at the outset to bid adieu to sentimentalizings about the alleged golden age in old India's epochs of military-political freedom. In regard to the economic situation you and I have to answer questions like the following: Did the Marathas enjoy greater prosperity under Shivaji and Baji Rao than to-day? Did the Bengalis enjoy greater prosperity in the days of Ali Vardi Khan or Vijayasena? Did the Punjabis enjoy greater prosperity under the Khalsas or Anandapala? Did the people of Madras enjoy greater prosperity under Tipu Sultan or Rajendra Chola? Statistically it is impossible to prove that India in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been becoming poorer and poorer. By all objective tests—in the matter of transport, export and import, agricultural output, manufactures and semi-manufactures, housing, all sorts of articles for consumption, even in the matter of the *dhoti* which you and I wear—by every economic index, it is possible to demonstrate

that even in spite of the foreign rule India has been progressing in the economic domain.

It is not my science to furnish arguments in justification of political-military subjection: Nor is it necessary for me to wax eloquent over the blessings of sovereignty in external and internal affairs. The glories of political freedom are by all means to be accepted as first postulates. Politics is indeed a force in human affairs and a powerful force. Freedom is a necessity for all mankind. But politics is not the only force. There are other forces not less powerful than freedom. A free country is not necessarily rich, nor is a subject country necessarily poor. However creative, inspiring and powerful political freedom may be as a spiritual and material force, it cannot, pragmatically considered, be taken to be the exclusive determinant in human civilization. A political interpretation of history in an Advaita or monistic manner is as untenable as a monistic economic interpretation or a monistic Freudian determinism.

I am convinced that we have to-day the beginnings of a new Indian Empire,—a new Indian nucleus of world-influences—which bids fair to be a worthy continuation of the ideological empire of the ancient and medieval Hindus. True it is that in the nineteenth century there was a great break in Indian creativity and culture-making desire and power. After the overthrow of Tipu Sultan and Baji Rao, and later, of Ranjit Singh, the entire Indian mentality became undoubtedly and almost entirely pessimistic. From one end of the country to the other, people lost all hopes. Was there anything to be done? European scholars, those 'friends of India,' came to us as teachers and we went to their country as pupils, as learners and we were

taught that our forefathers down to 1757, 1818, or 1857 were quite worthless people; and we were asked to believe that the East was fundamentally different from the West, and that there was nothing in common between the two. 'You, Orientals,' they said, 'you do not understand life, human beings, the earth, this world of ours. You do not understand secular interests, forts and fortifications, health and sanitation, construction of roads, village organization, family life, law and polity. These are much too material things for your mentality. The spiritual genius of India has always considered them to be beneath notice.' May be, why, almost certainly the Indians of that generation were flattered by such remarks coming from the Western 'friends of India,' from men like Max Muller, for example.

What, according to these Westerns, were the Orientals fit for? They conferred on Asia and especially on India the glory of extra-mundane achievements, the credit of understanding in an extraordinary degree the affairs of the other world, the spirit, the soul, communion with the divine, and what not. 'Don't you see,' said they in a seemingly appreciative manner, 'how wonderful the Indian intuition is? How exquisite and fine is the work of the Indian imagination! Your *forte* lies in the life after death. You are past masters in that life. Your brain is used to the super-sensual, the esoteric, the refined and delicate concerns of the transcendental world. Stick to that as your splendid patrimony. Don't soil your hands by touching the materialistic and dirty things of the life below.' That was the philosophy that Europe and America administered, not in homoeopathic doses, but in big allopathic doses, to the intellectuals of India, those who later became the

guardians of our morals and dominating personalities in our midst.

Naturally, as a consequence, the East, India, was regarded as just a continent of molly-coddles and slaves to be dominated by Europeans and Americans. In foreign countries a man from the East meant a coolie, an Indian was equivalent to a slave. In Europe and America an Indian at best meant only a student, just a learner going there for an academic degree and coming back with a certificate written by a white hand, to be cashed in the cultural stock exchanges of India,—Government offices and such other establishments—for a job of Rs. 250 to Rs. 1,250 per month.

All the same, the Indians—both Hindus and Mussalmans—were not unhappy to be thus entrusted by Eur-Americans with the glorious responsibility of managing the affairs of the Divine Communion. This was the position of India down to a particular time. But even India, often gullible as she is, could not be fooled all the time. The situation had to change, and it did change. How could the transformation be accomplished? How did Eur-Americans as well as Indians get debamboozled into the realities of the world-situation? How did the Westerns as well as the Indians themselves come to realize that the Indians were human beings of flesh and blood and not some messengers of God?

The opportunity came when in 1893 a mammoth clearing-house of cultures was convoked on the shores of the lake of Michigan at Chicago in the U.S.A. It was the meeting-place of about 5,000 men and women. There were the theologians and religious preachers, social scientists, anthropologists, philosophers, and natural scientists of the two hemispheres present. Most of them were

white but a few were yellow and brown like ourselves. That cultural exchange also counted among its members millionaires and milliardaires, big businessmen, transportation experts, engineers, chemists and mill-owners. It was this assembly of 5,000 Americans, Europeans and Asians that received for the first time a rude shock of a peculiar character. The rude shock was due to a bomb-shell thrown in the midst of that huge pandemonium declaring the equality between East and West. For the first time in the history of modern civilization and after the overthrow of Baji Rao and Ranjit Singh was heard the voice of Young India in and through that bomb-shell. It was the voice of a human being, not an esoteric creature dealing in the goods of the other world.

What he talked was perhaps not clear to many. But how he talked—the manner of his talk—was perceptible to all. It was challenging, it was a call to arms. The voice was that of modern India, an India bent upon a moral and intellectual tug of war with the world to-day. The audience had come to a Parliament of Religions. The impact of that bomb-shell was religious no doubt, but more than religious too. It covered the interests of entire human life, embracing as it did the whole problem of inter-racial contacts. The bomb-shell may be said to have announced to the world-pandemonium as follows:—‘You, Eur-Americans, from now on be ready to consider yourselves to be the pupils of Asia and, of course, of India also as the creator of modern values,—just as we are not ashamed to declare ourselves as the pupils of Eur-America. Reciprocal discipleship or reciprocal mastership is to be the relation from now on. No one-sided superiority or inferiority complex is to rule the international pattern to-morrow and day after to-morrow.’

That was, so to say, the Monroe Doctrine for Asia in the spiritual realm.

It went on, so to say, in the following strain: ‘You, Europeans and Americans, must not think that you are born to dominate Asia for all the centuries. Just note that you, Europeans and Americans, whether men or women, millionaires or multi-millionaires, are not going to have a greater domination on our Asian soil in the field of arts and sciences, morals, manners and sentiments than the Asians, although we are politically subject to some of yourselves, can have on Eur-American soil. We are going to dominate you ideologically to the same extent and in the same sense as you dominate us in the same field, although in military-political matters you happen to be our masters for the time being. If you want that our ideologies should be off Europe and America, from now on your ideologies should also be off Asia.’ This is the ideological Monroe Doctrine from the Asian side. The doctrine was enunciated for the first time in the history of modern civilization by a young man like many of the people present to-night. That young man was born on the banks of the southern Ganges and he was at once recognized as a re-creator of values, as a re-maker of mankind, as a world-conqueror. I refer to Swami Vivekananda.

I am not quoting the exact words of Vivekananda at the Parliament of Religions, Chicago. I am simply calling up before you my interpretation of the entire personality of Vivekananda,—the apostle of India’s might, the exponent of modern India’s values—in its orientations to the combined intelligence of Europe and America. Whatever may have been his topics and whatever his words, the audience discovered in this specimen of modern Indian manhood the determination of

Indians to struggle forward like human beings and get recognized as world-champions. It is not necessary for me to inquire into the question as to whether Vivekananda spoke about the Upanishads or the Vedanta, the Gita or Ramakrishna. That, certainly, he did. But whether he spoke about ancient times or modern times is for my purpose not the most important thing. What concerns me most is the total impact of Vivekananda the man on those 5,000 human beings, and on the millions of newspaper readers in the United States during the Parliament of Religions week and after. It was the picture of a human being addressing human beings and getting respected as a human being on terms of equality. It was not the Upanishads or the Vedanta that won recognition in that world-arena. The recognition of the Parliament and the people was conferred on the Young India of flesh and blood. The boldness of his challenge and the power of his conviction left no doubt that India did not live in the past but was virile enough to carve out an address for herself in the world of to-day. Vivekananda was accepted by Eur-America as a modern man, as a philosopher capable of solving modern problems in co-operation with Western thinkers.

Vivekananda is the man who for the first time in modern times succeeded in having the claims of modern India to creativity recognized by Eur-America and recognized as a contributor to the cultural expansion of mankind. Vivekananda was recognized as a world-power in America and also in Europe. He started the epoch of India's influences on modern nations. Further, he proved that in spite of a country being poor and in spite of its being a slave, it was possible for it to influence, to convert and to conquer the world. The

beginnings of a new Indian Empire were thereby laid in no mistakable manner. I call it the Ramakrishna Empire.

THE RAMAKRISHNA EMPIRE

The desire and the power of the Indian people to create and to dominate in the world of modern values have been in evidence uninterruptedly since the event of 1893. The 'ideas of 1905' constitute an important landmark as embodying in a concrete form on the Indian soil the spirit of world-conquest manifested by Vivekananda in the U.S.A. In 1940 it is possible to itemize the lines and amount of advance achieved during the last thirty-five years.

The progress that we have been able to accomplish during the last fifty years, especially since the glorious Bengali revolution of 1905,—the *Swadeshi* movement, the *Swaraj* revolution of Young India,—the progress that has been achieved in industrialization, banking, insurance, commerce, etc. as well as in scientific researches, in activities on the international plane is something of which any people in the world can be proud. The political, economic and cultural activities of Indians during the last thirty-five years are being watched by the entire world. What we are doing at Bombay, Calcutta, Madras or Lahore is attracting notice among all nations. It is being studied in New York, Tokyo, Berlin, Paris and last but not least in London. It will not do to be blind to the reality that our thoughts, our aims and our movements are already world-commodities. This little trade union movement over here and that little political activity over there are all being commented upon in the newspapers of the world. India has succeeded in establishing world-contacts. You and I are thus not tiny little bugs to be crushed

out of existence according to the whims of a particular group of individuals living in a certain corner of the earth. India is a power—of course, a junior power—among the powers of the world. She is influencing mankind in many directions although, no doubt, as yet not in a powerful manner. But men with eyes in East and West can see that Young India is already a creative force and has been establishing an address among the Vishwa-Shakti (world-forces) in the realm of ideas, ideals and creativities of the ideological type.

To-day there is hardly any journal of mathematics, physics, chemistry, geology, botany, zoology, medicine or the other natural sciences conducted by Europeans and Americans which is not publishing something by an Indian scholar or which does not review the work done by Indian scholars. Our Indian antiquarians and historians as well as researchers in the other human and social sciences have also come of age and have been recognized by European and American savants as their peers. This is a thing which was unknown even down to 1905. In all these arts and sciences Indians are not mere learners but have grown—although not in very large numbers yet—into teachers also. It is an aspect of world-domination in the sense of equality and constructive co-operation between East and West which has to be visualized in connection with the new Indian Empire of the twentieth century. Vivekananda was the founder of this new Indian Empire because in my opinion previous to him hardly any Indian had ever been recognized in Europe and America as a world-conquering force.

This new Indian Empire is not identical and is not to be confounded with the influences of ancient Indian culture on the Eur-American culture of the last

century and a half as noticeable in the romantic movement, 'new thought' cults, theosophy, vegetarianism and so forth. The modern West's interest in the old East, in the Asian literature, art, philosophy, etc. of bygone days, and in Orientalism as a branch of archaeological and antiquarian investigations is certainly an important feature in the contemporary contacts between India and Eur-America. But Vivekananda's pioneering goes much beyond this. It ushers in a new era of modern India's creations in the arts and sciences and co-operation with the modern West in the new problems of mankind.

Vivekananda is the first man to establish that empire, and it is lucky that with Vivekananda that empire did not cease to exist. He succeeded in leaving behind him a tradition of self-sacrifice, of the glorious vow of poverty, of spirituality combined with organizing power, and that tradition is embodied to-day in one of his creations, the Ramakrishna Mission. The activities of this Mission have reached in a somewhat stable albeit modest form several countries of Europe including England. The Mission is represented in South America also. In the United States of America it has centres in nearly a dozen cities. As is well known, the Mission has of course a network of institutions throughout India and Ceylon as well as Burma and the Federated Malaya States. Outside of Indian and Asian frontiers these institutions have served—although not yet in very considerable proportions,—to bring the Eur-American intellectuals, publicists, and culture-leaders into regular intercourse with the organizers of the Ramakrishna Order as well as other Indian scholars, businessmen and travellers. Contacts between East and West are thereby being maintained in Western centres of

learning, commerce and politics on terms of equality and mutual good will. An international co-operation of this type had never been attempted in modern times previous to the establishment of this new Greater India. This is why I have often described the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Mission as constituting the International Spiritual Service and the International Social Service of India. This body of cultural and ideological workers is not less profoundly constructive and significant for India and the world than the Indian Civil Service (I.C.S.), the Indian Medical Service (I.M.S.), the Indian Educational Service (I.E.S.), the Indian Police Service (I.P.S.) and so forth, or the several services maintained by the League of Nations.

The Ramakrishna Empire is not exclusively the work of the Ramakrishna Mission. It is the work of industrialists, of scientists, of antiquarians, of poets, of painters, of religious missionaries, of business magnates, of the trade unions, and of the political leaders of all denominations. By political leaders—though I do not belong to any political party—I mean not only people above forty but even young men and women between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five who are doing idealistic or constructive work. These young men and women are demonstrating to the world, along with the adults in letters, science and industry, trade union organizers, businessmen, and the Ramakrishna Mission that India is out conquering and to conquer. All those men and women, who are trying to crush to pieces the Himalayan obstacles that hamper the progress of India and to promote modern spirituality and society among the Indian people are establishing in their own personalities and in their daily activities that fundamental doctrine of equality between East and

West and international co-operation on terms of mutuality which is the spiritual foundation of the Ramakrishna Empire that has been pioneered by Vivekananda.

The Ramakrishna Empire is still in its nonage. It has just commenced its career and is hardly yet adequately known. But among its architects is to be mentioned the legion of men and women who are working at home and abroad in the most diverse fields of thought and action and in the most heterogeneous ways. Whatever is being done by Indians in industry, commerce, science, education, literature, fine arts, politics, labour organization, religion, and social service is a contribution to the strengthening of India's claims to recognition as a colleague of the other creative countries of the modern world. Not every builder of the Ramakrishna Empire is a religious preacher. Nor is every builder of this new Indian Empire a Hindu. The Mussalmans as well as the Christians of India have also been contributing to the Greater India as embodied in this empire. It is not to be supposed that the Ramakrishna Empire is being constructed exclusively by the intellectuals and other high-brows. The industrial workingmen in the factories of India are no less valuable builders of this organization than the Tatas and other industrialists. Nay, the Indian emigrants in the different overseas lands of the two hemispheres are also powerfully helping forward the evolution of this new Indian Empire in so far as they are exhibiting their creativities in a manner which can be recognized by their non-Indian colleagues as of at least equal worth with their own work in the same lines. Every Indian man and every Indian woman who embody in their daily thoughts and actions the desire and the power to influence, to

convert and to dominate are to be listed in the ever-growing schedule of the pillars of the Ramakrishna Empire.

Why do I call this 'Greater India' of to-day, this new Indian Empire of the twentieth century, the Ramakrishna Empire? My logic is very elementary. Vivekananda used to describe all his own activities as the activities of his Master, Ramakrishna. The empire that was brought into being by his personality is therefore aptly to be described, in my estimation, as the Ramakrishna Empire. And this is what I have done on several occasions, at Rangoon, Karachi, Calcutta, Delhi, Patna, Bombay and elsewhere (1936-1940).

For my logic I have some historical basis also. I wish you once more to recall the first ideological empire of ancient and medieval India. That Greater India was the cumulative result of all sorts of Indian thoughts and enterprises carried on for over a millennium and a half. The workers were in many instances Brahminic Hindu in the narrow sectarian sense. Not everybody among the Indian colonizers, missionaries and ideological empire builders of those days was thus strictly speaking a Buddhist. But it is very interesting that most of the Indian activities of that long period of history have come to be known in the world rightly or wrongly as Buddhist activities. The Greater Indias of those days have come to be described as so many bits of Buddhist India outside the Indian frontiers. That remarkable personality, Buddha, has furnished the name of the vast ideological empire of the Indians throughout the Asian Continent.

Asia was conquered by the spirit of India as a whole, not by the Buddhists as a sect or by the Shaivas as a sect or by the Vaishnavas as a sect. It is the

stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata that conquered for India the painters, sculptors, poets and preachers of Asia. It is the laws of Manu by which the social, economic and political norms of Asia were acculturated to Indian conditions. It is the Ayurvedic system of therapeutics that captured the medical experts of Asia. The Digvijaya of the decimal system of notation brought Asia within the Indian sphere of influence. Buddha was not the only Indian world-conqueror in Asia. And yet India is known in Asia as the land not so much of Rama, Shiva, Manu, Panini, Charaka and others as of Buddha. It is an accident of history perhaps. But it is a reality of international culture-contact.

Nothing is more curious than the fact that since the days of Yuan-Chwang, the Chinese scholar-organizer-educationist of the seventh century, even the *danton*, the twig that is used as tooth-stick, has been known in China as something Buddhist. And why? Because, in the mule-loads of things Indian carried to China by Yuan-Chwang from the land of Buddha were to be found hundreds of articles not excluding the *danton*. It is as if we in Asia were to describe the steam-engine as Christian because in sooth it was imported into Asia along with many other things from Europe whose inhabitants happen to be Christian by faith.

The ideological empire of the Indian people that has been slowly but steadily evolving since 1893 is but an embodiment of the creative urges of all the self-conscious men and women of India in their entirety. But I am following the precedent furnished by history in order to describe it after Ramakrishna because he was the inspirer of Vivekananda, who, as the representative of Young India, succeeded in laying the first foundation-stone. The Rama-

krishna Empire, then, as the successor of the Buddhist Empire, is growing into the second specimen of Indian ideo-

logical imperialism, constituting thereby another epoch of India in world-culture.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND MODERN INDIA

BY SWAMI JAGADISWARANANDA

The last century in which the great Swami appeared witnessed the end of the medieval age and the advent of the modern. India coming into contact with Europe was deluged by Western ideas and ideals. Thoughtless of the disastrous consequences, she began to ape the West and was about to sell her soul for a mess of pottage. English education and European civilization led to denationalization and Anglicization. Macaulay said rightly that no Hindu who received an English education could ever sincerely remain attached to his own faith. Modernization of India was, however, a necessity, for modernism is the only antidote to medievalism and modern thought is the only disinfectant for medieval errors. Sister Nivedita aptly observed that India is still in the throes of a passage from the medieval to the modern. This transition has turned all walks of collective life in modern India into a welter of confusion. The transitional age of chaos will continue for a few decades more until the last vestige of medievalism that is still sticking to the private corners of our social, national, and religious life disappears. European influence was so deep-rooted in the mind of the nineteenth century India that 'almost all the reformers of the last century,' remarks that famous French thinker, Romain Rolland, 'were Anglomaniacs and oscillated between the East and the West. Their characters also were compounded of the incompatible elements of the

East and the West.' The single exception, however, was Vivekananda's Guru, Sri Ramakrishna, who was not only free from occidental influence but was the perfect and spotless living example of the ancient Indian ideal. Blessed with the sublime vision of India's real soul, Vivekananda warned his bewildered countrymen thus: 'If India becomes English or Western she dies. India must remain Indian to uphold the highest torch of spirituality before the secular civilization of the materialistic world.'

Influenced by English education and European thought the young Swami in his pre-monk days turned agnostic for some time. He approached some religious worthies of his time but none could satisfy him with a direct reply about the existence of God. At last he went to Sri Ramakrishna and in the very first interview asked the question: 'Have you seen God?' 'Not only have I seen God but I can show Him to you; I see Him more intensely than I see you,' came the prompt and unequivocal reply from the God-intoxicated soul. This question was not a personal question of Vivekananda to Sri Ramakrishna. It was, in fact, the challenge of modern India to ancient India. Vivekananda voiced the Anglicized mind of modern India and Sri Ramakrishna truly represented ancient India. That was why he alone, of all his contemporaries, could accept the challenge. In every age God-men appear to make

such authoritative utterances. In one Upanishad we find one Vedic Rishi expressing his illuminations thus: 'Here ye, children of Immortality and ye that reside on earth and in higher regions; I have realized that Cosmic Being who is ever effulgent like the sun and is beyond all darkness. By knowing Him alone, one can cross the ocean of worldliness and ignorance and attain immortality. There is no other way.'

The union of Vivekananda with Ramakrishna is pregnant with a national meaning. The divine union of these twin souls means reunion of modern India with ancient India. Vivekananda's surrender to Ramakrishna signifies modern India's acceptance of ancient India's heritage. Modern India that made up her mind to adopt new standards in individual, social, and national life embraced in and through Vivekananda her age-old ideals of life and society. This was the desideratum of the modern times; hence the Swami's appearance was a historical necessity. In his epoch-making speeches in India, Europe, and America the Swami quoted nothing but the Upanishads and the Gita. As Buddha democratized the Upanishads, the Swami spread the Vedanta in the world. He was the first authoritative exponent of the Upanishads to the Western nations. 'Had anything in this Evangel of modern Hinduism' reiterates Nivedita 'been his own, he would have been less than what he was.' Vivekananda was a lineal descendant of the Aryan Rishis, of Buddha, Krishna, and Shankara.

As the victory in the Russo-Japanese war ushered in a new era for Japan, so the epochal success of Vivekananda at the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893 inaugurated a new era for India. The success of the Swami's mission to the West was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake and was

out to conquer. The Swami's success increased the self-respect of the Indian people. Mr. M. R. Jayakar of Bombay once remarked that Vivekananda's name is a passport to the cultural centres of the West and his disciples and grand-disciples are really cultural ambassadors to the Western world. 'When he began to speak,' remarks Sister Nivedita 'it was of the religious ideas of the Hindus, but when he ended, modern Hinduism had been created. In him India learnt as a whole to understand the greatness of her own thought—a self-unification that gave birth to modern Hinduism. It was the religious consciousness of India that spoke through him to the modern West.' India proclaimed through him to the modern world the message of her people as determined by her hoary past. His Chicago Address was a brief charter of enfranchisement for India herself. He, by his new interpretation of Hinduism raised it to a universal status. He has internationalized Hinduism. That is why within hardly four decades of his demise, a growing number of permanent Hindu monasteries have been established in the West. He has, therefore, been rightly called the God-sent inaugurator of an unexpected era of world-wide expansion of Hinduism. As the new prophet of Hinduism the Swami made it clear to the Indians that India is not effete and old but young and vigorous and said, 'Let the foreigners come and flood this land with arms and ammunitions; but up, up, India and conquer the world with spirituality.' The Swami wanted the Indians to believe that not only India had a great and glorious past but she was destined to have a still greater and brighter future. He was so consumed with this glorious vision of India's future that those who had the privilege to see and hear him got inspired with this vision. Nivedita

who was initiated into this vision by her Master wrote as follows: 'Just as Sri Ramakrishna, in fact, without knowing any books had been a living epitome of the Vedanta, so was Vivekananda of the national life. He never proclaimed nationality, but he was the living embodiment of the idea which that word conveys. My Master incarnates in his person the great national ideal.'

'What can I do for you, Swami?' was a frequent question of his admirers and friends in the West. 'Love India and serve India,' was his invariable reply. The monk and the patriot were curiously blended in him and Sister Nivedita has recorded in her reminiscences how often he passed from one mood to the other. A prophet is not a person as such. He is a 'National Person,' says Aldous Huxley. That means a prophet never lives on the plane of personality, the small self like the ordinary worldlings. He identifies himself with the whole nation and scarcely comes down to the individual mood except at the time of eating and other physical necessities. Pain and pleasure of the nation become his pain and pleasure.

C. F. Andrews in the *Rise and Growth of the Congress in India* aptly remarks that 'the Swami's intrepid patriotism gave a new colour to the national movement throughout India. More than any other single individual of that period Vivekananda had made his contribution to the new awakening of India. Even without being connected with the Congress, he very largely shaped its policy and promoted its evolution.' The Swami very clearly described his ideal of nation-building in India which in his opinion must be firmly founded on religion. 'The political systems that we are struggling for,' said the Swami, 'have been tried for centuries in Europe and found want-

ing; let religion be given a chance as in ancient India.' The nation in India, he predicted, will be a union of those whose hearts beat in the same spiritual tune, and national union in India will be a union of scattered spiritual forces. In modern India, as in the ancient, religion will be the key-note, the central theme, the life-blood and everything else will be secondary.

Vivekananda was the first and the foremost apostle of modern India to understand the genius of Indian history and to appreciate the true worth of Indian culture. All the thinking about national and social reconstruction in modern India has been done by the Swami for us. He has also given a clear-cut outline of the principles of nation-building.

If we compare the renaissance of modern India with that of other modern nations, the Swami's prophecy will be more clear to us. The awakening in modern Italy originated from the inspiring thoughts of Mazzini and Garibaldi; that in modern Russia from those of Maxim Gorky and Karl Marx; and that in France from those of Rousseau and Voltaire. But in modern India it is the ideas of religious apostles like Raja Rammohan, Vivekananda, Dayananda, Keshab Chandra and others that brought about the new regeneration. So the case of India is quite different from that of Italy, Russia, France or Germany. Plato had dreamt of an ideal State which would be ruled by wise men. In his *Republic* he says that the city and the society will never cease from evil unless politics and religion are combined together and politicians become philosophers (wise men). The great Greek thinker tried to realize his dream in some Mediterranean State but failed because the Governor of the State was not a philosopher. The Rishis of ancient India did realize such a collec-

tive society and modern India is fated to be blessed with such a new nation on earth, provided she does not adopt fascism or communism or any other 'isms' of the West and banish religion from her collective life. The Swami predicted even long before the birth of communism that the new age is for the Shudras or labourer class and the nation's genius would in this age rise in the labourers, i.e. the peasant, the cobbler, the cooly, etc. The Brahmin, the Kshatriya, and the Vaishya had their chances in the preceding ages, so the labourers will play their part in the modern age. A study of the national ideals of other countries will give us a better conception of Swami Vivekananda's glorious vision of modern India. India is the only country in the world that has worked for centuries to make religion the distinctive feature of her national life, just as other nations have struggled hard to form their principal themes in other fields. Equality and excellence of social life characterize the national life of the U.S.A. Men of subject nations with their bent backbone, due to poverty of education and wealth, live and move like free citizens after some months' sojourn in the Yankee soil. Germany has perfected herself in military science and intellectual supremacy. It is said that during the last world war the German soldiers used to pour over, in their barracks, the books of Kant, Hegel, and other serious authors, while the British soldiers devoured in their leisure hours the six-penny novels. Britain, on the other hand, has excelled in empire-building and commercial science. Oxford University is said to have included empire-building as a subject in its curriculum of studies. Even the missionaries and professors that come from that island to other countries of her vast empire, are imbued with imperialistic views.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan clearly analyses in his *East and West in Religion* how they have politicized religion! But India being God-guided has succeeded, in contradistinction to all other nations on earth, in giving a religious character even to politics. In India the medical science is a Veda, a scripture, music the science of sound is an art of prayer, and the Fine Arts, a kind of ritual worship. Swami Vivekananda reminded modern India of her national characteristics in unmistakable terms just at the psychological moment.

The two forces of Bharata Shakti are nation-building and world-moving. The former was manifest in Bhagavan Buddha who Aryanized the whole of the Far East and converted it into Greater India. China, Japan, Siam, and other Buddhist countries were actually civilized by Indian religion and culture, for Aryanization means civilization, remarks the great philosopher of history, Mr. Waddell. The self-governing countries of Siam and Japan have been made nations by Bharata Shakti. The nation-making power of Bharata Shakti was exhibited in Shankara who Indianized Buddhist India with her many foreign races and faiths. India-nization is nothing short of Hinduization. But for Shankara's Hinduization India could not have been able to absorb and assimilate so many alien elements in her race and religion. Both the forces of Bharata Shakti mentioned above were together incarnate in this new age in the person of Swami Vivekananda who has awakened India from her deep slumber of about one thousand years of self-forgetfulness and founded a country-wide organization of social reconstruction and cultural revival that has got by now about three hundred centres, (both affiliated and non-affiliated) in India, Burma, and Ceylon. The Ramakrishna Mission,

founded by him, has two distinct features. The domestic policy of this 'non-sectarian sect' is to achieve cultural unity in the Hindu world by emphasizing the common bases of Hinduism. As Sri Ramakrishna was, in the words of P. C. Majumdar, not only a Shaiva, or a Shakta, or a Vaishnava, or a Vedantist etc., but he was *all these* and many more, so the Mission named after him is not fanatical of any particular doctrine of Hinduism, but accepts and harmonizes all Hindu sects on the universal foundation of Advaita.

The aim of his whole life, as the Swami had said to Sister Nivedita in Kashmir, was to make Hinduism aggressive and dynamic like Islam and Christianity. He was constantly preoccupied with the thought of Hinduism as a whole and loved very much to dwell on the spectacle of her historical emergence. In the words of Nivedita 'Vivekananda's message is not only a gospel to the world at large, but to his own children the charter of the Hindu faith. What Hinduism needed amidst the general disintegration of the modern era was a rock where she could lie at anchor, an authoritative utterance in which she could recognize herself. For ages to come the Hindu man who would verify, the Hindu mother who would teach her children what was the faith of their ancestors, would turn to Vivekananda for assurance and light. What Hinduism needed was the re-organization and consolidation of thoughts and activities, ideas and ideals, and what the world needed was a religion which had no fear of any truth, scientific or philosophical.' All these are found in the message of Vivekananda which is really the Magna Charta for modern Hinduism.

The Swami prophesied that Hinduism will no longer remain a stationary system but will prove herself capable of

welcoming and embracing the whole modern development. The Eternal Religion of ours must become militant and proselytizing, capable of sending out special missions to foreign countries and of reclaiming into her own fold her own children that had been converted from her and of the conscious and deliberate assimilation of new elements. In the opinion of the Swami the Sikhs, the Jains, the Buddhists, the Aryas, and the Brahmos are no less Hindus. He has given a very broad definition of modern Hinduism. 'No army then carries the banner of so wide an empire,' remarks an English thinker, 'as that of Hinduism thus defined.' It is gratifying to see that Hindu leaders of modern India have accepted this definition of Hinduism. Mr. V. D. Savarkar, the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, defines Hinduism just in the same way in his *Hindutva*. The only difficulty in absorbing foreign elements into our race and religion is our social rigidity, but when our orthodox society has already opened its doors to them there is no other obstacle in the path of our expansion and assimilation. Intermarriage has already been going on between the Sikhs and the Hindus in Sind, between Aryas and Hindus in the Punjab, between the Jains and the Hindus in Gujarat, between the Brahmos and Hindus in Bengal, between the Buddhists and Hindus in Ceylon and Burma. The late Rev. Uttama of Burma, in his presidential speech to the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, remarked that Buddhists are also Hindus culturally, racially, and religiously. In Buddhist and Moghul India, Hindu religion and society did absorb many non-Indian elements deliberately. In course of time, the reascent culture and religion of the Hindus will affect and influence Zoroastrianism, Islam, Christianity, and

Judaism in such a way that they will be, like Jainism and Buddhism, accommodated in the broad bosom of Hinduism like Hindu sects. Zoroastrianism has already shown signs of unification. Christianity and Judaism have already yielded to the current of Indianization as is evident in the work of the Christ-Kula Ashrama of Madras and the Christ Prema Sangha of Poona. Sufism, Bahaim, and Ahmadiya Association and Khoja movement are trying to liberalize Islam and harmonize it with Hinduism. Modern Hinduism has already accepted the Semitic prophets of Islam and Christianity in the panel of her prophets in and through Sri Ramakrishna.

Dr. Norman Brown of Pennsylvania University, U.S.A., and Baron Omar Rolf Ehrenfels, a German Muslim, who travelled over India for the purpose of making special studies of the interaction of Islam and Hinduism, have un-animously opined that Semiticism will undergo amalgamation in modern India and lose its identity in Hinduism. Baron Ehrenfels remarks that the living existence of the ancient culture of Hinduism will change in some way or other the former condition of Indian Muslim culture, as was the case with European Christian culture, at the time of the Renaissance.

By reminding the Hindu nation of the interrelation of all parts of its own faith the Swami has revitalized modern Hinduism so forcibly that she is gradually becoming aware of herself as an organized unity. He pointed out that the vast complexus of systems that make up Hinduism is characterized by infinite inclusiveness. He said that the unique glory of Hinduism is her doctrine of the Ishta-Devata (chosen ideal) which makes it tolerant of every possible form of faith and culture. He has given a pragmatic bent, a practical

turn to Hinduism. Sir J. C. Bose truly said that true Hinduism made man work, not dream. The Swami also is the founder of a new order of Hindu monasticism (the first order since the close of Buddhist missions), whose mission is to unite all Hindu sects in India and expand Hinduism abroad.

A few words about the personality of the Swami and we have finished this long dissertation. The national and international aspect of his meteoric life has been portrayed above. 'He was a warrior monk,' said Annie Besant. 'He was a soldier monk,' said Nivedita. One Western savant has spoken of him as 'the Napoleon of Hinduism.' At the sight of the steady progress of Hinduism in Europe and America, a missionary has written a book to prove that Hinduism invades America. One American has compared the Swami with Caesar and Kaiser. With his magnetic personality and majestic appearance he was literally an apostle of manliness. 'The older I grow,' he confided to a disciple once, 'the more it appears to me that the whole of religion can be summed up in one word "manliness."' As a monk he was an inborn lover of death and worshipper of the terrible. Sister Nivedita observes: 'His personal ideal was that Sannyasin of the Sepoy Mutiny who, stabbed by an English soldier, broke the silence of fifteen years to say to his murderer, "And thou also art He."' In the language of the *Dhammapada* he wandered alone in the world like a rhinoceros, fearing nothing and caring for nothing even as a lion not trembling at noises, even as a wind not caught in the net, and even as the lotus-leaf unstained by water. He preached renunciation instead of Mukti; self-abandonment, instead of self-realization. 'Go thou,' he said once to Nivedita, as if addressing in one person each separate soul that would ever come to him for

guidance, 'and follow Him (i.e. Buddha) who was born and gave his life for others five hundred times before he attained Buddhahood.'

It is a man-making and character-building religion that he lived and taught. Eternal fearlessness and un-failing faith in ourselves were his gospel of life. His constant exhortation was to banish all ideas of weakness from our mind. He preached Vedanta, because it alone of all religions, teaches men that infinite capacity and possibility lie dormant in each soul. He realized under painful necessity that not only an alien rule but also our own religion has made us slaves. He was such a strong lover of freedom that he was reluctant to call man the servant of even God. This made Vivekananda roar as the lion of Vedanta thus: ' "Dasoham, Dasoham," (I am a slave,

I am a slave) we have been saying for centuries politically and spiritually. Let us at least once in life say, "Shivoham, Shivoham," (I am Shiva, the Spirit, eternally free and ever perfect).' To future followers he has left his undying blessings—'Be greater than myself.' While pacing up and down in the courtyard of the Belur monastery on the very day of his passing away, he was heard muttering to himself, 'If there were another Vivekananda he would have understood what this Vivekananda has done! And yet how many Vivekanandas will be born in future.' Vivekananda's clarion call is still resounding in the sky of India, calling Indian youths for service and sacrifice. The Swami is dead and gone, but his impersonal and immortal voice comes rolling down through the years with added strength: 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached.'

KALI DANCING ON THE BREAST OF SHIVA

BY PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEA

I. RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY AND ART

In Hinduism Religion, Philosophy and Art have always developed in the closest embrace with one another. It is the spiritual urge in the Hindu mind that has found expression in various forms of religious discipline, various systems of philosophical speculation, as well as various types of artistic creation. The religious rites and ceremonies, the social customs and institutions, the ethical ideals and duties, the aesthetic tastes and ideas, the senses of value and dignity, that have for centuries and millenniums exercised a governing influence upon the lives and thoughts and feelings of all classes of the Hindus, owe their origin

and sustenance generally to the same spiritual urge for self-realization or salvation or freedom from worldly bondage. In order to find out a rational basis for their religious and moral conceptions and to offer rational interpretations to the mystic supersensuous experiences of the truth-seers and saints, the Hindu thinkers devoted themselves to metaphysical speculation. The truths seen by the Rishis and rationally established by the philosophers were presented to the people at large in various artistic forms by the master artists,—by the poets, the musicians, the painters, the sculptors, the Pauranikas and others.

To the Hindus the highest philosophical truths are not mere abstract

concepts to be speculated upon and logically established, but concrete realities to be experienced and enjoyed. To them Philosophy is particularly concerned with the rational understanding of the ultimate Truth, which lies hidden within the phenomenal universe and also beyond it. Philosophy seeks to convince the intellect related to the world of finite, transitory, contingent, mental, and material facts that what is conceived or intuited as the ultimate Truth is rationally consistent with the nature of all these facts of experience and capable of furnishing adequate explanation for their origination, transformation, arrangement, adjustment, destruction, etc. Religion is concerned with the systematic discipline of the entire being of man—of his body, senses, mind and heart—for the direct immediate intuitive experience of the Truth. The Truth is self-existent and self-shining, transcendent as well as all-pervading, always and everywhere present and perceptible. It is the self-luminous essence of the mind as well as the abiding essence of all the objects of the mind's experience and thought. There is only a veil of ignorance between the Truth and the mind, and hence we see the finite transitory distorted appearances of the Truth and not the Truth Itself. The purpose of all forms of religious discipline—physical, psychical, moral and intellectual—is ultimately to remove this veil of ignorance, this obstacle in the way of the self-revelation of the Truth to the mind, and to bring the human consciousness face to face with the real nature of the Truth.

Art plays the important part of making the Truth lovable and enjoyable to the human heart. It constructs a bridge between the Supersensuous and the sensuous, the Infinite and the finite, the Eternal and the transient, the Intangible and the tangible, the Formless and the forms, the Spiritual and the material.

Art gives concrete, visible, tangible, material forms to the abstract concepts of metaphysics and the spiritual truths of religious experience. But the forms are so designed that they immediately lead the imagination to the formless. The products of mystic Art are finite and transitory in forms, but infinite and eternal in significance. They seek to bring the Spiritual Truth down to the plane of sensuous experience, and to charm the imagination up to the plane of the supersensuous Reality. Unlike the natural objects of ordinary sense-perception, the products of the spiritual Art instead of veiling the Truth seek to unveil Its inner character through their suggestive powers. They are meant to be Images of Truth.

II. HINDU DEITIES AND THEIR IMAGES

The Hindu artistic genius shone forth brilliantly in the conception and execution of the images of Gods and Goddesses. These Deities are living Realities of the supernatural and supersensuous planes. They have existence of a higher order than the objects and phenomena of this world of gross sense-experience. They reside within the hearts of the different departments of Nature and preside over their operations. They are self-conscious Moral and Spiritual Powers, determining the courses of events in Nature,—in the physical, the animal and the human worlds,—in accordance with eternal, moral and spiritual principles. They create harmony in the midst of discord, adjustment in the midst of catastrophes, ethical relations in the midst of physical interactions, ordered progress in the midst of various disruptive forces.

The Hindu spiritual insight discovered the dynamic presence of these Moral and Spiritual Agencies behind and within and above the natural phenomena of sense-experience. The enlightened moral and

spiritual sense of the Hindu sages penetrated through the veils of the outward appearances of the phenomena and forces of nature and got direct access to these Deities. They saw them, they talked to them (with *mantras*), they pleased them with their noble actions and religious observances, they formed alliance with them, they exacted favours from them, they exerted influence upon them. This was manifested in their exercising occasional moral control upon the courses of natural events. The stories they related about the lives and activities of these Deities are from our point of view the moral and spiritual interpretations they offered of the remarkable phenomena of nature, including the phenomena of human history. These stories represented their outlook on life and the world, the modes of their study of the facts of sensuous experience. They generally found some deeper truth underlying the outward appearances of phenomena.

The artists with spiritual insight endowed these Deities,—these supernatural and supersensuous Moral and Spiritual Agencies seen by the sages,—with appropriate bodily forms and symbols, which might easily signify and suggest their real characters and their relations to natural phenomena, and might open and enlighten the inner sense of the onlookers.

Though these Deities, being supernatural and supersensuous Realities, have existence of a higher order than the natural and sensuous creatures of this world, and being Moral and Spiritual Agents regulating the physical and psychical phenomena have higher truths embodied in them than the latter, they are not ultimate self-existent and self-luminous Realities, they do not represent the highest Truth, the highest Good, the highest Beauty and the highest Bliss sought after by our innermost consciousness. They are more permanent and

more brilliant manifestations of the Absolute Reality than the creatures of the sensible world; in them the Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss pertaining to the nature of the Absolute Spirit are manifested in much higher degrees; the veil of Ignorance concealing the 'face of Truth' is much thinner and more transparent in the characters of these moral and spiritual Realities. But nevertheless they are partial and imperfect manifestations of the ultimate Reality. So long and so far as the idea of Plurality and the idea of difference among them exist, the veil remains and the Truth is not perfectly manifested.

The Supreme Spirit,—the self-existent, self-luminous, differenceless, non-dual, supra-personal Being, above time and space, above motion and rest, above all ethical and spiritual distinctions,—is the Truth and Soul of all these Deities. The Supreme Spirit is the Ground and Source, the Preserver and Regulator, as well as the final Ideal and End, of all the Plurality, whether sensuous or supersensuous, mental or supra-mental, physical or psychical, moral or aesthetic. Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss are eternally realized in the absolute and perfect unity of His nature.

The Hindu spiritual Art has attempted to give sensuous forms to this highest Truth also in various ways, just as the Hindu religious systems have discovered different modes of approach to It and different kinds of discipline for Its realization. The Images in which the Supreme Spirit is sought to be represented, are generally worshipped with the deepest devotion by the advanced types of devotees for perfect self-realization.

III. THE IMAGE OF KALI ON THE BREAST OF SHIVA

One of the most magnificent attempts of the Hindu artists for giving a sensuous representation to the Supreme Truth of

the universe realized by the Hindu saints is to be found in the Image of Káli dancing on the breast of Shiva. Leaving aside the ludicrous pictures produced by men with little or no spiritual insight, the Image of Káli which is worshipped throughout the length and breadth of India has a comprehensive philosophy and a deep spiritual realization embodied in it.

Káli, the Divine Mother of the universe, with Her all-naked, awe-striking, dark-complexioned, well-formed body, with Her wide-open breast wearing a garland made of the heads of the departed creatures, with Her four hands stretched out in four directions and holding respectively the bleeding head of a demon, a sharp dazzling sword, a banner of universal fearlessness and an offer of blissful boon, with Her eyes smiling in joy and Her tongue bitten by Her teeth through wonder and admiration at Her own appearance and performance, with Her legs in a dancing pose, stands on the breast of all-white Shiva, who is lying under Her feet absolutely calm and motionless and breathless, with His eyes closed in the deepest self-concentration and without any outward sign of life. In order to appreciate the true significance of this grand Image, it is necessary to have at least some acquaintance with the Hindu conception of Shiva and Káli and their relation, the Hindu view of the plan and process of the universe, the Hindu outlook on the human life and its highest ideal. Whoever might have originally conceived the Image or to whomsoever the Supreme Truth might have revealed Itself in this form, the Image splendidly represents the Vedantic conception of the spiritual Substance, Ground and Cause of universe.

IV. CONCEPTION OF SHIVA

Káli represents the Divine Mother—the dynamic self-conscious and self-

modifying material cause—of the world of finite and transitory realities, and Shiva lies under Her feet as Her spiritual substratum and ground and support. Shiva is all-white, there being no distinction of colours in Him, all the diversified colours being perfectly unified in His transcendent nature. He lies absolutely motionless, absolutely changeless and effortless, absolutely disinterested in and unaffected by the cosmic play that is eternally going on on His breast. But with His eyes closed to the world, with His heart not beating in tune with the worldly changes, with His life-breath in absolute equilibrium, He is perfectly self-conscious within Himself. In His consciousness, or rather super-consciousness, there is no duality, no plurality, no relativity, no differentiation, no process, no distinction between subject and object, between the known and the knowable, between 'is' and 'was' and 'will be,' between 'is' and 'ought' and 'may-be' and 'must-be' between good and evil, beauty and monstrosity, happiness and sorrow, creation and destruction. This is why from the worldly view-point Shiva is represented as *Shava*, a Person wholly dead to the world. The world is as good as non-existent to Him, and He appears to be practically non-existent to the world,—the world where diversities and distinctions and struggles for existence prevail, where nothing can be even conceived as existent except in relation to and contradistinction from other beings. Shiva is accordingly often spoken of as 'God of Death,' and 'God of absolute unity' may quite properly be so called.

This Shiva, who appears as dead or non-existent to the worldly creatures dominated and blinded by diversities, is conceived by the wise and enlightened as alone self-existent and as the sole ground of all orders of worldly existences. He alone exists, and exists

necessarily, in Himself, by Himself and for Himself, and not through any struggle or exertion for existence, or by any process of Becoming, or for serving any purpose in a system of existences. His existence is at the basis of all time and space, at the basis of all relativity and contingency, at the basis of all differences and struggles. His existence is Self-luminous Being. Neither Existence nor Consciousness can be regarded as predicates or attributes to Him. He is Existence; He is Consciousness. All the things of the universe and the universe itself have existence only in so far as they participate in His nature, in so far as they are partial and limited manifestations of Him. All conscious beings are conscious, in so far as He reveals Himself through them. It is His consciousness which appears under various limitations in the diverse minds and manifests itself as knowing and feeling and willing in relation to diverse worldly phenomena. Perfect self-consciousness and perfect self-existence are identical in significance, and they likewise involve the notion of the eternal realizedness of the ultimate ideals of human consciousness, viz. absolute Goodness, absolute Truth, absolute Beauty and absolute Bliss. Ideas of differences among these ideals imply their imperfections, their partial characters. In the stage of perfect realization there is no distinction among them. In the absolute Existence-Consciousness that Shiva represents, all ideals are eternally realized and perfectly unified. Hence there is no difference of any kind in His transcendent nature. All the powers and attributes that we can conceive of are eternally present in Him in their perfection and hence exist in Him in their undifferentiated reality, in their absolute unity and identity with Him. Shiva, from this view-point, is the sole Reality, the Absolute Truth, the One without a second.

This is the conception of Shiva, described in sublime and beautiful language in the Násadiya Sukta of Rig-Veda, in the Mandukya, Shvetáshvatara, Kaivalya and several other Upanishads, in the Shiva-Gita and other Shaiva treatises.* Shiva is identified with Brahman of Vedanta Philosophy and some of the principal Upanishads.

V. SHIVA AND HIS POWER

Shiva, being the sole self-existent Reality, must have the dynamic cause, the creative Power, for the production of all contingent, temporal, finite existences, inherent in His nature. We ourselves and the world of our normal experience must have been evolved from Him, must be sustained by Him, and must ultimately be merged in Him. He must be the Self of all, the Source of all, the Lord of all, the Illuminator of all, the Preserver of all and the Destroyer of all. It is He who must be regarded as having manifested Himself in these diverse names and forms that constitute the world. The Power and Will for such diversified self-manifestation must accordingly be supposed to be eternally existing in His bosom, eternally present in His nature, and as such essentially

*यदाऽतमस्तन्न दिवा न रात्रिः न सन्नचासन् शिव
एव केवलः ।

तदक्षरं तत् सवितुर्वरेण्यं प्रज्ञा च तस्मात्
प्रसृता पुराणी ॥
(श्वेताश्वतर)

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिःप्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न
प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ।
अदृष्टमध्यवहार्यमग्राह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यप-
देश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारम्
प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स
आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥

अचिन्त्यरूपमव्यक्तमनन्तममृतं शिवम् ।
आदिमध्यान्तरहितं प्रशान्तं ब्रह्म कारणम् ।
एकं विभुं चिदानन्दमरूपमजमद्भुतम् ॥

(शिवगीता)

non-different from Him. When this Power lies asleep in Him, when it is unmanifested in creative activities, there is no differentiated existence, no particularized consciousness, no distinction between being and non-being, knowledge and ignorance, light and darkness, good and evil, subject and object. (Násadiya Sukta). This is the conception of Mahá-pralaya, in which Shiva alone exists in His transcendent unity, and from which state the Power manifests itself in dynamic form and as Cosmic Energy, the Mother of the universe. From the noumenal and supra-temporal point of view, the Cosmic Energy with all Her manifestations is eternally identical with Shiva, because She has no existence apart from the existence of Shiva, the Absolute Spirit; while from the phenomenal and temporal point of view She is an eternally self-modifying creative, regulative and destructive Power evolved from and illumined and supported by and in this sense distinct from the changeless, effortless, self-existent, self-luminous Spirit. This Power of Shiva and Mother of the universe is Káli.

Thus from one point of view Káli is eternally within the bosom of Shiva, indistinguishable from His essential, transcendent, differenceless, self-existent and self-luminous nature; while from another point of view, She rises from the bosom of Shiva, is standing and dancing on the bosom of Shiva, is ceaselessly passing through multiform, finite self-modifications without losing Her self-conscious identity with Shiva under Her feet as Her ground and support. In relation to the phenomenal world She is the inexhaustible omnipotent cosmic energy, the Mother of all diversities, and in relation to Shiva She is the Divine Power, supremely intelligent and omniscient, supremely good and beautiful and majestic, supremely loving and blissful and self-enjoying. She plays Her part eter-

nally on the infinite breast of Shiva, with a view to the diversified and progressive realization of the infinite existence, consciousness, goodness, beauty and bliss of Shiva in and through a phenomenal system of finite existences, finite consciousnesses, imperfect goodnesses, imperfect beauties and imperfect enjoyments. She is eternally in the devoted service of Shiva, to whom She belongs, to whom She is eternally wedded.

VI. SHIVA'S MANIFESTATION THROUGH KALI

Without Shiva Káli has no existence, and without Káli Shiva has no expression. It is through the manifestation of Káli that Shiva, the eternal infinite inactive impersonal Being-consciousness, becomes a dynamic self-conscious, self-realizing Personal Being. It is in and through Káli that Shiva knows Himself, enjoys Himself, manifests Himself;—He divides Himself, as it were, into subject and object, knower and knowable, enjoyer and enjoyable, doer and deed, and becomes an active Personality. Shiva is the Soul of Káli, and Káli as manifested is the embodiment of Shiva. In the unmanifested state Káli is identical with Shiva, and Shiva is the differenceless non-dual Reality.

Káli, in course of Her dancing movements on the breast of Shiva, gives phenomenal, differentiated expression to His eternally transcendent, undifferentiated nature. She displays the infinite, supra-temporal, necessary existence of Shiva in the forms of countless varieties of finite, transitory, contingent existences. She manifests the pure, transcendent absolute consciousness of Shiva in the forms of innumerable finite phenomenal consciousnesses. She exhibits the absolute, transcendent, undifferentiated, non-dual Knowledge, Goodness, Beauty and Bliss of Shiva's character in the forms of phenomenal dualities

of knowledge and ignorance, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, happiness and misery. She presents the eternally self-fulfilled reality of Shiva in the form of a temporal process of progressive realization and His supra-temporal and supra-spatial spiritual infinity in the form of beginningless and endless extent and continuity in time and space. Through the operation of Káli, Shiva's changeless Being appears as continuous Becoming, His self-luminous, actionless, blissful existence appears as an omniscient and omnipotent creative and destructive Force, His perfectly peaceful and differenceless unity appears as the supreme principle of unity in diversities, as the ground of harmony in the midst of discord, as the force of love in the midst of hatred and competition and hostility.

VII. THE WORLD SYSTEM AND THE UNDERLYING SPIRIT

The Image of Káli dancing on the breast of Shiva vividly presents before us the great Truth that all creations and destructions, all struggles for existence and the concomitant hostilities and atrocities and triumphs and frustrations in the animal world, all the apparent prosperities and adversities, vanities and lamentations, ascendancies and degradations, of individuals and races and communities, all the thunders and cyclones and tornadoes and earthquakes that strike us with horror and cause havoc in the world,—all these have an underlying spirit and a plan and purpose behind them, that all these are organically related to one another having their proper places

and functions in a grand harmonious cosmic system, that all these are well-regulated modes of self-expression of and belong to the all-comprehending Divine Body of one supreme, omnipotent and omniscient Personality, that they have as their ultimate ground and support one absolutely true, good, beautiful and blissful Spirit, in whom all that we love and adore and seek after and hope for are eternally realized and unified. The Image tells us that the world, however bewilderingly diversified and complicated, however infested with agonies and catastrophes, however apparently shocking or frightening or loathsome many of its phenomena may be to our finite understanding and feeling, is originated from and planned and regulated by the omnipotent and omniscient Power (*Shakti*) of *Satya-Shiva-Sundara*,—the True, the Good, the Beautiful. It teaches us that Shiva's Existence is the true existence of all, that Shiva's spirit animates and illumines everything in the universe, that Shiva's character is hidden in the heart of every phenomenon. It invites us to see *Satya-Shiva-Sundara* reflected upon whatever we observe, whatever we feel, whatever we think of. Káli is the embodiment and self-expression of Shiva, and the world is the self-manifestation of Káli. Shiva is *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Being-Consciousness-Bliss), Káli is *Sat-Chit-Ananda-Mayee* (the embodiment of Being-Consciousness-Bliss), and the universe is Káli manifested in time and space. This represents the Hindu conception of the universe.

(To be continued)

LOVE CONQUERS DEATH

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

[Savitri successfully pleads before the god of Death and saves her husband, Satyavan. Alcestis of the Greek legend delivers her husband, Admetus, from death by dying in his stead. The gods were pleased and Hercules brings back Alcestis from the lower regions to the land of the living. Here, in this story, Behula saves her husband, Lakhai, from the consequences of Manasa's curse. In all cases it is woman's love that saves life from the jaws of death.—Ed.]

I

The great merchant prince Chand, or Chand-Sadagar as he was called, lived in the city of Champaka. He was a steadfast devotee of Shiva. It was ordained that the worship of Manasa—a female deity who ruled over the snake world—would not be introduced amongst men, unless and until Chand-Sadagar first offered worship to her. But Chand was so much one-pointed in his devotion to Shiva that he could not and would not think of any other deity. Manasa was in a fix. If Chand did not agree to worship her, she was to go without having any worship from anybody in the world. Manasa wanted to cajole and coax Chand; she tried to bribe him with many favours. But Chand was adamant—he would not divert his attention to any other god. Being exasperated Manasa threatened Chand that she would ruin him, if he did not come down. This attitude of Manasa rather hardened him against her. So ensued a fight between Chand and Manasa—between a man and a goddess.

II

Chand had six sons. Within a year these six sons died one by one: this was the act of Manasa whose anger Chand had incurred. Great wail arose in the household. The palatial home of Chand which was alive with the playful activities of children now wore a gloomy look—it was now silent like a grave.

The suffering of Sanaka, the wife of Chand, was the greatest. How could a mother's heart bear the death of six sons and that in quick succession in the course of a year! Day and night she was in tears. She pleaded with her husband to give up the quarrel with the deity. How could a man cope with a goddess in a quarrel? She earnestly prayed to Chand to agree to offer worship to Manasa. But Chand would not listen to any counsel.

Finding it hard to stay in a home which was so desolate, Chand set out on a mercantile expedition. He thought, that would give his mind a relaxation from the heavy strain which it was undergoing. With seven big sailing ships full of merchandise Chand-Sadagar started. There were hundreds of sailors, attendants and servants in the ships. It was a huge affair. Innumerable persons came to witness the sight, as the ships left the shore. But as soon as the ships were on the high sea, a gale arose. Roaring waves dashed furiously against the ships, which tossed up and down, till all of them sank with every thing they carried. Chand knew it was another vile act of Manasa. He strove hard for his life and at last succeeded in swimming across to the shore.

Shivering with cold, tired, jaded and hungry, stripped of all his clothings, he did not know where to go. Nor could he realize where he was. But he was not daunted—for was he not a devotee of the

all-powerful Shiva? He went to the village near-by, and strangely enough he found that his friend Chandraketu lived there. Naturally his friend received him with warm arms—especially as he was in such a distressed condition. Chandraketu at once clothed him well and prepared a feast for him. As Chand-Sadagar sat for the dinner, in course of conversation, it transpired that his friend was a devotee of Manasa. This startled him—infuriated him, he would not touch food at a house where his sworn enemy, Manasa, was worshipped. He left the house immediately without even touching the food.

But Manasa did not leave him there. Her evil eyes followed him wherever he went. Misery dogged his footsteps but his faith in Shiva kept up his spirits.

After many months of sufferings, Chand at last reached his home. All people of the city of Champaka felt sorry for him, when they learnt of all his bitter experiences. They did not know how to sympathize with him sufficiently. But with all their endeavour they failed to persuade him to change his attitude towards Manasa.

III

Time rolled on. The house of Chand-Sadagar again lit up with the smile of a new-born babe—a son, whom they named Lakshmindra (lit. Lord of Lakshmi, the goddess of Fortune), but usually afterwards would call by a shortened name Lakhai. The news of the birth of Lakhai was received in the city of Champaka with mixed feelings. For as the people were glad at the birth of a son to their dear Chand-Sadagar, they were also anxious as to what would be the future fate of the child. Had not the six sons of Chand succumbed to the anger of Manasa?

Sanaka tried to forget her bereavement of the six children, by looking at

the face of Lakhai. Lakhai was so beautiful in appearance and withal so bright and intelligent that he became the darling of the whole of Champaka. This added to the joy of the mother, but the father became outwardly indifferent to the son. The fact was, an astrologer told Chand that Lakhai would die from a snake-bite on the night of his marriage. This prophecy disturbed the peace of Chand day and night, and he did not like to have any attachment for the son. But all the same his love for him was too intense, and incessantly he prayed to Shiva for help to avert the destiny of Lakhai.

As the boy grew up, Sanaka, who did not know the prophecy of the astrologer, pressed her husband hard to arrange for the marriage of the son. But seeing the utter indifference of Chand in this matter, one day Sanaka burst into tears and accused her husband of having no love for the only son they had. At last Chand-Sadagar yielded. All the prophecies of astrologers do not come true. Who knows if the astrologer did not commit a mistake in his calculation as regards the future of Lakhai!

But Chand-Sadagar took sufficient precautions. He built a special house—of iron, on a hill top and made it impregnable against snakes. But poor Chand did not know that the mason, at the threat of Manasa, kept a hole in the building through which a snake could enter.

The bride selected belonged to a neighbouring village. Her name was Behula. Even in her young age Behula attracted the attention of the whole village. For, God showered, as it were, all accomplishments on her. She was so beautiful that she was often mistaken for a heavenly being. She excelled beyond expectation in household duties. She had a tender heart which felt for any person fallen in misery. She would be found

by the side of a patient suffering from a fell disease, she would invariably go to wipe off the tears of a widow who was mourning the loss of her husband. Behula was a mere child, but nevertheless the old and the young found solace and peace from her very presence. But now and then Behula would become absorbed in her own thoughts. Then she would have a far-away look, her body would be still as marble, and people would not dare approach her.

When the marriage of Lakhai with Behula had been performed, Chand broke the prediction about Lakhai to the father of the bride. At this the latter grew anxious and became upset, but Behula was calm and grave: she wanted to face the situation boldly.

When Behula entered the portals of the house specially built to avert the dreaded catastrophe, a shiver ran through her body. Would she be able to save and protect her husband? Soon she summoned up courage. It was but the question of one night. The prediction was, 'Lakhai would die from snake-bite on the night of his marriage.' Well, it could be easily prevented. Behula thought she would sit up the whole night so that no snake could approach her husband.

Lakhai, who knew nothing of the prophecy, was fast asleep, but Behula kept awake, keenly watching the room. It was midnight. Everything was still. But the very silence pressed heavily on the heart of Behula. She had no peace of mind. She counted the hours by the minutes—if she could protect her husband for some more hours, the prediction would prove false. She was determined to falsify the prophecy.

It was towards dawn. Behula was tired. Anxiety made her exhausted more than the wakefulness. In an unguarded moment she closed her eyelids—she became asleep. But it was not

long. She woke up suddenly, disturbed by a bad dream. She looked all round. She felt sorry and ashamed that she had fallen asleep. Lo! there something going away through a small hole in that corner. Exactly at that time Lakhai gave a low scream, just awake from his sleep. But before he could utter anything, it was all over. Lakhai was bitten by a dreadful snake, and instantaneous death was the result. Behula was overwhelmed with grief. She did not know whether to curse her fate or curse herself. Why did she fall asleep? Oh, the evil hour when she lost control over herself!

IV

In dreadful suspense, next morning, the whole city of Champaka came to the residence of Lakhai to know what had been his fate. But before the door of the room was opened, from the sobbing inside they knew that the fate could not be averted—Lakhai could not be saved.

When the whole situation was revealed, Chand felt exasperated, Sanaka became bewildered. The news spread like wild fire, and wherever it went people were overcast with sorrow, for greatly did Lakhai win the heart of all.

Amidst the gloom that spread over the house of Chand, there was a fresh trouble. Behula would not agree that her husband should be cremated. She proposed that the dead body should be put on a raft and allowed to drift in the river and she also would accompany the dead body. This was a strange proposal. It meant that they were to lose both Lakhai and Behula. This idea upset Sanaka more than anybody else. But Behula insisted to have her way.

The raft was on the middle of the river, carrying the dead body of Lakhai and with Behula sitting by. As the raft began to go down the stream, carried by the current and tossed by the waves,

people thronged on both sides of the river. They began to pray to Behula to come back—for they could not bear such a heart-rending sight. But Behula was silent, calm and determined. She must save her husband—though she did not know how.

Slowly the raft passed out of sight. People strained their eyes to have even a faint view of Behula—who resembled Sita in her devotion to husband—but she could be seen no more. Gradually they returned home, but the sight they had witnessed haunted their memory day and night.

Sanaka was carried home back. But she could not stand the shock of this bereavement. Almost always she was in a fainting fit. The short time she was in a normal condition, she would weep uttering the name of Lakhai or Behula.

Chand appeared to have gone mad. He no longer looked to the household duties. Most of his time would be spent in the deep forest in a neighbouring hill. He could not bear the presence of any person. He wanted to be left alone. He was restless. Now he would sit and meditate on Shiva, then he would loudly repeat the name of his dear Lord, and some time he would wander aimlessly in the deep forest. At times he would hear, as it were, the voice of Lakhai in the breath of the wind, and then he would feel distracted and lacerated.

V

Days and nights passed. The raft went on drifting. Villages after villages came on the scene and went out of sight. Passing boats would look astonishingly at the raft, carrying as if a goddess on it; people on the bank seeing Behula from a distance recalled the rumour, which travelled to their parts, that in Champaka a girl wife was consigned to the river along with the dead body of her husband. But Behula was oblivious

of everything that went round her. Her whole attention was to protect the dead body of Lakhai. Some time sharks and crocodiles came gaping, and she would hold the corpse on her bosom. Some time the putrid smell of the dead body attracted fish; Behula would drive them away with her hands. But Behula could not prevent the putrefaction of the body of her husband. As days passed, the dead body became only a mere bundle of bones. But these were a great treasure to Behula; she hugged them to her bosom.

And Behula herself was reduced to a skeleton. She looked like a thin wasted spectre of her former self. Who could then recognize her to be that girl who once brought down the very heaven, as it were, to her village home?

Many visions passed over the minds of Behula. Some time they were terrifying, Behula would quake with fear. Some time she would see pictures of happy homes alive with the laughter of joyous children, that would make her grief all the more poignant. Some time she would hear the voice of someone who was trying to dissuade her from her purpose. But amidst all these trials Behula was firm.

In this way some months passed, and the raft struck against the ground near a bathing ghat. There Behula found a washer-woman cleansing clothes. The lady was all attention to her work, she took no notice of the raft, though it was there for some hours. One strange incident struck Behula. The lady had a child which disturbed her in her work. She throttled the child to death and quietly began to beat her clothes. Clothes became milk-white. As the evening drew nigh, the lady sprinkled some water on the dead body of her child which at once came back to life. Then carrying the child on her back along with the bundle of clothes, she flew

through the air and soon became out of sight. The next morning the lady came back with her child and a bundle of clothes, killed the child, washed her clothes and in the evening disappeared with her revived child. Behula watched all these things. In the next morning as the lady was going away, Behula flung herself at her feet, with the thought that the lady might give her a clue as to how to bring back her husband to life.

At first the washer-woman treated Behula very coldly, but as Behula repeated her entreaties, the lady became tender. She told Behula to accompany her to heaven and gave her the information that Shiva was pleased with her devotion.

Carrying the remnants of the dead body of her husband, Behula accompanied the washer-woman to heaven, and she was ushered into the court of Indra, the god of gods. There were assembled Brahmâ—the creator of the world, Vishnu—the protector of creation, Shiva—who was easily pleased, Kubera—the god of wealth, and others. Before that vast assembly, bathed in tears Behula prayed for the life of her husband.

The gods were pleased with the devotion of Behula to her husband but they insisted that Behula should sing a song before her prayer could be considered. So many trials Behula had stood, but the present one was much greater than any she had experienced in the past. She was consumed with grief and a more wretched condition could not be conceived of than what she was in. This was not the state of mind in which one could sing! What a heart-rending proposal!

But not to comply with the request meant losing the chance of getting back the life of her husband. Behula steeled her heart, suppressed her feelings, and sang a song. The song

had such a soft melodious tune, that it brought tears to the eyes of all those assembled there.

Then the gods said to Behula, 'We are extremely pleased with you. We have watched your great devotion to your husband. The seemingly cruel proposal of asking you to sing was only to test further your love for your husband. You have stood all the trials, and you will get back the life of your husband.'

But now came forward Manasa with a list of her grievances against Chand-Sadagar—how he had treated her with contumely and so on. How could she give back the life of his son? This made everybody silent in that big assembly. Behula was in a great suspense—was she going to lose the boon which she had earned with so much hardship and suffering? Shiva, whose great heart felt for all, came to save the situation. He thought of his devotee Chand, he appreciated the intense devotion of Behula to her husband, and he also sympathized with the lot of Manasa. So he promised that he would see to it that thenceforward Chand offered worship to Manasa. Thereupon Manasa readily agreed to give back the life of Lakhai. At this happy solution all the gods rejoiced, Behula got back, as it were, her own life. But there was something more. How could Behula return to Sanaka, her mother-in-law—with only her own husband brought back to life? Sanaka lost her other six sons also? She mourned their loss no less. So Behula prayed that all the losses that Chand had suffered from the wrath of Manasa should be redeemed. The gods saw the reasonableness of her argument and supported Behula. Manasa agreed, but on the condition that she would again take back what she was giving, if Chand did not submit to her.

Soon came Lakhai back to life. So did all his brothers. The seven sailing

ships of Chand which were destroyed were now returned to Behula, with all their commodities. Lakhai started for Champaka with all these. How great was the joy of all the brothers when they met one another again. They were dreaming of the happy days that lay ahead—how greatly their mother would rejoice when they would reach Champaka; how intense would be the joy of their old friends, relations and associates to meet them, and so on. But Behula could not participate in their joys fully. There were marks of anxiety on her face. Who knows whether her father-in-law would agree to worship Manasa? If he did not, then she would lose everything she had got. So the trial was not over.

The party reached Champaka. The news travelled to Sanaka and all the people of the city, who rushed to the spot. They could hardly believe their eyes when they saw all the seven sons of Chand brought back to life. But none of the brothers would get down from the boat. Behula gave out to her mother-in-law the condition on which Manasa gave back the life of her husband and others. If that condition were not fulfilled, they all would go away. This piece of news was hardly a source of joy to Sanaka, who knew well the attitude of her husband towards Manasa.

VI

Chand passed his days in the forest in hard asceticism to please Shiva. One day he saw a monk approach him. In the course of the conversation, the monk ridiculed the ascetic practices of Chand as being another form of egotism and self-conceit. As Chand protested, the monk told Chand that his quarrel with Manasa was the clear indication of his pride. So long as there was pride in any form, so long as there was hatred against anybody, one could not realize

Truth however hard might be one's asceticism. These stray remarks changed the whole outlook of Chand, he saw the vision of a new world before him. But how could this monk know what had happened between him and Manasa?—Chand pondered in great astonishment. But before the shock of surprise was over, Chand saw that the monk had disappeared, and he heard a voice which said that Shiva and Manasa were but the different aspects of the same entity and Chand was wrong in differentiating one from the other.

Now that his self-conceit and pride gave place to humility, Chand easily and clearly saw his mistake and he had no longer any objection to worship Manasa. With the resolve to offer the same devotion to Manasa as he had given to Shiva, Chand was returning home, when he heard the news about the achievement of Behula.

He went directly to the river-bank, received his seven sons and the blessed daughter-in-law—a heavenly gift—and all together performed the worship of Manasa amidst great joy and festivity.

VII

There are some persons who do not feel comfortable at the happiness of others. So, as rejoicing went on at the house of Chand, one from the assembled guests raised the objection: 'Behula cannot be taken back to the family. For so many days she had been nobody knows where. She must pass through a test—she will have to walk over fire, as did Sita in days of yore, in order to prove her innocence. If such restrictions are not observed, the social order will be upset.'

There were persons to support even this man, but the saner people got startled to hear such words. To doubt the innocence of Behula whose very presence was a blessing to humanity?

Blasphemy could not go further. As furious controversy went on with regard to this topic, Behula came out before the public, shaking off her usual shyness. She said: 'The dream of my life is over. I wanted back the life of my husband, and I have got that. If you have any objection to accepting me, I make the path clear for you. Let me take leave of you.'

Scarcely had these words been finished

when the people saw Lakhai and Behula going up to heaven through the air. Only their dead bodies were left behind.

Lakhai and Behula were heavenly beings who were born on earth to redeem a curse which fell on them. Now that it was done, they could no longer be in the mortal world.

But from that time on people began to worship Shiva and Manasa with equal devotion.

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

Even while he was in the midst of his arduous labours in the West, Swami Vivekananda realized that a more important work was awaiting him in India. The soul of the nation was to be roused to a sense of its own worth. Forgotten values of life were to be brought back to light. Religion was to be made a living force which will strengthen the people and lead them to realize the fullness of life. When the great leader returned to the motherland and made his triumphal tour from Colombo to Almora, it was in the city of Madras that he first intimated to eager listeners his plan of campaign. There was great enthusiasm and a genuine desire on the part of the people to learn more of the teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsadeva. Some of the citizens approached Swami Vivekananda with the request that he should kindly send one of his brother disciples to stay in Madras and establish a monastery which would become the centre of the religious teaching and philanthropic activities outlined by the Swami in his addresses delivered in India and abroad. By way of reply Swami Vivekananda said, 'I shall send you one who is more orthodox than your most orthodox men

of the South and who is at the same time unique and unsurpassed in his worship and meditation of God.' The very next steamer from Calcutta brought to Madras Swami Ramakrishnananda and Swami Sadananda to assist him in the work.

In a few words the leader has summarized the individual characteristics of the apostle in relation to the field of work for which he was chosen. South India has been all along the stronghold of orthodox Hinduism. When Buddhism in the days of its decadence upset the ancient religion and made men lose faith in the Eternal Dharma, it was the Alvars, the Nayanmars and Acharyas of the South who gave new vigour to the religion of the Rishis. Again when foreign invasions disturbed the practice of the old religion, it was South India that closely guarded the sacred Vedic fire and passed it on to others when the opportune time came. To infuse new life into the ancient religion without breaking the continuity of the tradition, the apostle to the South had to be a person of great intellectual attainments, of unflinching devotion to the ideal and deep reverence for the forms of worship and religious practices sanctified by the

authority of a succession of great teachers. Swami Ramakrishnananda possessed all these and in addition he had an overflowing kindness, abounding sympathy for all and a childlike nature which exhibited the inner purity of the soul.

Sashibhushan Chakravarti—that was the name by which Swami Ramakrishnananda was known in his pre-monastic days—was born in an orthodox Brahmin family of the Hooghly district, Bengal, in the year 1863. The father, a strict observer of religious traditions and a devout worshipper of the Divine Mother, gave the early training that laid the foundation of the lofty character exhibited in the life of his great son. We can form an idea of that early training from the Swami's own utterances regarding the upbringing of children. We quote the following from his lecture on 'How to be a Real Master.' 'Since it is our nature to rule, it is always better to give this nature full scope to develop itself, to evolve masters and not slaves out of ourselves. It will be my duty to point out to you how that can be effected. From our very childhood we hate restraint. No conventionalism, no formality, no etiquette, no manner can bind a child. The children of the world profess no religion, admit no restrictions and therefore have no caste; they are all of the same caste for their characters are always and everywhere the same. Now the question is, should we leave our children do whatever they like, for by so doing we give them perfect liberty and thus virtually make them masters and not slaves to others? A human child is the most forlorn and helpless creature on this earth, and so if it is allowed to be left alone to itself to do whatever it likes, is there any doubt that it will be kicked out of existence by those

enemies, ever on the alert to work woe—enemies such as ignorance, hunger, thirst, cold, heat, physical and mental weakness, diseases and lots of other things? When a child is incessantly under the gaze of all these evil-doers, and when it is itself unable to resist them, it is our duty to keep it in a place beyond their reach. When a plant is very young we put a fence round it to save it from being pulled out by mischievous urchins or by cattle. So we should limit the liberty of a child, to prevent its falling a prey to the enemies mentioned above. This is the reason why a boy should be made to go through a course of strict discipline before he is allowed to have any liberty and as he proves stronger gradually, under such discipline, we can give him liberty more and more, little by little. When he is strong enough to resist all evils, to hold his own ground against all temptations and promptings of nature, he should be allowed full liberty.'

Again in his lecture on 'Religious Education' the Swami observes as follows: 'Should the children be given undue liberty? A child's mind is always after play, is always after trifling things; and if you allow him full liberty he will grow up to be a shallow man, in no way different from an animal, merely eating and drinking, playing and sleeping. A human child is intended for higher things than these. We should make a god out of him and not a beast.' We have quoted at length from the Swami's lectures to bring out in bold relief an outstanding characteristic of his life. The traditional wisdom inherited through generations makes the Brahmin father realize his duties towards his son. The Brahminic ideal of life based upon the control of the mind and the senses, austerity, purity, forbearance and such other

virtues demands that from the earliest age the child should be made to go through a course of discipline, a discipline that would bring out the god in him and make him achieve self-mastery. The daily bath at the stated hour, the duties in the household and in the worship-room, the restraint in speech and behaviour, and other details to be strictly observed by the growing boy gradually build up his character and give him that mastery over himself which leads him to the attainment of the higher values of life. As we already stated above Sashibhushan was born in an orthodox Brahmin family and his father was a strict observer of religious traditions and a devout worshipper of the Divine Mother. Sashi inherited these and later on perfected his character under the guidance of his Great Master.

Now to resume our narrative, Sashibhushan went to school and having successfully completed the school course entered college. He was a brilliant student at college and his favourite subject was mathematics. He and his cousin Saratchandra came under the influence of the Brahmo Samaj. Sashi became intimately known to the Brahmo leader, Keshab Chandra Sen and was appointed private tutor to his sons.

At this time Sri Ramakrishna was closely known to many members of the Brahmo Samaj. In order to enjoy the company of the saint the members resolved to celebrate their anniversary at Dakshineswar. This event took place on a certain day in October, 1883. Sashi and Sarat arrived at Dakshineswar and along with a few other boy-companions went to see the Master. They found him seated on the small bedstead in his room. Sri Ramakrishna received them with a smile, asked them their names, inquired

where they lived and was pleased to hear that they belonged to Keshab's Brahmo Samaj. Sashi was then reading in the F. A. class and the others were all preparing for the matriculation. As Sashi was the eldest of the band, the conversation was addressed to him. The Master spoke of early marriage and its attendant evils. He pointed out how the responsibility to maintain a family was thrust upon boys far too early, even before they completed their education. Then he spoke of the necessity of a strong spiritual foundation for realizing the true end of life. He said, 'Bricks and tiles, if burnt after the trade mark has been stamped on them, retain these marks for ever. Similarly you should be stamped with spirituality before entering the world. Then you will not become attached.' 'Then, sir, is it wrong to marry? Is it against the will of God?' asked one of the boys, Sri Ramakrishna had a book taken down from the shelf and pointing to two passages asked the boy to read them aloud. The first passage (St. Matthew XIX.12) gave Christ's opinion on marriage: 'For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.' The second passage was from St. Paul (I Corinthians VII. 8, 9). It read: 'I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.' When the passage was read, Sri Ramakrishna remarked that marriage was the root of all bondage. He then asked Sashi whether he believed in God with form

or without form. The boy frankly answered that as he was not certain about the very existence of God, he was not able to speak one way or other. The reply pleased the Master very much. Sashi and Sarat were fascinated by the personality of Sri Ramakrishna. They made the Master the pole-star of their life.

Of Sashi and Sarat Sri Ramakrishna used to say that both of them were the followers of Jesus the Christ in a former incarnation. Were they James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who are so often mentioned as next only to Simon Peter, the chief apostle? Whatever that might be, subsequent events show that both the cousins Sashi and Sarat became pillars of the Order and the great philanthropic organization founded in the name of the Master.

Slowly and silently Sashi was progressing in the life of the Spirit. His keen intellect, robust physique, and steady character were beginning to centre round the one grand theme of God-realization. Let us record one little incident which bears testimony to Sashi's character as the ideal disciple. One day it happened that he was busily engaged in studying some Persian books in order to read the Sufi poets in the original. The Master called him thrice before he heard. When he came, Sri Ramakrishna asked him what he had been doing. Sashi told that he was engaged with his books. Sri Ramakrishna quietly remarked, 'If you forget your duties for the sake of study, you will lose all your devotion.' Sashi understood. He took the Persian books and threw them into the Ganges.

Sashi was now in the Final B. A. class; the examination was fast approaching. But at that very time Sri Ramakrishna was lying ill in Cossipore Gardens. The young disciple had to decide between his studies and

service to the person of the Master. Unhesitatingly Sashi decided to renounce his possible career as a man of the world for ever and give his body, mind and soul wholly and unreservedly to the service of the Master. He and the other disciples served the Master day and night. The illness of the Master became the means of bringing the disciples closer together. In those memorable days, the Master's conversation and his frequent soaring beyond the world of the senses in Samadhi gave the disciples a closer communion with the personality of the Master and served, as it were, the means for passing on to the disciples the spiritual realizations of the Master. Hour after hour the disciples attended to the Master. All too suddenly the day of consummation came. Let us listen to Sashi's own words and try to visualize the final scene in the divine drama.

'When Sri Ramakrishna gave up his body did he feel any pain? On the contrary I think that was the most blissful moment of his life, for there was horripilation all over his body. I myself saw it. Every hair stood up on end. He never really felt much pain. He never lost his cheerfulness. He used to say that he was all well and happy, only there was a little something here (pointing to the throat). On that last night he was talking with us to the very last I remember every incident of that last day. He seemed very well and cheerful. In the afternoon he talked for fully two hours to a gentleman who had come to put him some questions about Yoga. A little later I ran some seven miles to bring the doctor. When I reached his house, he was not there, but I was told that he was at a certain house. So I ran another mile and I met him on the way. He did not want to come but I dragged him away just the same. He

gave Sri Ramakrishna some medicine saying: "I am sure this will cure you," and Sri Ramakrishna scolded his Mother a little saying, "How long shall I have to take this Uchchishtam?"

'We all thought he was very well because he ate so much more supper than usual, and he said nothing of going. In the afternoon he had asked Yogin to look in the almanac and see whether it was an auspicious day and Yogin said that it was a very auspicious day. Also he had been telling us for sometime that the vessel which was floating in the ocean was already two-thirds full of water, soon the rest would fill up and it would plunge into the ocean. But we did not believe that he was really going.

'He asked us to fan him and some ten of us were all fanning at once. He was sitting up against some five or six pillows which were supported by my body and at the same time I too was fanning. This made a slight motion in the body and twice he asked me: "Why are you shaking?" As if his mind were so fixed and steady that he could perceive the least motion. Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) took his feet and began to rub them and Sri Ramakrishna was talking to him, telling him what he must do. "Take care of these boys," he repeated again and again, as if he were putting them in his charge. Then he asked to lie down. Suddenly at one o'clock he fell towards

one side, there was a hoarse sound in the throat and I saw all the hairs stand on end. Swamiji laid the master's feet on a quilt and ran downstairs as if he could not bear it. A doctor, who was a great devotee and who was feeling his pulse, saw that it had stopped and began to weep aloud. "What are you doing, you fool?" I asked, meaning that he was acting as if Sri Ramakrishna had really left us. We all believed that it was only Samadhi, so Swamiji came back, and we all sat down, some twenty of us, and began repeating, "Hari Om! Hari Om!" all together. So we waited until between one or two the next day. Still the body had some heat in it, especially about the back, but the doctor insisted that the soul had left the body and about five it had grown cold, so we placed it on a very beautifully decorated cot and carried it to the cremation ground.'

The greatest trial was at the burning ghat. Feelings of a contrasting character visited the soul of Sashi. Now the joy and bliss the Master had shed over them all at the time of the Maha-Samadhi came over him and he sang the name of the Master in triumphant praise. Then a sense of utter loneliness stole over his joy and made him the victim to most violent grief. When the flames that had made ashes of the body of the Master had died out, amid the silence that prevailed, Sashi gathered the sacred relics.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The poet has passed away. 'Whither?' we ask. 'To the fields Elysian, to the realms of Everlasting Light' comes the answer. While on earth, he voyaged over all the seven seas. Wherever he went, he was acclaimed as an Immortal. This is his last voyage. He is homeward bound. The ship has set sail; the winds are favourable; he will safely reach port. There he will meet his compeers; the bards of all ages and climes. He came to us from the blessed realm of the Immortals bringing with him Joy and Light and Love. During his sojourn here, he distributed his gifts generously to all. Now at the journey's end, when he meets his Master, great will be his own joy. Looking forward to the day of meeting, the poet said,

'Once you had lent to my eyes
a generous portion from your limitless
store of light.

Now at the day's end, you have come
to reclaim it, my Master,
and I know for certain that I must
make good my debt.

'But why cast shadow before my evening lamp? I am but a guest for a few days in this world that has come out of your light, but if out of its abundance a few fragments of that light are left behind, let them remain in careless neglect at the last trace of your chariot.'

The light that he left behind will be ours for all time to come. The undying cadences of his music have made his mother-tongue a world language. His advent has lent glory to this Motherland of ours. The immortal spirit of the Vedic Rishis spoke through him. The nations heard and wondered. In paying

their homage to India's glorious son, they bowed their heads in reverence before the footstool of the Great Mother.

A prince among men, worthy scion of a great and talented family, wherever he went he upheld the honour of India. India's joy was his joy; India's sorrow was his sorrow. When world's recognition first came in the shape of the Nobel Prize for Literature, some of his countrymen went on a deputation to meet the poet and offer him their felicitations. Among the men who were assembled before him, the poet saw many who had not read his works and studied his message. Urged by feelings of wounded love, he spoke out his mind and administered a dignified rebuke in the following terms: 'What brings you gentlemen, here to-day? You, whom I had failed to please so long, what have I done, pray now to please you so mightily? It is not my worth, but the recognition of the foreigner, that has evidently worked up this sudden outburst of appreciation. I thank you for your generosity: but excuse me please, if I refuse to get drunk with you over this gilded cup of foreign wine.' Again after the Punjab disturbances, feeling deeply for the sufferings of his countrymen, the poet decided to renounce his knight-hood. The following extract from his historic letter to the Viceroy written on this occasion shows one phase of his noble character: 'The very least that I can do for my country is to take all consequences upon myself in giving voice to the protest of the millions of my countrymen, surprised into a dumb anguish of terror. The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in the incongruous context of

humiliation and I for my part wish to stand, shorn of all special distinctions, by the sides of those of my countrymen who, for their so-called insignificance are liable to suffer degradation not fit for human beings.'

His genius was many-sided. His collected works will fill several volumes. Very little of it has been translated into English, but that little has taken the English-knowing world by storm. Oxford, the most ancient seat of learning in Britain, recognizing the great merit of the poet conferred on him the Degree of Doctor of Literature *honoris causa*. A special convocation of Oxford University was held at Shantiniketan on the 7th day of August, 1940—we note that the honour from Oxford came, exactly one year before the poet's passing away. On the historic occasion of this special convocation, the Honourable Mr. Justice Henderson of Calcutta High Court, in the capacity of Public Orator read out the Latin address by the University of Oxford requesting Sir Maurice Gwyer to confer the degree. We extract the following from the English translation of the said address: 'You see in him a great scholar and a great artist, both in prose and in verse; one who has written poetry, romance, satire, history: who has left scarcely any field of literature untouched and has touched nothing that he has not adorned. How rarely has such richness of imagination been combined with such elegance of style! How astonishing is the range of his versatile genius, wisdom and laughter, terror and delight, the power of stirring our deepest emotions. And yet we are always conscious of his essential humanity, of a man who thinks nothing beneath his notice, if only it is concerned with mankind. You see in him a musician who seems to obey no rules and yet has invented a thousand new

melodies; a distinguished philosopher deeply versed in natural philosophy, in ethics and in theology and who has at the last achieved that complete serenity of mind sought by how many and won by how few. Yet all dedicated as he has been to those pursuits, he has not lived for himself alone; for deeming good education for the young the most venerable of all institutions he has been the founder and director of this famous Academy, whose purpose is by wise methods to inculcate among its students a love of pure learning. Let it also be said that he has not valued a sheltered life so far above the public good as to hold himself wholly aloof from the dust and heat of the world outside; for there have been times when he has not scorned to step down into the marketplace; when, if he thought that a wrong had been done he has not feared to challenge the British raj itself and the authority of its magistrates; and when he has boldly corrected the faults of his own fellow-citizens. What more can I say? Here before you is the myriad-minded poet and writer, the musician famous in his art, the philosopher proved both in word and deed, the fervent upholder of learning and sound doctrine, the ardent defender of public liberties, one who by the sancity of his life and character has won for himself the praise of all mankind. And so with the unanimous approval of the Vice-Chancellor, the Doctors and the Masters of the University, I present to you a man most dear to all the Muses, Rabindranath Tagore, already a Nobel prizeman, in order that he may receive the laurel wreath of Oxford also and be admitted to the Degree of Doctor of Literature *honoris causa*.'

His contribution to the awakening of India is indeed very great. He revealed India to her sons and daughters. The whole of Asia listened to his words.

As in the days of the Buddhist missions of Emperor Ashoka, the currents of Indian thought spread over the whole of Asia. China and Japan, Iran and the East Indies once again remembered their cultural debt to India. He travelled to various countries in Europe and America and spread everywhere the eternal message of India and raised India in the estimation of those countries. He took part in Indian national movements and made his voice heard. He was deeply interested in education and founded the Shantiniketan for resuscitating the national culture and giving it a new shape to suit the changed conditions of the present time.

On the 8th of May, 1941 his eightieth birthday was celebrated all over India and in several places abroad. On the 7th of August, 1941 he passed away from the scene of his earthly activities. Bengal has given birth to many illustrious sons who have brought glory to the Motherland; one by one they are passing away. Their labours are bearing fruit; very soon this country will take its place in the comity of nations. India will ever cherish the memory of Rabindranath Tagore.

SWAMI GANESHANANDA

Swami Ganeshanandaji attained Mahasamadhi at 1-45 A.M. on Saturday, the 26th of July, 1941 at the Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta. His brother-monks, his many friends and the large number of students who received their education with his help and guidance are stricken with grief at the untimely passing away of the Swami who was so dear to them. At the time of his demise he was only forty-four years old. Of these twenty-two were devoted to the service of the Mission.

After receiving the blessings of His Holiness Srimat Swami Brahmānandaji

Maharaj, the first President of the Ramakrishna Mission, Amiya Maharaj—as Swami Ganeshanandaji is lovingly known among his brothers, friends and pupils,—left for Madras in 1919. Returning in 1921, he started the Mission Centre in Sarisha (Diamond Harbour), Dist. 24 Parganas. For the last twenty years he devoted himself heart and soul to the development of the Centre. One Boys' Extended M. E. Agricultural School, one Girls' H. E. School, one Mixed U. P. School, a Charitable Dispensary, a Library, a Students' Home, an Inter-Schools Sports Association and a Literary Society are among the activities carried on by the Centre. All these institutions are focussed around the important work of rural uplift. The declared aim of the work is the formation of a happy group of model villages, rich in education, health and wealth. In ancient India, the villages were the centres of culture. Once again in a renascent India, the strength of the country will depend upon the strength of the villages. Reconstruction is indeed a large problem. All-renouncing monks are, in a way, the fittest persons to undertake the task. Fired with the strength born of conviction and faith in the words of the Guru, Swami Ganeshanandaji successfully translated into action some of the ideas propounded by Swami Vivekananda with reference to a nation-building system of education. 'Muscles of iron and nerves of steel' is one of the sayings of the great Hindu Monk of India. Swami Ganeshanandaji gave special attention to the health and physical well-being of the boys and girls under his charge. Besides outdoor games, pupils of the Sarisha schools have military and Swedish drill, dagger and Lathi play, Ju-jitsu and boxing under the guidance of experts. Pupils of both sexes

are made to read the daily papers and discuss current events. Various items of village welfare work are undertaken by the teachers and pupils.

In the midst of his regular duties the Swami always found time to nurse the sick, and convey words of consolation to the bereaved and the distressed. He made no distinction between high and low in showering his love and lending a helping hand. The barber, when he was on sick-bed, was sure of the Swami's visit to his humble dwelling. The cabman and bus-driver knew that the Swami always had a smile and a kind word for them. Poor students who

came to him for advice and help found in him a warm friend.

The Swami was a man of dynamic energy and irresistible personality. His courage and determination made him face dangers and difficulties without flinching in the least. Outwardly a strict disciplinarian, he had an exceptionally large and sympathetic heart, which swelled at the sorrows of others and urged him to help them with parental affection. His sincerity and enthusiasm were captivating, and with these he inspired his colleagues and associates and attracted them with his unbounded love.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

VIEWS AND REVIEWS OF SRI AUROBINDO. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Library, 12, Kondichetty Street, Madras. Pp. 88. Price Re. 1.*

Part One consists of four essays. 'The Needed Synthesis' pleads for the recovery of the fulness of life by effecting the unity of the love of the Bhakta and the knowledge of the Brahma-Jnani. The essay on 'Arya—its significance' gives a comprehensive account of the various meanings attached to the term and clearly shows that in its original use the word expressed not a difference of race, but a difference of culture. What exactly is meant by 'Meditation in Yoga' is elucidated in the third essay and the fourth treats of the 'Universal Consciousness.' Part Two consists of the reviews of Arthur Avalon's 'Hymns to the Goddess,' Mr. G. C. Gangoly's 'South Indian Bronze,' and 'Rupam,' Mr. H. G. Wells' 'God, the Invisible King,' and Mr. N. P. Subramania Iyer's 'Kalaprakasika—a Treatise on Astrology.' The views expressed on art, religion, literature and philosophy exhibit the author's vast erudition and keen critical insight. The book is neatly got-up.

THOUGHTS AND GLIMPSES OF SRI AUROBINDO. *Published by The Arya Publishing House, 63, College Street, Calcutta. Pp. 41.*

Contains a collection of Aphorisms, Thoughts and Glimpses. Some of these are the results of profound meditation and will lead the reader to ponder deeply over the eternal verities of existence.

HERACLITUS. BY SRI AUROBINDO. *Published by the Arya Publishing House, 63, College Street, Calcutta. Pp. 70.*

This essay originally appeared in the *Arya* as a criticism of Prof. Ranade's book on the subject and now for the first time is brought out as a book. It shows how often the thought of Heraclitus is identical with the Vedic and the Vedantic. It contains much that is interesting in Vedic and Greek philosophy and students of philosophy will find the book very valuable.

BANKIM—TILAK—DAYANANDA. BY SRI AUROBINDO. *Published by The Arya Publishing House, 63, College Street, Calcutta. Pp. 80.*

The book opens with the text of the *Bande Mataram* song (original Bengali in Devanagari characters) and two translations, one in verse and one in prose. This is followed by the article on 'Rishi Bankim Chandra.' The author says, 'The hero, the Rishi, the saint are the natural fruits of our Indian soil; and there has been no age in which they have not been born. Among

the Rishis of the latter age we have at last realized that we must include the name of the man who gave us the reviving Mantra which is creating a new India, the Mantra *Bande Mataram*.' Emphasis is laid upon Bankim, the seer and nation-builder, one of the makers of Modern India. Bankim shaped the Bengali language as a fit and satisfying medium of expression; he inspired an unerring vision of the moral strength necessary for complete self-sacrifice for the country and complete self-devotion to the work of its liberation, above all he gave the inspiring Mantra which is creating a new India. The article on 'Bal Gangadhar Tilak' was originally contributed as an introduction to the *Speeches and Writings of Tilak*. It gives a lucid account of the nation-building activities of the great patriot and closes with the sentence: 'Mr. Tilak's name stands already for history as a nation-builder, one of the half-dozen political personalities, memorable figures, representative men of the nation in this most critical period of India's destinies, a name to be remembered gratefully as long as the country has pride in its past and hope for its future.' The article on 'Dayananda' was originally contributed to the *Vedic Magazine*, 'It was Kathiawar that gave birth to this puissant renovator and new creator. And something of the very soul and temperament of that peculiar land entered into his spirit, something of Girnar and the rocks and hills, something of the voice and puissance of the sea that flings itself upon those coasts, something of that humanity which seems to be made of the virgin and unspoilt stuff of nature, fair and robust in body, instinct with a fresh and primal vigour, crude but in a developed nature capable of becoming a great force of genial creation He was not only plastic to the great hand of Nature, but asserted his

own right and power to use Life and Nature as plastic material. We can imagine his soul crying still to us without insufficient spring of manhood and action, "Be not content, O Indian, only to be infinitely and grow vaguely, but see what God intends thee to be, determine in the light of His inspiration to what thou shalt grow. Seeing, hew thee out of thyself, hew that out of Life. Be a thinker, but be also a doer; be a soul, but be also a man; be a servant of God, but be also a Master of Nature!" For this was what he himself was, a man with God in his soul, vision in his eyes and power in his hands to hew out of Life and image according to his vision. Hew is the right word. Granite himself, he smote out a shape of things with great blows as in granite.' These extracts will give some idea of the vigorous and inspiring style in which this and other articles in the book are written. Here is another extract bearing on another great leader: 'Vivekananda was a soul of puissance if ever there was one, a very lion among men, but the definite work which he has left behind is quite incommensurate with our impression of his creative might and energy. We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not well where, in something that is not yet formed, something leonine, grand, intuitive, upheaving that has entered the soul of India and we say, "Behold, Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his Mother and in the souls of her children." So it is with all. Not only are the men greater than their definite works, but their influence is so wide and formless that it has little relation to any formal work that they have left behind them.' The book closes with an article on 'Ramesh Chandra Dutt.' We heartily commend the book to all who are interested in the makers of Modern India.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE MAYAVATI HOSPITAL, REPORT FOR 1940

The Mayavati Charitable Hospital came into being as a sheer necessity—in fulfilment of the local needs. The condition of the villagers, mostly ignorant and poor, is so helpless in times of disease and sickness

that even the stoniest of hearts will be moved to do something for them. The regular dispensary was opened in 1903. Since then it has been growing in size and importance. Now quite a large number of

patients come from a distance of even 50 or 60 miles, taking 4 or 5 days for the journey.

The hospital stands within the precincts of the Ashrama, and is in charge of a monastic member qualified for the task. There is also a medical graduate who was appointed to increase the efficiency of the work. Service is done in a spirit of worship, and as such irrespective of caste or creed.

In the hospital there are 13 regular beds, one extra bed being added this year. But sometimes we have to make arrangements for even 30 or more indoor patients—there is so great a rush for admission. People come from such a great distance and in such a helpless condition that anyhow they have to be accommodated.

The operation room is fitted with most up-to-date equipments and as such almost all kinds of operation can be done here. This has been a great boon to the people of this area. In the current year we have further increased the equipment of the hospital.

We have also got a small clinical laboratory, which is a rare thing in these parts. Now almost all kinds of medical help that one can expect in a city are available here.

There is arrangement for the amusement and recreation of the patients through a gramophone. There is also a small library for those who can read.

The following comparative chart will indicate the gradual evolution of the hospital.

Year	No. of Patients	
	<i>Outdoor</i>	<i>Indoor</i>
1915	1,173	...
1925	3,162	35
1930	5,014	203
1935	14,344	189
1940	14,312	286

The total number of patients relieved during the year at the Outdoor Dispensary was 14,312, of which 10,772 were new cases and 3,540 repeated cases. In the Indoor Hospital the total number treated was 286, of which 231 were cured and discharged, 11 were discharged otherwise, 36 were relieved, and 8 died.

RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1940

	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
RECEIPTS						
<i>To Opening Balance :</i>						
Cash in hand ...	630	0	0			
With Central Bank of India, Ltd. (S. B. A/c.) ...	4,682	1	5			
				5,312	1	5
Subscriptions and Donations ...				1,133	0	0
Interest ...				4,180	12	0
Miscellaneous Receipts ...				73	12	0
*Advance from Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta ...				1,904	13	0
				TOTAL	12,604	6 5

	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
DISBURSEMENTS						
Establishment ...				169	1	6
Medical Staff ...				1,567	0	9
Medicines and Instruments ...				1,005	13	0
Equipments and Furniture ...				191	9	9
Beddings, Clothings and Laundry ...				323	1	3
Stationery, Printing and Postage ...				55	13	3
Repairs to Buildings ...				119	9	6
General Expenses ...				257	2	9
Miscellaneous Expenses ...				28	11	3
*Repayment of Advance from Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta ...				1,904	13	0
<i>Closing Balance :</i>						
Cash in hand ...	576	9	0			
With Central Bank of India, Ltd. (S. B. A/c.) ...	6,400	1	5			
				6,976	10	5
				TOTAL	12,604	6 5

Examined and found correct.
 N. C. CHAKRAVARTY & Co., R. A.,
 Incorporated Accountants (London).

13th Feb., 1941.

We cordially thank all our donors, who by their continued support have made it possible for us to carry on this humanitarian work in such an out-of-the-way place.

And we hope we shall receive from them such support and help even in future.

All contributions, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged by the undersigned.

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA,
President, Advaita Ashrama,
P.O. Mayavati, Dt. Almora, U. P.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, KHAR, BOMBAY

The report of the Ramakrishna Mission, Bombay, for the years 1938-1940, presents a brief account of its useful activities during the period, which may be classified as follows:

Missionary: Ever since the inception of the Centre in 1923, the Swamis have been popularizing the universal teachings of Vedanta by holding classes and lectures in the city and its suburbs as well as in different parts of the province and outside it. As many as 455 weekly religious classes were held and 122 occasional lectures were delivered during the period under review. The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were duly celebrated when lectures and discourses on the lives and teachings of the great Masters were delivered.

Educational: The Ashrama has a free Reading Room and Library with nearly 3,284 books in it, which were largely utilized by the public. The Students' Home, con-

ducted by the Mission, accommodated 71 college students during the period under report. The special feature of the Home is its ideal surroundings and atmosphere that provides the students with facilities for building up their life and character.

Philanthropic: The Charitable Dispensary that was opened with the starting of the Centre, renders both homoeopathic and allopathic treatment to the needy public. A total number of 33,780 patients, of whom 13,164 were new and 20,516 repeated ones, was treated in 1940 as against 15,594 in 1938. The surgical cases treated in the three years were respectively 162, 384, and 714.

In October, 1940, the city of Bombay and the suburbs were overtaken by a cyclonic storm. The Mission gave immediate relief to the sufferers by helping them with corn, clothes, blankets, and also cash.

Present Needs: (1) Rs. 5,000/- for purchase of some up-to-date apparatus and appliances. (2) Rs. 25,000/- for acquiring a plot of land for the Students' Home.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KANKHAL, HARDWAR

The Sevashrama is a hospital meant mainly for the poor of the country, irrespective of caste or creed. A short summary of its activities for the year 1940 is given below.

The Indoor Department contains 50 beds, but more patients were accommodated in times of epidemics, or during *Melas* when large number of pilgrims visits the place. The total number of indoor patients treated during 1940 was 1,295, of whom 1,085 were cured, 139 relieved, 44 died, and 27 were under treatment at the close of the year. The Outdoor Dispensary treated 29,848 patients, of whom 18,341 were repeated cases and 11,507 new ones. The daily average attendance in both the Departments together was 114.

The Ashrama has been conducting a Night School since 1913. The number of students

during the year was 130. Of these 88 were of the depressed classes including untouchables, 29 Muhammadans, 1 Sikh, and 12 high caste Hindus. For the convenience of students who could not attend the school at night day-classes were opened recently.

The Library of the Ashrama had, at the end of the year, a collection of 2,524 books. The number of books issued to the public came to 2,387.

The Sevashrama sends its earnest appeal for funds to meet its various needs, a few of which are mentioned below:

- (1) Rs. 20,000/- for a General ward.
- (2) Rs. 6,000/- for a Compound Wall.
- (3) Rs. 5,000/- for Repairs of buildings.
- (4) Rs. 6,000/- for Underground Drainage.
- (5) Rs. 6,000/- for Land and Building for the Night School.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MISSION ASHRAMA, JALPAIGURI

The activities of the Ashrama for the year 1940 may be brought under the following heads:

Religious: Regular weekly classes were held in the Ashrama in which the scriptures were explained so as to bring out the true significance of religion and the fundamental unity that underlies all religions. Occasional lecturing tours also were undertaken by the Swamis to neighbouring places. The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were duly celebrated. These were occasions when people of various creeds and faiths came together in mutual understanding.

Educational: 5 poor students were accommodated in the Ashrama and all their expenses were borne by it. There is a school for Harijan boys in which 21 students received their education during the year. The Library and Reading Room conducted

by the Ashrama were used largely by the local public.

Philanthropic: A total number of 22,977 poor patients, of whom 8,819 were new cases and 14,158 repeated ones, were treated in the Charitable Dispensary conducted by the Ashrama. The number of surgical cases was 25.

There is a Maternity Section run with the help of an experienced doctor and two trained midwives. 58 ante-natal and 196 post-natal cases were attended during the year. 6 poor children were supplied with milk and some others with warm clothings. Besides curative work, arrangements for preventive service also were made by organizing magic lantern lectures and distributing literature on maternity and child-welfare.

The Ashrama authorities appeal for funds for erecting a Temple and a Guest House and a Maternity Clinic.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, NARAYANGUNJ BRANCH

The Mission was started as early as 1903. A perusal of the report for the year 1940, a short account of which is given below, shows the steady growth of the institution from year to year to its present state of usefulness. The activities may be classified under the following heads:

Missionary: Regular classes were held in the Ashrama twice a week in which the universal principles of Vedanta were explained. The total number of classes during the year came to 100. Besides these, the Swami in charge of the Centre visited many places in the neighbouring districts and delivered as many as 25 lectures on various religious topics. The birthday anniversaries of Sri Ramakrishna and many of his monastic disciples were duly celebrated and the Durga Puja was performed.

Educational: The Students' Home, started in 1938, is an ideal institution which looks after the physical, mental, and spiritual growth of its inmates. There were 32 students in the Home at the end of the year. Of these 28 were paying and 4 free. All the 3 students who appeared for the Matriculation Examination came out successful.

2 were placed in the first division, one securing 80 per cent marks in two subjects. As a part of their training the boys were taken on excursion to several places. Debates on various subjects were organized for their intellectual development.

The Mission conducts a Library which is open to the public. A Children's Section has been started as a branch of this Library. There is a Free Reading Room attached to the Library which is provided with many dailies, weeklies and monthly journals.

Charitable: The Homoeopathic Charitable Dispensary treated 7,446 patients during the year. Many poor and needy families were helped with regular doles of rice and pecuniary help was given to 35 persons. Besides these, a few pieces of new cloths were distributed among the needy.

Present Needs: (1) Rs. 45,000/- for acquisition of Land and construction of a Dormitory for the Students' Home. (2) Rs. 2,000/- for a Library Building. (3) Rs. 500/- for a Gymnasium. (4) Rs. 2,500/- for a Kitchen. (5) Rs. 500/- for a Tube-well. (6) Rs. 500/- for two Latrines.