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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

TEACHINGS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By M.

Purity of thought and action—Scriptures help only in the early stages—Vanity dies hard—Power manifests variously—Free will and God’s will—The Master in ecstatic mood—God with form and without form.

Saturday, April 7, 1883. Sri Ramakrishna was visiting the home of Balaram in Calcutta, with Narendra, Bhavanath, Rakhal, M., and others. At the Master’s bidding, Balaram had invited some of the young devotees to lunch. Sri Ramakrishna often said to Balaram, ‘Feed them now and then; that will confer on you the merit of feeding holy men.’ The Master looked on his young disciples, yet untouched by lust and greed, as the very embodiment of God.

A few days earlier Sri Ramakrishna had been to Keshab’s house with Narendra and Rakhal to see a performance of the play entitled *Nava-Brindavan*. Narendra had taken part in the performance, in which Keshab had played the role of Pavhari Baba.¹

¹ An ascetic and Yogi of great distinction, who was a contemporary of Sri Ramakrishna.

Master: ‘Keshab entered in the role of a holy man and sprinkled “holy water”. But I didn’t like it. The idea of sprinkling “holy water” on a theatrical stage after a performance!

‘Another gentleman played the part of Sin. That is not good either. One should not commit sin, nor should one even feign it.’

The Master wanted to hear Narendra sing. The young disciple was not feeling well, but at the Master’s earnest request he sang to the accompaniment of the Tânpurâ :

Sing, O bird that nestles deep
within my heart!

Sing, O bird that sits on the
Kalpa-tree of Brahman,
Sing God’s everlasting praise

* * *

And he sang:

Brahman, Joy of the whole
universe, Supreme Effulgence;
God beginningless, Lord of the
world, the very Life of life!

* * *

Narendra said to the Master with a smile, referring to Bhavanath: 'He has given up fish and betel.'²

Master: 'Why so? What is the matter with fish and betel? They aren't harmful. The renunciation of lust and greed is the true renunciation. Where is Rakhal?'

A devotee: 'He is asleep, sir.'

Master (with a smile): 'Once a man went to a certain place to see a theatrical performance, carrying a mat under his arm. Hearing that it would be some time before the performance began, he spread the mat on the floor and fell asleep. When he woke up it was all over. (All laugh). Then he returned home carrying the mat under his arm.'

Ramdayal was very ill and lay in bed in another room. The Master went there to inquire about him.

At about four o'clock that afternoon some members of the Brâhmo Samâj arrived. The Master talked with them.

A Brahmo: 'Sir, have you read the *Panchadashi*?'³

Master: 'In the beginning one should hear such things and discuss philosophical problems. But later on,

Cherish my darling Mother Shyâmâ
Tenderly within, O mind;
May you and I alone behold Her,
Letting no one else intrude!

'One should hear the scriptures during the early stage of spiritual dis-

² Hin-Ju religious aspirants often renounce these, since they are considered luxuries and detrimental to spiritual progress.

³ A book on Vedanta philosophy.

cipline. One doesn't lack in knowledge after the attainment of God. Then the Divine Mother supplies it without fail.

'A child spells out every word as he writes, but later on he writes fluently.

'The goldsmith is up and doing while melting the gold. As long as the gold hasn't melted, he works the bellows with one hand, moves the fan with the other, and blows a pipe with his mouth. But the moment the gold melts and is poured into the mould, he is relieved of all anxiety.

'Mere reading of the scriptures is not enough. One cannot understand the true significance of the scriptures if one is attached to the world.

Though with intense delight I
learned many poems and dramas,
I have forgotten them all, en-
tangled in Krishna's love.

'Keshab enjoys the world and practises Yoga as well. Living in the world, he has directed his mind to God.'

A devotee described the Convocation of the Calcutta University, saying that the meeting looked like a forest of human heads.

Master: 'The divine feeling is awakened in me when I see a great crowd of people. Had I seen that meeting, I should have been overwhelmed with spiritual fervour.'

* * *

Sunday, April 15, 1883. Surendra, the Master's beloved lay disciple, had invited the Master to his house on the auspicious occasion of the Annapurnâ Pujâ. It was about six o'clock when Sri Ramakrishna arrived with some of his devotees. The image of the Divine Mother was installed in the temple. At Her feet lay hibiscus flowers, and Bilwa leaves; from Her neck hung a garland of flowers. Sri Ramakrishna entered the temple and bowed down

before the sacred image. Then he went to the open courtyard, where he sat on a carpet surrounded by his devotees and disciples. On the carpet which was covered with a white linen sheet, lay a few bolsters. He was asked to lean against one of these, but he pushed it aside.

Master (to the devotees): 'To lean' against a bolster! You see, it is very difficult to give up vanity. You may discriminate, saying that the ego has no foundation; but still it comes, nobody knows from where. The head of the goat has been chopped off, but still its limbs jerk about. Or, perhaps, you are frightened in a dream. You shake off sleep and are wide awake, but still you feel in your heart the palpitation. Egotism is exactly like that. You may drive it away, but still it appears from somewhere. Then you say with a sullen face, "What! I have not been shown proper respect!"'

Kedar: 'One should be lowlier than a straw and patient as a tree.'

Master: 'As for myself, I consider myself as a speck of the dust of the devotee's feet.'

Vaidyanath arrived. He was an educated man, a lawyer of the High Court of Calcutta. With folded hands he saluted the Master and took his seat at one side.

Surendra (to the Master): 'He is one of my relatives.'

Master: 'Yes, I notice that he has a fine nature.'

Surendra: 'He has come here because he wants to ask you a question or two.'

Master (to *Vaidyanath*): 'All that you see is the manifestation of God's Power. None can achieve anything without this Power. But you must

*Rich and aristocratic persons seeking comfort generally sit in that fashion.

remember there is not the same manifestation of power in all things. *Vidyasagar* once asked me whether God endowed some with greater power than others. I said to him, "If there are no greater and lesser manifestations of power, then why have we taken the trouble to visit you? Have you grown two horns? Therefore, it stands to reason that God exists in all beings as the All-pervasive Power, but that there is a difference in Its manifestation.'

Vaidyanath: 'Sir, I have a doubt. People speak of free will. They say that a man can do good or bad according to his will. Is it true? Are we really free to do whatever we like?'

Master: 'Everything is subordinated to the will of God. It is all His play. He has created various things—great and small, strong and weak, good and bad, virtuous and vicious. This is all His *Mâyâ*, His sport. You must have noticed that all the trees in a garden are not of the same kind.

'As long as God is not realized, one thinks one is free. It is God Himself who keeps this error in man; otherwise sin would have multiplied. People would not be afraid of sin or be punished for it.

'But let me tell you the attitude of one who has realized God. He feels, "I am the machine and Thou, O Lord, art the Operator. I am the house and Thou art the Indweller. I am the chariot and Thou art the Driver. I move as Thou movest me. I speak as Thou speakest through me."

(To *Vaidyanath*): 'It is not good to argue. Isn't that so?'

Vaidyanath: 'Yes, sir. This desire to argue disappears when one attains Wisdom.'

The Master, out of his stock of a dozen English words, said, 'Thank you!' in the most charming way, and they all laughed.

Master (to Vaidyanath): 'You will make spiritual progress. People don't trust a man when he speaks about God. If a great soul affirms that he has seen God, still the average person will not accept his words. He says to himself, "If this man has really seen God, then let him show Him to me." But can one learn to feel a person's pulse in one day? One must move in the company of a physician for many days; only then can one distinguish the different pulses. One must be in the company of those with whom the examination of the pulse has become a regular profession.'

'Can anyone and everyone pick out a yarn of particular count? If you are in that trade, you can distinguish in a moment the forty-count thread from a forty-one.'

The Kirtan was about to begin. Some Vaishnavas were seated at one side with their Mridangas and cymbals. The drummer began to play on his instrument preparatory to the singing. The sweet and melodious sound of the Mridanga filled the courtyard, recalling to one's mind the ecstatic Kirtan of Sri Gauranga. The Master passed into a deep spiritual mood. Now and then he cast his glance on the drummer and said, 'Ah me! Ah me! My hair is standing on end.'

The singers asked what kind of song they should sing. The Master said humbly. 'Something about Gauranga, if you please.'

The Kirtan began. They sang about the celestial beauty of Sri Gauranga:

The beauty of Gauranga's face
Glowing brighter than the brightest
gold;
His smile illumines all the world.
Who cares for even a million moons
Shining in the blue autumn sky?

The chief musician added improvised lines as they sang: 'O friend, His face shines like a full moon!' 'But it does not wane nor has it any stain on it.' 'It illumines the devotee's heart.' Again he sang: 'His face is bathed and made beautiful with the liquid beauty of a million moons.'

At these words the Master went into deep Samâdhi. After a short while he regained consciousness of the sense world. Then he suddenly stood up, overpowered by his spiritual mood, and sang improvised lines with the professionals, thinking himself to be a milkmaid of Brindavan gone mad with the beauty of Sri Krishna's form: 'Whose fault is it,—that of my mind or that of His beauty?' 'In the three worlds I see nothing but my beloved Krishna.'

The Master danced and sang. All remained spell-bound as they watched the scene. The chief musician sang the words of a Gopi: 'O flute, please stop. Can you not go to sleep?' One of the musicians added a new line: 'How can it sleep? It rests on Krishna's lips.'

The Master sat down. The music went on. They sang, assuming the attitude of Râdhâ: 'My eyes are blinded; my ears are deaf. I have lost the power of smell. All my senses are paralysed. But alas, why should I be left alone?'

At last the musicians sang of the union of Radha and Krishna:

Radha and Krishna are joined in
the Nidhu grove of Brindavan;
Nothing can equal their beauty;
no end there is to their love.

As the music came to a close, the Master said, 'Bhâgavata—Bhakta—Bhagavân'⁵, and bowed down touching

⁵ Literally: 'Gospel, devotee, God'.

the ground with his forehead. He bowed down to the devotees seated on all sides and took on his head the holy dust of the ground where the sacred music had been sung.

It was about half past nine in the evening. Surendra entertained the Master and the devotees with a sumptuous feast. When it was time to take leave of their host, the Master, the devotees, and Surendra entered the temple and stood before the image.

Surendra (to the Master): 'No one has sung anything about the Divine Mother to-day.'

Master (pointing to the image): 'Ah! Look at the beauty of the temple. The light of the Divine Mother seems to have illumined the entire place. Such a sight fills one's heart with joy. Grief, agony, and desire for pleasure disappear.

'But can't one see God as formless Reality? Of course one can. But not if one has the slightest trace of worldliness. The Rishis of olden times renounced everything and then contemplated Sachchidānanda, the Indivisible Brahman.

'The Brahmajñānis of modern times⁶ sing of God as "immutable, homogeneous". It sounds so dry to me! It seems that the singers themselves don't enjoy the sweetness of God's bliss. One

⁶ A reference to the members of the Brahma Samaj.

doesn't care for a cold drink of refined sugar-candy if one is satisfied with coarse treacle.

'Just notice how happy you feel when you see the external image of the Deity. But those who always cry after the formless Reality do not get anything. They realize nothing either inside or outside.'

The Master sang a song to the Divine Mother:

O Mother, ever blissful as Thou art,
Do not deprive Thy worthless child
of bliss!

My mind knows nothing but Thy
lotus feet.

* * *

Again he sang:

Repeat, O mind, my Mother
Durgā's hallowed name;
Whoever travels the path, repeating,
"Durga! Durga!"
Shiva Himself protects with His
almighty trident.

The Master saluted the divine image. As he came down the steps he called softly to Rakhal, 'My shoes—are they missing?'

As the Master got into the carriage, Surendra and the other devotees bowed down before him. Then the carriage started for Dakshineswar. The moonlight lingered on the house-tops.

SONNET SEQUENCE TO SRI RAMAKRISHNA

I

How came You, Godhead, the epitome
Of Knowledge, Bliss, Existence, first to be
Conceived in Spirit and personified—
But by the tears the desolate long cried?

How came You, patient Lord, to bring Your voice
 To earth again flesh-borne—but for Your choice
 To sing and stir in man the strength to break
 Into his hostile body for the sake
 Of bliss inside his heart, to sing him of
 The joyfulness of soul afloat in love?
 For when death came, thrush-like through bleeding throat
 You sang the Self, full note on fuller note,
 Nor left behind the frame of flesh until,
 Not death's it was, but Your own Lordly will.

II

You came to man, the fettered, desolate,
 Half buried in the bed of sensuous mire,
 And called on him to rise and liberate
 Himself from nets self-woven of desire.
 You called on him to rise to wind and sun
 And couch in calmness on the grassy leaves,
 And learn of You the knowledge of the One
 By knowing which a man no longer grieves.
 Through You his senses were all made to kneel
 Before man in the service of his soul,
 And joy welled up in him and he could feel
 The mind uprising towards the God-lit goal;
 For You were born for this, and were before,
 And shall be times to come—how many more?

III

RAMA YOU WERE, THE BUDDHA, KRISHNA, THEN
 The Christ and Ramakrishna, through whom scores
 On scores of men are lifted to the shores
 Of deathlessness, to live in God again.
 Out of Existence—how, no mind can know—
 Men fall to earth and pleasure, and grow blind,
 Until Your shining hand leads them to find
 The upward arc where freedom-bent they go.
 For men shall ever rise on faith and rest
 In Knowledge, Bliss, Existence, finally;
 But not until all creatures born shall be
 Beyond the gross conception, by You blest,
 Shall You have freedom from their constant call,
 Nor lose Yourself in the Impersonal.

—DOROTHY KRUGER

LEST WE VEGETATE

BY THE EDITOR

What they discussed was only work, and what they praised was only work. Therefore, one indeed becomes good through good work and evil through evil work.—*Brihadâranjaka Upanishad*, III. ii. 13.

I

A Brahmachârin, passing through a wood, came at evening across a poor wood-cutter bending under the weight of his burden of fuel by selling which he hoped to procure the bare means of subsistence for his family. Taking pity on him the Brahmacharin said, 'Proceed farther than you usually do.' Next day the poor man went deeper into the forest, and what was his joy when he came to a sandal-wood forest! 'But', cogitated the poor man, 'the Brahmacharin asked me to move on.' So next day he went still farther and reached a mine of silver. Not stopping with this, he continued his exploration with the result that he next obtained some gold and at last an inexhaustible mine of diamonds.

This spirit of being constantly on the move pervaded Indian life in all its ramifications,—in religion, arts, sciences, and material achievements,—till at last a time came when India became the centre of a dynamic civilization. Then all roads of cultural progress emanated from India, or rather, they all led to India.

But things have changed. An India that was once in the vanguard of civilization, finds herself beaten hollow; and theories of the innate inferiority of the East are formulated to be thrown at her face to make her ignoble discomfiture more intolerable. Who knows if these theories of racial superiority are not born of an unconscious desire for

silencing the uneasy conscience of the West, and if this narcotic of inferiority complex is not injected through the veins of the East with a view to perpetuating the otherwise unbearable ignominy? Be that as it may, the East has, strangely enough, submitted herself to these none the very praiseworthy soporific influences, and the literatures of the countries east of the Suez complacently re-echo the strange slogans manufactured by the intellectuals of the West.

Take, for instance, the idea of evolution. It is argued that Europe and America have reached the pinnacle of modern civilization through a process of evolution that works for the survival and uplift of the best. If the East has fallen back it is because of this natural process of evolution. This pet word meets one in all historical writings, where it is taken almost as a gospel truth. Nay, the gospels may prevaricate, but not this scientific verisimilitude! Darwin, perhaps, never foresaw such a wide application of a biological theory that in his days was at best only an imperfect collation of certain biological data. Nevertheless, Herbert Spencer proceeded at once to build a stupendous sociologico-philosophical structure on it; and taking the cue from him, subsequent imperialist writers have now discovered in this theory an ample justification for continuous domination over the so-called backward peoples of Asia, Africa, and America. It is so natural for men to

accept a theory that at once titillates their national vanity and supplies a moral background for a palpably immoral act. But what is not equally obvious is that the nations which ere-long led others, should be willing partners in such an ignoble game.

II

Lét us take a few instances of such absurd generalizations of the evolutionary sociologists from the pages of history. H. R. Hall in his *Ancient History of the Near East* writes: 'Greece alone, . . . with a brain many times more intelligent than those of the Easterners, resisted successfully. The barbarian recoiled: Greece had saved the West, and with it the future civilization of the world.' The same writer then goes on to speak about 'certain natural causes which have influenced the History of the East'. As for these natural causes, any one will come across quite a lot of them in the opening pages of Indian and Asiatic histories, where the climatic influences, the geographical limitations, and the other-worldly philosophies are pilloried successively, till the virus of a racial inferiority complex takes firm possession of the unsophisticated young brains of the students.

That Persia was defeated at Salamis is an indisputable historical fact. But it is hardly sober history to claim that the Greeks are many times more intelligent than the Easterners. Equally stupid is the theory that Greece saved the future civilization of the world. And one reaches the limit of one's patience when the highly civilized nations of the East are branded as barbarians. A Leonidas or an Alexander cannot prove the absolute superiority of a race; nor can the defeat of a Xerxes or a Porus discredit a whole nation. For were there not Attilas, Chengis Khans, and

Chandraguptas to pay back the West in her own coins? And what is this Western civilization if not an adaptation of and improvement on that of the East? Who can forget the indebtedness of Greece and Rome to Egypt, and of Eastern Europe and Spain to the Arabs? Through all these channels, again, percolated the imperceptible but irresistible influence of India, Persia, and China.

The course of the world's history lends very little colour to such a crass theory of inherent racial superiority. Even with our own eyes we can see how low Greece has fallen. Besides, should we now believe that Western nations like the English, the Germans, or the French are intrinsically more intelligent than the Greeks? If this line of argument is followed, the Western evolutionists will be forced to eat their own words. For, so far as material civilization is concerned, North America will, perhaps, at this stage, carry away the palm. And what position will be allotted to the uncanny intelligence of the Japs?

The fall of the East is comparatively a recent event compared with her long history extending over millenniums of fruitful creativity. India's medicines and surgical knowledge were sought for by contemporaneous foreign nations who had the requisite intelligence to appreciate their value, and that at a time when the barbers of Europe were the surgeons and the English people sought for the magic touch of the king for curing physical ailments. Hospitals existed under Ashoka, but were unknown in Europe before the fourth century A.D. The ships of India supplied models to those of Europe, and Indian textiles were the envy of Lancashire.

True, the India of old is gone. But is she lost for ever? Are not the births of geniuses like Ramakrishna and Vivekananda in religion, Bankim and

Tagore in literature, Bose and Raman in science, Seal and Radhakrishnan in philosophy, Tata and Walchand Hirschand in industry, C. R. Das and Mahatma Gandhi in politics, indicative of the high intellectual, practical, and moral acumen of the nation and suggestive of the bright days ahead?

Considered thus from every point of view it would appear that progress seldom lies in a straight line. A theory of uninterrupted evolution has no legs to stand on. At best social progress is in jumps or cycles, though that, too, is a highly disputable thesis. There is no fear, therefore, that a race once fallen is bound to remain ever so. There is still hope for India unless she prefers to vegetate. Racial progress is a matter of deliberate choice followed energetically and persistently. Our success lies in constant activity and movement. Inertia stops where action begins. The task ahead is stupendous and the problems baffling. But move we must. Success favours the brave. We must put our shoulders to the wheel.

Kali he becometh who lieth,
Dvâpara when he riseth,
Tretâ when he standeth erect,
And Krita when he moveth.
Do thou move.¹

III

It is only the ignorant who think that India's philosophy acts as a clog to her wheel of progress. Truer it is to say that she had a very positive outlook on life, which is still the marvel of the unsophisticated intelligentsia of the West. It was not a vain phantasy that led Nietzsche to speak so rapturously of Manu's sociological thoughts:

Stanzas at the ends of sections are from A. B. Keith's translation of *Aitareya Brâhmana*, XXXIII. 3.

'It is replete with noble values, it is filled with a feeling of perfection, with a saying of yea to life and a triumphant sense of well-being in regard to itself and to life,—the sun shines upon the whole book. All those things which Christianity smothers with its bottomless vulgarity, procreation, woman, marriage, are here treated with love and confidence.'

As it is with Indian sociology, so is it with her philosophy—it is full of positive energism coupled with unending progress. We learn from the *Aitareya Brâhmana* (XII. 10) that in days of yore, Indra, after his victory over Britra and attainment of excellence in every respect, told Prajâpati, 'I shall become just what you are. I, too, shall be great.' What was Prajâpati's perplexity at this intrepidity! 'What (Kah) shall I then be?' asked he. Nothing daunted, Indra replied, 'You will be what you have described yourself to be.' So Prajâpati or the Creator of all beings became Kah (who?), an eternally unanswerable query; but Indra became Mahendra, the Great Indra.

Thus moves the Indian world towards a goal of perfection that is ever an unknowable and unrealizable entity. The social progress towards absolute perfection is but asymptotic. The quest can never stop; for then the demons will get the upper hand and disintegration will set in. Individuals may stop after attaining perfection in spite of this flux. But society goes on merrily for ever and for ever.

The body of this Kah, this Prajâpati, is, however, a changeable factor, depending, as it does, on the sum total of the activities of beings, and more so on that of men. According to Indian philosophy, all other births are chiefly for enjoying the fruits of action accumulated in previous births; but human beings have the freedom and

privilege to acquire new merits or demerits as they choose. These bits of accumulated tendencies born of human action are so powerful that they may even lead to successive creations and dissolutions. At the end of a cycle Prajapati comes with a new body evolved from the fine Karmic germs repositied in God's hands. Nay, even during a cyclic existence, Prajapati's body is undergoing constant changes through human action. Men individually and collectively thus forge their own destiny. 'In the beginning this world was but in the form of water (or oblations offered in the preceding creation). The water produced Satya, Satya is Brahman. Brahman produced Prajapati.' (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, V. v. 1). The existence of God's grace is not denied; but oftener it elects to depend on positive human effort. The immutability of God is not incompatible with the transmutability of Prajapati's body; for there can be no cosmic play unless God sustains it. 'It is because of His existence, that Cosmic Vitality holds in Itself the fruits of all actions.' (*Ishopanishad*, 4).

India's ideology does not stand in the way of her progress. On the contrary, it postulates that her fortune and honour are in her own keeping. She can either act and change herself, or sit and rot.

The fortune of him who sitteth also
sitteth,

But that of him who standeth,
standeth erect;

That of him that reclineth lieth
down;

The fortune of him that moveth
shall move indeed.

Do thou move.

IV

We are not unaware of the impediments on the way. One of these is

our extreme conservatism which is the result of many contributory factors. It is a common human weakness to rest on one's laurels, and the case with nations is not otherwise. A high state of culture carries within itself the seeds of its own disruption, giving scope, as it does, to luxury, relaxation, sense of security, loss of individual initiative, and stereotyped group activity. A second contributory factor in India's case was an unthinking prescription of ascetic virtues for all and sundry, which followed on the wake of the Hinayânic Buddhism of the Indian type. The third factor was a constant flow of foreign barbarian hordes, against whom the Indian society had to adopt certain measures of self-protection with a consequent loss of mobility and adaptability. The fourth was the aggressive Islamic faith, which, proud of its achievements elsewhere, and convinced, on the one hand, of its own faith as the last word of God and, on the other hand, of that of the Hindus as heresy which it was meritorious to put down, forced Hindu society to be permanently on the defensive. The last stroke was delivered by European subjugation. And as it happens in the case of slaves, the Hindus are often the worst tyrants in intra-social dealings, while in the world forum they are the worst cowards, shrinking at the slightest demand for meeting others on equal terms through social energism, fresh adjustments, adaptations, and progress.

How glibly we talk about our Sanâtana Dharma, and how hypocritical we are all the while! We can write volumes supporting on scientific grounds the inhuman treatment meted out to our less fortunate co-religionists, we cling doggedly to time-worn customs in the name of the Sanatana or everlasting Dharma, and we wallow in our manifestly abject, present condition lest

we be accused of falling down from our national excellence, scarcely realizing that real Sattva (goodness) consists not in an innocent passivity but in a righteous activity that does not quail at the risks involved. Our conception of Sanatana Dharma is so queer indeed!

We have to look behind mere forms, and read our history afresh. What is everlasting and all-pervading in Hinduism, is not a bundle of rituals, creeds, and dogmas, but the universal spiritual principles that supply a stable background for all the changing social phenomena. Prajapati changes but not so the immutable Brahman. No particular custom can have this stability, nor can any be demonstrated to be universally acceptable. The customs of the South vary from those of the North. Vedic rituals are seldom in evidence in modern India. Historically considered, the society of old changed, and the Rishis taking due note of this fact prescribed new formulae of social conduct, which became embodied in the respective Smritis of different ages. We do not decry rituals, symbols, images, or mythologies, since they are necessary for translating into practicable and comprehensible forms the ultimate truths. 'They are our nurse and as such indispensable in youth.' But on that score they should not be elevated to the high position of the spiritual verities themselves. The Hindus must get over their fear complex, and taking their stand on the real Sanatana Dharma, must find out ways and means for dragging out society from its present welter through a steady process of internal growth and evolution. The world is in a perpetual flux. Time and tide wait for nobody. Those who fall back and fail, have only themselves to blame. But those who have the temerity to do and dare, standing on first principles and waging a war of attrition

against opposing forces, are crowned with success.

Wandering one findeth honey,
Wandering the sweet Udumbara
fruit;
Consider the pre-eminence of the
sun,
Who wearieth never of his peregrina-
tion.
Do thou move.

V

Our little successes here egg us on to higher achievements by creating self-confidence and self-mastery. There is no virtue in mere passivity. Success is not for one who counts the waves of the sea, and wants to bathe when they will all subside. Spirituality evades one who is not ever alert and does not give proper play to his energies. Stagnant water emits a stench, but a flowing stream is ever sparkling and delightful. Inaction, as such, is deprecated by all. It is the slothful who make a virtue of their extreme aversion for action. But we do not blame them, since 'even sages are bewildered as to what is action and what is inaction'. The truly wise are those 'who see inaction in action, and action in inaction'. Passivity must not be allowed to ingratiate itself into our favour under the guise of virtue. The *Ishopanishad* is very positive on this point: 'Should one wish to live a hundred years in this world one should do so by performing sanctimonious deeds alone. There is no other alternative than this, O man, by which thy work will not bind thee.' And the Gita points out that even such a simple problem as keeping the body and soul together cannot be solved without work.

It is activity, then, that makes for the welfare of mankind as a whole. Particularly have we to remember this in India where millions spend their time idly, taking shelter in a false philosophy

of inactivity. It is this torpor, more than anything else, that keeps India down and adds daily to her cup of extreme misery. In the light of this, one easily understands the apparently ungodly instruction that gushed forth from the lacerated heart of Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-saint of India: 'You will be nearer God through the football than the Gita.' He, an world-renouncing monk, merged in Beatitude, would even go to the length of crying out, 'Can you steal?'—when faced by extreme laziness masquerading as religiosity. It was only by such rude shocks that India could stop from her day-dreaming and develop and divert her energies into creative channels. Truth to speak, we are all steeped in Tamas, in extreme inertia, and cannot all on a sudden jump on to the height of undisturbed equipoise. Surely, we have to launch on a long period of mobile life that will by its energism sweep away the dirt and sloth of hundreds of years and make the national temple fit for God. Before that no amount of talk and vaingloriousness will help us. This reminds us of a parable told by Sri Ramakrishna. In a village lay a temple in a dilapidated condition and full of thick dirt. The rats and bats had made it their home. One day Podo, a veritable Rip Van Winkle, began blowing a conch from the temple attracting by the sound the villagers, who came flocking under the impression that somebody had taken the pain of cleansing the temple and installing an image there. What was there dismay when they found that it was all empty sound! They then castigated Podo by saying, 'There is no god in your temple, O Podo; then, why this blowing of conch that only disturbs the placidity of the countryside?' We wax eloquent talking about India's greatness and past

achievements, only to invite the ridicule of more successful nations thereby!

The remedy lies in activism, in a more intense determination not to be satisfied with things as they are. There must be a frantic effort for remedying the existing evils without caring for ought. It is in action that the secret of success lies. It is action that transforms misery into happiness, dependence into self-mastery, and this abject earth into a smiling paradise.

Flower-like the calves and loins of
the wanderer;

His body groweth and is fruitful;
All his sins disappear,

Slain by the toil of his journeying.
Do thou go about.

VI

God-fearing souls will hesitate at this teaching of a goalless activism. But why should one care so much for a goal when one is so deeply in indolence as to be unable even to have an intellectual grasp of it? When the Gita along with the other scriptures says that action is better than inaction, and saints like Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda lay the greatest emphasis on this, may we not shake off our hypnotism and begin doing the piece of work nearest at hand? When asked about metaphysical truths, Buddha retorted by saying, 'If a man is stung by a poisoned arrow, should I wait to answer his silly questions about the enemy, the structure of the arrow, or the quality of the poison, or should I extract it forthwith?' This is how a realist will look at the problem. And yet the idealist need have no qualm of conscience. For men are often inherently much better than we think them to be. 'God is in everybody's heart,' and good sense will ultimately prevail when one is put on the way of progress, though there may be a few initial lapses and false

HOW TO GET RID OF DESPONDENCY

BY SWAMI TURIYANANDA

Self-praise is no doubt bad; none the less, continuous harping on depressing thoughts like, 'Our lives are in vain,' 'we are failures,' etc., are also not conducive to the best results. Our Master hated pride, but he also would not put up with despondent, self-deprecating, abject attitudes. Rather he would ask us to be proud of our relation with God and would say, 'I am His child, what fear can be mine?' He would ask us to summon great strength saying, 'I shall be easily delivered, thanks to His grace.' The following attitude is always there in the songs of Ramprasad too: 'Of whom is he, whose Mother is the Divine, afraid?' He is not even afraid of quarrelling with the Mother. There are many songs like, 'I shall no more call on the Mother', in which all kinds of sulks are being indulged in against the Mother. The Master also tried to drive home this idea into us. So you will have to reject this feeling of despondency. Are you nobody? Manage to find time for the contemplation of God even in the midst of this great activity. Spend all your leisure on it. Why only noons and twilights—all time is His. The whole life is His alone. Besides, it is necessary to have the faith that if one can take refuge in Him giving up everything else even for a moment, life becomes blessed and pure and all sins and suffering flee.

It is true that without love of God and Guru there can be no fitness for understanding the Divine, but God is nowhere but in the heart. If he is not

there, there is no hope of ever finding Him anywhere. He, too, is the Guru. 'My Lord is the great Lord of the world, my Guru is the Guru of the world.' If this is not so what special need is there for such a God or Guru? If this was not so how could we live? Who is always protecting us? Whose mercy is sustaining lives? He is merciful to all. Whoever seeks Him finds Him. The tame cat turns wild by living in the forest. This eye, this skin, and this arm turn supernatural and divine after finding Him. There is no use in merely learning words; it is because of His presence in the beginning, the middle, and the end that words are with meaning.

Shridhara Swami has told the greatest truth—the Master used to say that all jackals have the same cry: 'Those men who have known Brahman and are without attachment and who always remember Nârâyan, the Guru of the gods, have all their pain of sin allayed by meditation, and they do not any more have to be suckled by mothers.' (*Prapanna Gita*).

His feet are holy and extend everywhere. The universe is a quarter of Him. We are sheltering in those feet. Whom else shall we worship except those feet? He is the 'life of our life, the eye of our eyes.' There is not a shadow of doubt that He is our all in all whether we know it or not. May we, then, dedicate ourselves heart and soul to Him and depend on Him entirely. May we not see anything but Him.

LIMITATIONS OF PHYSICAL SCIENCE

BY PROF. D. N. SHARMA, M.A.

Materialism draws its inspiration mainly from physical sciences. Before subjecting it to a critical scrutiny on other grounds it would be worthwhile boiling down the hypotheses of physics to a few salient facts, the rejection of which would prove fatal to the materialistic outlook on life. The most important contentions of scientists on which I shall base my subsequent criticism, when expressed in unambiguous language, clear even to a lay man, may be summed up as follows :

(a) Natural phenomena are the only real facts—noumena have no existence and, therefore, no reality.

(b) The scientific method is to proceed from certainty to certainty or from the known to the known and not from the known to the unknown or *vice versa*.

(c) The structure of the universe can be explained, rather it is explicable only on mechanistic basis and there is no room for Intervening Purpose (God) in the scheme of physical causation or mechanical law. God is a superfluous entity.

(d) That which cannot be perceived cannot exist.

To the scientist the universe is a 'fortuitous collocation of atoms', an 'incidental by-product of material processes', a mere 'eddy in the primaeval slime'; to a philosopher, on the other hand, it is an embodiment and expression of design and purpose. The entire process of evolution is not a haphazard affair, and humanity is destined to carry life to higher levels than what have yet appeared. Man is free to make his life as he pleases and his will is not determined by bodily reflexes and un-

conscious impulses. 'The mind is a unique and independent activity and not a mere function of bodily processes which have produced consciousness as a kind of glow surrounding the brain like bright colours on an oil-film.'

'Nineteenth-century physics was essentially materialistic. Under its influence physicists until recent years have been dominated by the notion that to be real a thing must be of the same nature as a piece of matter. Matter was something lying out there in space. It was hard, simple, and obvious; indubitably it was real, and as such calculated to form an admirable foundation upon which the horse sense of the practical man could base his irrefragable convictions. Now matter was something one could see and touch. It followed that whatever else was real must be of the same nature as that which one could theoretically see and touch.' (Joad : *Guide to Modern Thought*, p. 16).

Ethical and aesthetic values, religious experiences and divine vision, philosophical insight and poetic inspiration, are either explained away or are at best regarded as constituents of a world of shadows due to the simple fact that they have a doubtful existence in the sensible world. This view appeals to common sense which is always less revolutionary and adventurous, which is always slow of apprehension and lags behind times. It takes long to grasp a fact and even a still longer time to throw off the yoke of an exploded theory. That explains the devotion of the unphilosophic mind to the now defunct scientific principles so eagerly

and ardently upheld and noisily trumpeted fifty years back but looked with doubt and suspicion in the presence of revolutionizing discoveries by the present-day scientists. The house that was assiduously built on the doctrine of the 'solidity' of matter, seems to be crashing and is being mercilessly pulled down by the modern scientists. Let us see what one of the eminent scientists of world-wide reputation has to say on this vital point.

'Owing chiefly to two German physicists, Heisenberg and Schrodinger, the last vestiges of the old solid atom have melted away, and *matter has become as ghostly as anything in a spiritual sense. . . . The main point . . . in the modern theory is the disappearance of matter as a "thing"*. It has been replaced by emanations from a locality—the sort of influences that characterize haunted rooms in ghost stories. . . . All sorts of events happen in the physical world; but tables and chairs, the sun and moon, and even our daily bread, have become pale abstractions, mere laws exhibited in the succession of events which radiate from certain regions. . . . A string of events connected in this way (by a law of succession from next to next), by an approximate intrinsic law of development is called one piece of matter. . . . *The theory of relativity leads to a similar destruction of the solidity of matter, by a different line of argument.*' (Russell: *An Outline of Philosophy*, pp. 104-119).

This statement coming from the pen of an illustrious physicist stands unchallenged. Professor Stace is not unnaturally led to the other extreme when he declares: 'I do not believe that electrons and protons are real. I believe they are fictitious or hypothetical entities.' None the less they are real, for, though they are not even microscopic 'things', without them the struc-

ture of the atom cannot be precisely understood. How can then they be both real and unreal? They are unreal in the 'scientific' sense inasmuch as they cannot be perceived (to science to see is to believe); they are real in the 'philosophical' sense, since their existence can be 'inferred' from the construction of the atom and from the fact that in their absence phenomena cannot be adequately explained. Physical science then cannot without fatalistic results to the fair field of its 'discoveries' and 'explanations' deny existence to objects or events that cannot be ordinarily perceived. That is why 'physics to-day is not likely to be attracted by a type of explanation of the mind which it would scornfully reject for its own æther'. (Eddington: *Science and the Unseen World*, p. 21).

The question cannot, however, be summarily dismissed. The orthodox school of scientists tenaciously clings to the mid-Victorian conception of the universe, according to which reality was synonymous with the 'world there out in space'. It consists of 'objects perceived.' We are directly aware of 'what is in the head', i.e., the sense-data. Our knowledge is limited by these sense-data; beyond them or behind them nothing exists that we can know of. Sense-data are the only source of our knowledge of the outside world. To deny this obvious fact is to posit the existence of a reality that is extra-sensuous and whose knowledge can be derived only from inference. For the orthodox scientist to concede this much would amount to losing ground from under his feet. But in the attempt to defend his position one is at once confronted with serious obstacles that make the position of the physicist at once contradictory and untenable. If our knowledge is limited to sense-data alone, are we to believe that they are

either the (a) objects that we call 'physical things', or they are (b) mere 'clues' of physical things which are only indirectly known to us through these clues? (a) If they are the things perceived how does it happen that the sense-data of two people create a common world for them? It is inconceivable. We must accordingly fall in line with Russell's thought when he says, 'It is plain that if we are to know anything about the table, it must be by means of the sense-data, . . . but we cannot say that the table is the sense-data. . . . The real table, if it exists, we call a physical object.' (*The Problem of Philosophy*, pp. 17-18). The sense-data are signs of the existence of *something* independent of us. The 'one great reason why it is felt that we must secure a physical object in addition to the sense-data, is that we want the *same* object for different people. . . . There is a permanent public object which underlies or causes the sense-data of various people and various times.' (*Ibid.* pp. 31-33). But nobody can contradict the statement, that we can never *prove* the existence of things other than ourselves and our experiences. This existence, then, owes its validity either to 'instinctive beliefs' or 'inferences', both of which are beyond the scope of science. (b) If sense-data are mere clues, they cannot be the objects themselves—the clue of a criminal is not the criminal himself. Sense-data are 'pointer-readings' that point to an order of things other than and different from themselves. The modern physicists are accordingly led to the conclusion that the scientific view is that 'our problem starts from data which are contained in the minds of conscious beings, and that all we assert of a physical world external to ourselves must necessarily be derived by indirect inference.' (Sir Arthur Eddington: *Philosophy*, Janu-

ary 1933). Sir Arthur makes a distinction between (a) the 'physical world' that stands 'revealed by investigation (both practical and theoretical) according to the recognized methods of physical science', and (b) the 'familiar world' with its 'illusions and subjective interpretations which come spontaneously into the mind as the result of habitually using our eyes and other sense-organs.' Sir Arthur goes on to affirm that 'the physical world and the familiar world have been becoming more and more dissimilar, but it is only in the present century that the difference has become radical. As the result of two great theories—the relativity theory and the quantum theory—the familiar world and the physical world have become entirely distinct. Those mental impressions of things, which form themselves into the familiar world, provide the *clues* which we weave together so as to arrive at inferences about the physical world. *A priori* we have no more expectation of finding resemblances between objects in the familiar world and objects in the physical world than of finding a resemblance between a criminal and a clue.' (*Philosophy*, January 1933).

Without committing ourselves to the truth or otherwise of the nature of physical reality as described by Sir Arthur Eddington we can safely assert that this clear admission by a scientist of no mean reputation, supported, as it is, by the unimpeachable authority of the latest scientific theories, brings science nearer to philosophy which has primarily to deal with the vital problem of the relation between 'appearance' (the familiar world of the scientist) and 'reality' (the physical world of the scientist). The last word on the subject must in the fitness of things rest with the philosopher who does not work under any such limitation as the exclu-

sion of all data of knowledge except the sense-data. 'But the invocation of Reality seems to imply some higher censorship than the scientific method itself can supply.' (Eddington).

The scientist feels his position invulnerable when he asserts that phenomena can be explained in terms of mechanical causation, which is the indispensable foundation of all science that claims to step beyond the descriptive stage. Undoubtedly, we daily come across a 'causal process' which involves no reference to purpose or to future happenings; yet we are perfectly familiar with events of a type in which reference to the future seems to play an essential role, namely, all our deliberately planned actions, every action in which we achieve some results which we have first conceived as a possibility of the future and have desired and striven to bring about or realize. All such successful actions are clear instances of purposive causation. They are the only kind of teleological events of which we have direct and intimate knowledge.

But are we justified to conclude from human purposive activity that there is a divine purpose behind the twist and dance of electrons and protons, the elements that compose atoms? The world-famous scientist, Professor Arthur H. Compton of the Department of Physics in Chicago and a Nobel-prize-winner states: '. . . to the physicist it has become clear that the chances are infinitesimal that a universe filled with atoms having random properties would develop into a world with the infinite variety that we find about us. . . . This strongly suggests that the evolutionary process is not a chance due but is towards some definite end. If we suggest that evolution is directed we imply that there is a directive intelligence direct-

ing it.' (Quoted in *Prabuddha Bharata*, July 1931).

It will not be out of place to give a few more extracts from the writings of some other world-renowned scientists to bear out the fact that the trend of modern science is to show that purposivism and not mechanism provides a more correct and satisfactory interpretation of the universe.

'I believe, many will discover in themselves a longing for mechanical explanation which has all the tenacity of original sin. The discovery of such a desire need not occasion any particular alarm, because it is easy to see how the demand for this sort of explanation has had its origin in the enormous preponderance of the mechanical in our physical experience. But, nevertheless, just as the old monks struggled to subdue the flesh, so must the physicist struggle to subdue this sometimes nearly irresistible, but perfectly unjustifiable desire. One of the large purposes of this exposition will be attained if it carries the conviction that this longing is unjustifiable.' (Bridgman: *The Logic of Modern Physics*, New York, 1928).

'Although we are still far from any positive knowledge, it seems possible that there may be some factor, for which we have so far found no better name than fate (why not "purposive activity"?) operating in nature to neutralize the cast-iron inevitability of the old law of causation. The future may not be as unalterably determined by the past as we used to think. . . . We are compelled to start afresh. Our difficulties have all arisen from our initial assumption that every thing in nature, and waves of light in particular, admitted of mechanical explanation; we tried in brief to treat the universe, as a huge machine. As this has led us into a wrong path, we must look for some other guiding principle. . . . The

picture of the universe presented by the new physics contains more room than did the old mechanical picture for life and consciousness to exist within the picture itself, together with the attributes which we commonly associate with them, such as free-will and the capacity to make the universe in some small degree different by our presence. For aught we know, or for aught that the new science can say to the contrary, the gods which play the part of fate to the atoms of our brains may be our own minds. Through these atoms our minds (our purposive strivings) may perchance affect the motions of our bodies and so the state of the world around us. To-day science can no longer shut the door on this possibility; she has no longer any unanswerable arguments to bring against our innate conviction of free-will.' (*The Mysterious Universe*, New York, 1930).

'His (the physicist's) first step should be to make clear that he no longer holds the position, occupied for so long, of chief advocate for determinism, and that if there is any deterministic law in the physical universe he is unaware of it.' (Presidential Address to the Mathematical Association by Sir Arthur Eddington, 1932).

'Everything points with overwhelming force to a definite event, or series of events, of creation at some time or times, not infinitely remote. The universe could not have originated by chance out of its present ingredients, and neither can it always have been the same as now.' (Sir James Jeans: *Eos*, p. 52).

'Any science which denies that the world is purposive is, in my opinion, stupid and dogmatic. But science has long ago decided that the question of purpose lies outside its scope. Perhaps it is a question for philosophy.' (Stace: *Philosophy*, Oct. 1935).

Modern science has become less dogmatic and the modern scientist is more humble in his professions. The old theories of mechanical causation and blind determinism have seen their bottoms knocked out of them. The very outlook of life has changed. There is a large measure of truth in the conviction of Sir James Jeans that 'the teachings of astronomy and physical science are destined to produce an immense change on our outlook on the universe as a whole, and on our views as to the significance of human life. The question at issue is ultimately one for philosophic discussion, but before the philosophers have a right to speak, science ought first to be asked to tell all she can as to ascertained facts and provisional hypotheses. Then, and then only, may discussion legitimately pass into the realms of philosophy.'

The chief aim of science is the description and not the explanation of facts; the how and not the why of things. If it attempts the latter it is likely to find itself in troubled waters; it must not aim at the impossible and undesirable task of usurping the place of philosophy. Undoubtedly science attempts at 'making the world seem more homely and familiar, instead of strange and alarming'. The genesis of philosophy is a desire to know the truth, just as that of religion is a yearning for perfection, that of art, a craving for beauty, and that of science, to move about freely and comfortably in the world around us. If it transgresses its bounds and wilfully ignores its limitations it not only stupifies and bewilders the inexperienced but also misleads and betrays humanity. Let it be satisfied with its descriptions and analyses of the phenomena and leave it to philosophy to explain the why of things. In its attempt to offer explanations science falls back on reality, but cannot realize

its nature since it is not amenable to its methods. Analysis and selection study things piecemeal and in their static aspect; the flow and flux of life lie outside their scope. Scientific observation is too limited and helpless to understand the nature of such values as beauty, art, and humour; only direct or intuitive knowledge can come to our aid in this realm forbidden to ordinary perception. We conclude :

(1) The study of science is confined to some aspects of reality and not to the totality of things; there are things, for instance, beauty, music, humour, of which science can give no account.

(2) It is a *description* and not *explanation* of facts. It aims at making us

familiar with the phenomena around us so that we may be assured of a *comfortable* life free from fear and risk.

(3) Science studies the 'familiar' world and not the 'real' world. The method of science—observation—is not the only method of knowing the reality. Scientific observation has ultimately to fall back upon 'inference' when it comes to the study of 'fundamentals'.

(4) The ultimate reality is the field of intuition and not observation.

(5) It may not yet be safe to assert that science is fairly on the way to spiritualizing itself, but there is little room for doubt that it has almost completed the process of dematerializing itself.

RELIGIOUS SYNTHESIS IN MEDIEVAL INDIA

BY SUDHANSU BIMAL MOOKERJI, M.A.

In conflicts of ideas and ideals, or for the matter of that in all conflicts, the weaker are swallowed up, absorbed, and assimilated by the stronger. But when both the contestants are equally virile, the upshot more often than not is a compromise between the two.

The history of India—religious and cultural—affords a commentary on the above statement. The Aryan invasion of India took place between c. 6000 and c. 2000 B.C. Numerous foreign invasions—the Persian, the Greek, the Parthian, the Shaka, the Hun—had since swept over the rich and fertile plains of India and she bowed low before all these blasts, in the language of Arnold, 'in patient, deep disdain'. But all these conquerors were within a short time absorbed in the Indian body politic.

The Mohammedan conquest of India began in the twelfth century A.D. India

had already felt the impact of the advancing tide of the arms of Islam. (Cf. the Arabian conquest of Sind early in the eighth century A.D. and the plundering raids of Sultan Mahmud in the eleventh). Following the second battle of Tarain in the last decade of the twelfth century the followers of Islam began to settle in India in gradually larger numbers. A clash between the Hindus, the children of the soil, and the Mohammedans was the inevitable result. Religious toleration was not consciously recognized as a virtue by the conquerors, and in the Turko-Afghan conquest of India temples were desecrated and pulled down and the Hindus persecuted for their religion. It must, however, be admitted that the Turkish rulers never made any attempt to convert the people wholesale to Islam, but were content with exacting the 'Jizya'. Fiercely bigoted Sultans were

not, however, rare. Firoze Tughlak (1351-88), for example, encouraged conversion to Islam by offers of patronage and equality with the conquerors.

The danger which now threatened Hindu culture and society had a twofold reaction on them. On the one hand, it made society more orthodox than ever, while on the other, a more liberal spirit asserted itself in the society.

The writers and commentators of the Smriti works guarded the society against any infiltration of Mohammedan influence by all sorts of injunctions and prohibitions. The best known worker in this field is Raghunandan of Bengal.

Liberal-minded saints and seers, on the other hand, preached the unity of God-head. Differing in details, they were at one regarding the goal of religion—of human life. They preached in unison that caste and creed are no barrier in the path of salvation: faith in and devotion to God alone lead to final deliverance, to the state beyond all speech where sorrow is unknown.

There arose many sects aiming at harmony between the warring creeds—Islam and Hinduism. They tried to bring the followers of the two on a common platform. Differences of dogma and rituals and of external marks of faith were ignored, Kavir and Dadu, Nanak and Chaitanya, to name only a few out of a legion, were all exponents of this school. Their converts were recruited from among the Hindus and the Mohammedans alike, and they accepted the orthodoxy and dogmatism of the Brahmin no more than that of the Mullah. They all made attempts to simplify religion and bring it to the door of the common people. They took their stand on the teachings of Vedanta and preached the brotherhood, nay, the oneness of men.

We shall here make an attempt to give an idea of the teachings of some

of the saints of the Turko-Afghan (so-called Pathan) period of Indian history.

RAMANANDA (1399-1470 A.D.)

The original name of Ramananda was Ramadatta. The process of religious synthesis had begun in Medieval India even before Ramananda. But from his time onward we can trace an uninterrupted flow of this process throughout the middle ages. Quite early in life he was initiated into Vaishnavism as practised by the sect known as Shri and came to be known as Ramananda. His catholicity was too much for his Order and within a short time he grew tired of its regulations. He could not understand why God should refuse to accept the offerings placed before His image if seen or touched by a non-Brahmin. He saw the manifestation of God in all beings and rose above conventions and formalities. This led to his expulsion from the Order. Raghavananda, the spiritual guide of Ramananda, knew the stuff his disciple was made of and permitted him to found a sect of his own. Ramananda did it and introduced the worship of Râma and Sitâ.

Ramananda seized upon the idea of man's equality before God and was not a believer in the caste system. This is why he accepted as his disciples the cobbler Ravidas and the Mohammedan weaver Kavir. The spiritual elevation attained by Ramananda transformed him into a magnetic personality and attracted to him countless men and women. He preached for the common people in their language. An inkling of Ramananda's mind may be had from what he said to Kavir—'Weaving ordinary clothes will not do. You are to take up the Sâdhanâ of weaving fabric with the essentials of Islam and Hinduism.' Ramananda says, 'I have ransacked the Vedas and the Purânas. God is not to be found there. He is

here. . . . I have dedicated myself to my God. Ramananda's God is all-pervading. . . .' Such was the teaching of Ramananda.

KAVIR (1397-1518)

'About 1450, the mystic weaver Kavir assailed at once the worship of idols, the authority of the Koran and the Shastras and the extensive use of a learned language.' (Cunningham's *History of the Sikhs*). Kavir was the son of a Mohammedan weaver of Benares. Tradition however has it that he was the son of a young Brahmin widow abandoned for fear of scandal and brought up by the weaver reputed to be his father. Kavir was a disciple of Ramananda, but not a Sannyâsin.

The two distinct trends of Hindu and Islamic Sadhana united in the life of Kavir. Endowed with a spiritual knowledge of a very high order that he was, Kavir realized the essence of Islam as well as of Hinduism.

The teachings of Kavir are embodied in his Dohâs, one of which says, 'None reads the Vedas in the mother's womb, none was born a Mohammedan. All are descended from the same stock; the same life animates all; the whole earth has been born of the same mother. Is that knowledge which separates man from man?' He says elsewhere, 'We are the progeny of Ali as well as of Rama. The city of Hari lies in the east and that of Ali in the west. Nobody cares to locate the city of heart (Hridaya-puri) where both Rama and Rahim are to be found. . . .' Or again, '. . . the Hindu observes Ekâdashi, the Mohammedan Ramjan. Are not other months and days God's? If God is confined within the precincts of temples and mosques, to whom does this universe belong? Who has seen Rama in images? In what holy place has He been found? My preceptor is

He to whom this universe belongs, He who is Rama and Rahim in one.' How catholic and unconventional!

NANAK (1469-1539)

Born of Chhetri parents in the hey-day of the Turko-Afghan power in India, Guru Nanak was the founder of Sikhism. Spiritual urge led him to renounce the world in adolescence. A monotheist, he was not a believer in the caste system. His liberal outlook born of intense spirituality of a very high order was intolerant of all current conventions. He realized that Truth cannot be the monopoly of any individual, sect, or book, revealed or otherwise received. The Ultimate Truth is latent in every man. It has to be brought out by sincere, selfless and lifelong Sadhana (endeavour). He said, 'Man becomes man when the Ultimate Truth dawns on him, when he can love Truth sincerely.'

Nanak was a widely travelled man. As a mendicant friar he travelled over the whole of India and Ceylon and even went to remote places like Mecca and Persia. After long wanderings extending over many lands and years Nanak came home, married and settled down as a householder. He said: 'God is to be found neither in the Koran nor in the Puranas. The writers of holy books have flaunted their erudition in their works. The Shâstras are full of errors. To attain God one need not renounce the world. He reveals Himself and is immanent in our everyday life. The anchorite in the cave and the prince in the palace are equal in His eyes. God is concerned not with the caste but with the doings of man.' Nanak was against the superstitions and image-worship of the Hindus and the intolerance and cow-killing of the Muslims. He tried and tried hard to do away with all these. An idea of the grandeur of Nanak's conception

may be had from the following saying of his: 'Hundreds of thousands of Mohammads, crores of Brahmâs and Vishnus, thousands of Ramas are waiting on the threshold of the temple of the Supreme God. They all are mortal, but He is eternal. All sing His glory, but shamelessly quarrel among themselves over Him. . . .' The universalism of Baba Nanak's teachings achieved a fair measure of success in effecting a synthesis of Hinduism and Islam. The burden of his message was the unity of Godhead and the brotherhood of men. True to his teachings Guru Nanak counted among his disciples Hindus as well as Mohammedans.

CHAITANYA (1485-1584)

By far the most brilliant of these reformers was the Bengali Brahmin Chaitanya. His father Jagannath Mishra was an immigrant from Sylhet into Navadwip, the great cultural centre of Eastern India. He was thoroughly educated in the various branches of learning and quite early in life became known far and wide for his profound erudition. He married twice and till the age of twenty-four years led the life of a householder. But then a change came over him and he renounced the world and dedicated himself to preaching the excellence of Bhakti (devotion). His doctrine was that salvation is attainable through faith, purity, and devotion. He broke himself free from the current social conventions and was not a believer in the caste system. He freely admitted lower-caste people to his fold and counted even a Mohammedan (Yavana Haridas) among his prominent followers. The ideal of purity of conduct, he set for himself and his followers, was very high. His teachings may be summed up as follows: Compassion, selflessness, and faith in God lead to salvation. The tenor of his message

like that of all other reformers of the age was the brotherhood of man. Chaitanya's teachings did much to relax the rigours of the caste system and that iniquitous monster untouchability received a heavy blow at his hands.

Of the other reformers of this age mention may be made of Ballavacharya, Dadu, Ravidas, Ekanath, Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti, Nizamuddin Aulia, Nur Kutub Alam, Shah Jalal, and Namdev. They all attempted to bring about a *rapprochement* between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. The essence of the teachings of them all as well as of those we have spoken of is the same. They all preached that God is one and without a second. He alone is to be worshipped. He is attainable only through faith and devotion. Rituals are superfluous for the realization of the Final Truth. Hindus and Mohammedans have the same God. Caste system is no part of religion and God is the common Father of all.

It is early to speak disparagingly of the endeavours of these great saints and seers. Religion to-day is a declining interest everywhere and it is fashionable nowadays to say that the advent of so many religious reformers in a nation is only a symptom of its intellectual bankruptcy. But when everything has been said the fact remains that men like these have saved the soul of India, oppressed as it was through long centuries of political serfdom.

The teachings of Ramananda, Kavir, Nanak, Chaitanya, and others had the effect of drawing the Hindus and the Muslims closer when the incursion of fresh hordes of invaders from the fertile shores of the Oxus and the Jaxartes upset everything and the gulf between the two communities remained unbridged.

What India needs most to-day is a

band of seers fired with the idealism of the mighty minds mentioned above. That and that alone can bring peace and political emancipation to our un-

happy motherland torn asunder by communal hatred and animosity.

Is the fire of the Sadhana of Kavir, Nanak, and their tribe extinguished?

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF HINDU PHILOSOPHY

BY V. R. TALASIKAR, M.A., LL.B.

Inquisitive students of philosophy might be aware of the cardinal principles of Shankara's philosophy, which are by far the most influential in Indian thought. To an Indian mind, a mere academic interest or curiosity in knowing the real nature of the world we live in, has little attraction. It has been taught to think from ages past that a man born in this world, must direct his activities towards the attainment of the fourfold path to liberation called in Hindu sociology, Purushârthas. The first and foremost object is 'social liberation' in accordance with religion, which is called Dharma. The second object is 'economic liberation' or Artha, i.e., wealth. Third comes 'sexual liberation' called Kâma. And the last and the most important is 'spiritual liberation' called Moksha or final emancipation. It is this *summum bonum* of life to which the eyes of every Hindu should be directed, and it is this end with reference to which every individual or social activity or pattern of social behaviour is primarily determined or judged.

Knowledge, according to Hindu metaphysics, becomes an object of ceaseless endeavour in so far as it leads to Moksha or final emancipation. Hence all the systems of Indian philosophy are unanimous in, at least, one proposition that the highest knowledge leads to final emancipation. Theoretically at least in Indian philosophy, knowledge is a means to an end and hence subservient

to it, although in practice it is knowledge pursued for its own sake; for a true knowledge of the nature of the Ultimate Reality is itself emancipation from the bonds of this illusory world. In modern Western epistemology, knowledge as an end in itself has become a mere slogan; science pretends to be purposeless while in reality it has become the most purposive of all. Very few scientists are concerned with considerations about the Ultimate Reality as such; it is the application of their knowledge from science which seems to be of more value to them. And it is for this reason that advance in modern science brings along with it economic prosperity and an ostensible amelioration of primitive hardships and human sufferings.

Further advance in scientific knowledge is dependent upon economic abundance, and, therefore, it is in the fitness of things that scientific knowledge should leave its high and independent pedestal to subserve the temporary economic interest of certain groups. Thus in Western societies, knowledge has become a handmaid of economics, while in Indian philosophy there is nothing which transcends knowledge. If we bear this in mind, we can at once realize the reason of difference between the social and moral values in the Indian and Western societies. Economics backed by material science is furnishing the criteria for moral values in

Western societies; while in the Hindu society the highest knowledge which can never be divorced from religion, is responsible for laying down *a priori* rules of social behaviour and the consequent moral values.

It is a patent fact that mammon-worship has taken complete possession of men's minds, and that there is a great social premium put on wealth in Western industrial societies. Amenities due to the developments in material science are fast increasing and a rising standard of living has come to be an indication of human progress. An increase in the standard of living brings in its trail, among other factors which disintegrate the institution of the family, an enormous increase in human wants. Economics is concerned with the satisfaction of these wants or human desires; and if the nature of human desires is such as to make their complete satisfaction a sheer impossibility, then obviously economics is reduced to the sad plight of a blind man at the crossroads. It would be trying to appease human desires which if not checked by some moral value would exhibit a strong tendency to grow more and more, and which cannot be ultimately satisfied. Complete gratification is like a mirage after which Western economics is madly running like a ship bereft of its moorings.

The reason of this economic chaos and the consequent social unhappiness is the total absence of moral values which operate more strongly on men's minds than the secular laws of the State. Economics is not a normative science, and the nature of science is such that it is unable to provide us with the ends of life. Scientific knowledge is like a two-edged sword, it can be used both ways. It all depends upon the user whether to turn it to good or bad account. Those who are spell-bound by

the dazzling achievements of mechanistic science refuse to realize that it is this subjective element in human life which is infinitely of more importance than a supposed objective or inductive knowledge. Nature is always a-moral. It knows neither morality nor immorality which are purely *a priori* conceptions. However intimate be our knowledge of the working of natural forces and nature's laws, it is useless to expect from her the normative type of rules or ought-to-be type of rules of social and individual behaviour. Economics may tell us many things about production and distribution, but it is not its function to lay down that one must not be too much after wealth.

In the absence of moral values, scientific knowledge, in the zealous pursuit of which mankind spent nearly two centuries and which thinks it a humiliation to admit the existence of a soul or a spirit, instead of subserving man is conquering him, and man is falling a prey to it. It is stated above that science cannot furnish us with any eyes of guidance and that scientific knowledge, unless utilized by better-minded persons or societies is by itself powerless to offer any solace to mankind. Strictly speaking, knowledge must transcend man and environment out of which it arose and must subserve some final goal or end. In Western social groups it is again applied to a supposed betterment of the individual or society, thus completing a vicious circle. In Hindu philosophy there is nothing which can be construed as degrading the highest knowledge from its lofty pedestal for harnessing it to the continuous utilitarian processes of the world.

In the foregoing discussion, I have attempted to point out the social implications or reflections of both types of philosophies. In this connection it

must be pointed out that there is a difference between the highest knowledge of Indian philosophy and knowledge about the nature of the world according to modern science, which I have sought to contrast as regards their respective reactions on societies in which they sprang. The nature of this difference and the reasons will be made clear at a later stage. Here it will suffice our purpose if we find out the cause of the difference between the ethical norms or moral values existing in the industrial or aggressive societies of the West and the crystalline and peaceful society under the sway of the Indian philosophy. We have also to remember here that we have to find reasons for this difference with respect to the particular types of metaphysics the respective societies have developed in the course of history.

Many persons and even thinkers of some note are disposed to disbelieve in the relation of philosophy to social behaviour and moral values. They contend that the differences between epistemological or teleological doctrines should have no effect upon individual or social behaviour. Whatever theories we may hold about the existence of God or about the nature of the Ultimate Reality or about the validity of a particular means of knowledge, so long as there exists a standardized pattern of social behaviour, there is no reason why the conflicting metaphysical doctrines should make a difference in social behaviour. We have to admit that such a contingency does arise in the presence of the various militant schools in Indian philosophy. Even though in one and the same society there may be divergent theories about ulterior problems, there can exist standardized patterns of social behaviour called *Āchāras*, according to the cultural level of different layers in the social fabric. To ensure

the stability of the laws of social behaviour there must be moral values of a stable nature to act as a sanction to the written or unwritten code of social behaviour. These moral values are strictly *a priori* and tend to evolve from the particular type of philosophy or outlook on life (*Weltanschauung*) that is generally common in that group. The knowledge with the help of which we look at the Ultimate Reality determines to a much greater extent our attitude towards life. As said by Aldous Huxley, 'It is impossible to live without a metaphysics.'

We have up till now very briefly dealt with the fourfold ideal achievement of human life,—the position of knowledge as a means or as an end, the dependence of scientific knowledge on economic abundance or capitalist groups and hence the domination of economic values in the dynamic societies of the West, the absence of any influence of moral values upon the ever-increasing appetites and desires of the industrial man, and the disharmony between the transcendental knowledge and socio-moral values. We shall now try to trace the origin of the divergence between knowledge which is a-moral and the moral condition or well-being of society.

As stated above, in Hindu philosophy a mere academic knowledge, as is the fashion of the scientists of the West, of cosmic processes is of little avail, unless it is of some use to man's final emancipation. This kind of the highest knowledge can only be attained by the individual as a result of rigorous austerities. Emancipation is not a thing to be obtained by groups of individuals. A man under the sway of Hindu ideology has, at least for the sake of his own soul, not only to acquire knowledge of the world he lives in, but also a superior kind of knowledge which

transcends this transient world and gives him permanent peace. Here the bounds of all objective knowledge must melt away, for it is not the ephemeral and hence unreal knowledge of the world, but the eternal knowledge of his imperishable soul that will show him the light. According to the Upanishadic philosophy this knowledge consists in the realization of the essential unity of the individual and the Cosmic Soul or Brahman. In order to realize for oneself that the individual soul is only a part and parcel of the Cosmic Soul which is the final cause of the world, a mere knowledge of natural or scientific laws is of little use. Control of the senses, purification of the mind and such other things which rescue the mind from the mazes of the world, indifference to happiness or misery, weighing delight and sorrow with equal scale, taking delight in his own soul—in a word perfect non-attachment to the objects of the world—are the requisites of the ideal man according to Hindu philosophy. This is the goal of man, and this is the state of the highest knowledge under Hindu philosophy which is mainly responsible for establishing the moral values and patterns of social behaviour, a peculiar type of culture in the stable and lasting Vedic civilization.

If we look to the materialistic societies of the West we get an entirely different picture. People agree in holding that knowledge from natural science can be the only knowledge worth the name, that philosophy and all that talk about soul is nothing but useless twaddle as it cannot be subjected to observation and experiment, that to cherish materialistic and mechanistic dogmas and propagate them for the enlightenment of the ignorant masses is an indication of social progress, that if there be any ethical system it must be so elastic as to suit the con-

venience of every individual because he has natural rights. It goes without saying that this ethical system should impose no moral restraint and should be Godless. Because science must have the final word, everything is reduced to matter; and this so-called objective knowledge is inferior to none. It is no wonder, therefore, that although the scientifically minded man of the modern era might be knowing a few more important details of knowledge than his brother in other types of societies, so far as the qualities and achievements of the mind are concerned there is hardly any progress at all. A mind free from desires is a thing of rarity in the industrial world which is dangerously tending towards the anti-social. Control of passions, a sort of introverted tendency, non-attachment to all worldly objects of sense, have not been the basis of moral values in Western societies. Their philosophy also lacks these qualities as it seems to be mere arm-chair speculation of some neurotic and abnormal brains and not of supermen, men who have raised themselves by their austerities to the level of seers. The highest knowledge according to Western ideology has no further end to serve and hence it is a knowledge of an ephemeral world without a soul. One who takes delight in knowing the nature of his own soul has nothing left for him in the outside world, and such an orderly system of achievements such as 'Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha' can alone produce peaceful societies and civilizations.

The effect of this bifurcation between the so-called objective knowledge and the knowledge of the subject is obvious and is hastening the world into cataclysmic changes and misery. Man is now possessed by the knowledge from

science which has, because of the moral weakness of man, proved to be an engine of tyranny. We are manufacturing horrible engines of death to effect large-scale slaughters on the strength of the knowledge science gave us. We have progressed so far as to stick to our political opinions rather than be actuated by a sense of justice against blackmailing, racketeering, political intrigues, and all that which party politics requires. If one dares to pronounce that the decline of the West has begun or that we are on the verge of moral bankruptcy, he is at once branded as an alarmist.

Knowledge without moral restraint and moral values is mainly responsible

for creating the 'power civilizations' of the West. The mad scramble for profit, the race of armaments, ballads of nationalism which falsify history, the egoism of political dogmas, are all the indications of a lust for power. It is natural under these circumstances that the moral values should be envisaged from the standpoint of power civilization and not of a peaceful civilization like that of the Hindus. The societies of the West think that it is better to live as a tiger for one day than be a real peaceful man and live eternally. The difference in moral values is due to the difference in the respective philosophies, and hence the divergent pictures.

THE POWER OF WORDS

Miss M.,

CHICAGO,
6 May 1900.

Here I am, looking out on the Lake and down on the tops of trees. For a few days I am staying here. I am alone, and have been sitting in a great window, reading *Paolo and Francesca* for an hour. How wonderful it is! I feel the mood that Swami speaks from when he tells us that we, the Universe, even God Himself, are all 'but the meaning of words'. Some day we shall reach Freedom and then *I know*, I trust, at last *I shall find* a great cry waiting for my voice, and every word, or every sentence, shall be a human life. No more threading of pictures on a string of story, but for every *glimpse* now, a *drama* then, moving swift and sure, with precision to its goal, and then even beyond that a word—some divine, most inward, ancient, and yet prophetic—speaking of an impulse that shall compel and include all dramas within itself.

Still an idolater you see! Seeking for one word that may express to one's sense the Infinite Inexpressible!

I look up and see the restless rippling of this great blue water, as if it were but a few steps off below my window, broken by the bare branches of the tree-tops, just touched here and there with the shimmering spear-like tips of buds, and the white gulls fly north and south across the blue, as if between branch and branch of these gnarled trees.

And I was going to ask you, 'What is it *you* will want, on that great day of our Freedom?' Not a word, not a cry,—I know that. The right to love *all*, perhaps, or to suffer and heal all, or the gift of unerring vision. These I could imagine you asking, if I could indeed imagine your remembering to ask anything for yourself. It is selfish, perhaps, to dream such a dream. But there is something so mysterious in the power of words, to sway the soul, even as the water yonder and the trees are swayed.

Love.

—M. (SISTER NIVEDITA)

SWAMI SUBODHANANDA

BY SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

The early name of Swami Subodhananda was Subodh Chandra Ghosh. He was born in Calcutta in the year 1867 and belonged to the family of Shankar Ghosh, the founder of the famous Kâli temple at Kali Tala (Thanthania), Calcutta. His father was a very pious man and fond of religious books; his mother also was of a very religious disposition. The influence of his parents contributed not a little to the growth of his religious life. His mother would tell him stories from the *Râmâyana*, the *Mahâbhârata*, and other scriptures, and implant in him, while still very young, love for truth, and devotion to God. From his very boyhood he showed a remarkable spirit of renunciation and had a vague feeling that he was not meant for a householder's life. When pressed to marry, he emphatically said that he would take to the life of a wandering monk, and so marriage would only be an obstacle in his path. As it was settled that on his passing the class examination he was to be married, Subodh fervently prayed to God that the result of his examination might be bad. God heard the prayer of the little boy, and Subodh, to his great relief, did not get promotion. Subodh was at first a student of the Hare School and was then admitted into the school founded by Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar.

At this time he got from his father a copy of the Bengali book, *The Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna*. He was so much impressed with its contents that he was very eager to see Sri Ramakrishna. His father told him to wait

till some holiday when he could conveniently take him to Dakshineswar. But Subodh was impatient of any delay. So one day he stole away from the house and along with a friend started on foot for Dakshineswar. There he was received very affectionately by Sri Ramakrishna, who caught hold of his hand and made him sit on his bed. Subodh felt reluctant to sit on the bed of a holy person, but Sri Ramakrishna disarmed all his fears by treating him as if he were his close relation. In the course of conversation Sri Ramakrishna told Subodh that he knew his parents and had visited their house occasionally and that he had also known that Subodh would be coming to him. Sri Ramakrishna grasped the hand of Subodh and remaining in meditation for a few minutes said, 'You will realize the goal, Mother says so.' He also told Subodh that the Mother sent to him those who would receive Her grace, and he requested the boy to visit him on Tuesdays and Saturdays. The request was difficult of accomplishment for Subodh, as great objection would come from his parents if they knew of his intention.

The next Saturday, however, Subodh fled away from the school with his friend and went to Dakshineswar. During this visit Sri Ramakrishna in an ecstatic mood stroked his body from the navel to the throat and wrote something on his tongue, repeating, 'Awake, Mother, awake!' Then he asked Subodh to meditate. As soon as he began meditation his whole body trembled and he felt something rushing along the spinal column to his brain.

He was plunged into a joy ineffable and saw a strange light in which the forms of innumerable gods and goddesses appeared and then got merged in the Infinite. The meditation gradually deepened and he lost all outward consciousness. When he came down to the normal plane, he found Sri Ramakrishna stroking his body in the reverse order.

Sri Ramakrishna was astonished to see the deep meditation of Subodh, and learned from him that it was the result of his practice at home; for Subodh used to think of gods and goddesses, hearing of them from his mother.

After that meeting with Sri Ramakrishna Subodh would see a strange light between his eyebrows. His mother coming to know of this told him not to divulge this fact to anybody else. But seized as he was with a great spiritual hankering, Subodh promptly replied: 'What harm will it do to me, mother? I do not want this light but That from which it comes.'

From his very boyhood Subodh was very frank, open-minded, and straightforward in his talk. These characteristics could be seen in him throughout his whole life. What he felt he would say clearly without mincing matters. One day Sri Ramakrishna asked Subodh, 'What do you think of me?' The boy unhesitatingly replied, 'Many persons say many things about you. I won't believe in them unless I myself find clear proofs.' As he began to come closer and closer in touch with Sri Ramakrishna the conviction gradually dawned on him that the Master was a great Saviour. So, when one day Sri Ramakrishna asked Subodh to practise meditation, he replied, 'I won't be able to do that. If I am to do it, why did I come to you? I had better go to some other Guru.' Sri Ramakrishna understood the depth of the feeling of the boy and simply smiled. But this

did not mean that Subodh did not like to meditate—his whole life was one of great austerity and steadfast devotion—it only indicated his great confidence in the spiritual powers of the Master.

Subodh's straightforward way of talking led to a very interesting incident. One day the Master asked Subodh to go now and then to Mahendra Nath Gupta—afterwards known as M.—who was a great devotee and lived near Subodh's home in Calcutta. At this the boy said, 'He has not been able to cut asunder his family tie, what shall I learn of God from him?' The Master enjoyed these words indicative of Subodh's great spirit of renunciation and said, 'He will not talk anything of his own. He will talk only of what he learns from here.' So one day Subodh went to M. and frankly narrated the conversation he had had with the Master. M. appreciated the frankness of the boy and said, 'I am an insignificant person. But I live by the side of an ocean, and I keep with me a few pitchers of sea water. When a visitor comes, I entertain him with that. What else can I speak?' The sweet and candid nature of Subodh soon made him a great favourite with M. After this Subodh was a frequent visitor at the house of M., where he would often spend long hours listening to his talks on Sri Ramakrishna.

Gradually the attraction of young Subodh for Sri Ramakrishna grew stronger and stronger, and after the passing away of the Master in 1886, he left his parental homestead and joined the monastic order organized by Swami Vivekananda at Baranagore. His monastic name was Swami Subodhananda. But because he was very young in age, Swami Vivekananda would lovingly call him 'Khokâ', meaning child, by which name he was also called by his brother

disciples. He was afterwards known as 'Khoka Maharaj' (Child Swami).

Towards the end of 1889, along with Swami Brahmananda Swami Subodhananda went to Benares and practised Tapasyâ for a few months. In 1890 they both went on a pilgrimage to Omkar, Girnar, Mount Abu, Bombay, and Dwarka and after that went to Brindavan, where they stayed for some time. He also underwent spiritual practices in different places in the Himalayan region, later went to the holy shrines of Kedarnath and Badrinarayan twice, and also visited the various holy places in South India going as far as Cape Comorin. He also went afterwards on a pilgrimage to Assam.

While practising Tapasya at Brindavan, he once undertook to make a circuit of the sacred area round about the town,—a thing considered holy by the orthodox devotees. For that Subodh had to cover a distance of 168 miles. He was all alone, with no belongings except the cloth he had on. One day while he was thus walking, absorbed in his own thoughts, a youthful woman suddenly clasped him in her arms from behind. Subodh was startled at this unexpected situation and began to pray loudly to the Lord. At this the woman let go her hold and fainted: perhaps, the pricking of conscience was too much even for this unfortunate woman when she saw how pure and innocent the young monk was. Afterwards he would say that much useful experience could be gained by wandering alone, but it also involved grave risks.

When Swami Vivekananda, after his return from the West, appealed to his brother disciples to work for the spread of the Master's message and the good of humanity instead of living in seclusion, Subodhananda was one of those

who placed themselves under his lead. After that he worked in various capacities for the cause of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission. When the Belur Math was started in 1899, he was put in charge of the management of the monastery, in which capacity he worked for some time. During the great epidemic of plague in Calcutta in 1899, when the Ramakrishna Mission plague service was instituted, Swami Subodhananda was one of those who worked hard for the relief of the helpless and panic-stricken people.

During the great famine in the Chilka islands in Orissa in 1908, he threw himself heart and soul into the relief work. He had a very tender heart. The sight of distress and suffering always found an echo in him. He would often be found near sickbeds nursing the sick at considerable risk to his own health. On one occasion he nursed a young student suffering from smallpox of a very malignant type with such loving care and attention that it amazed all who witnessed it. Sometimes he would beg money from others in order to help poor patients with diet and medicine. Many poor families did he help with money given by devotees for his personal needs. One family near the Belur Math was saved from actual starvation by the kindness of the Swami. If he knew that a devotee was ill, he was sure to go to see him. The devotee would be surprised and overwhelmed with emotion at this unexpected stroke of kindness on the part of the Swami. A young member of the Alambazar Math had to go back temporarily to his parents because of illness. Swami Subodhananda would now and then call on him and inquire about his health. That young member is now old and one of the most senior monks of the Order, but he still remembers with respectful gratitude the kindness

he received in his youth from Swami Subodhananda.

Later, although he could not personally work so much, wherever he would be he would inspire people to throw themselves into the work started by Swami Vivekananda. During his last few years he made extensive tours in Bengal and Bihar and was very instrumental in spreading the message of the Master. He would even go to the outlying parts of Bengal, scorning all physical discomfort and inconvenience. But for this sacrifice on his part many in villages would not have come into intimate touch with the living fountain of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda.

In this religious giving he spent himself without any reserve. During his tours he had to undergo great inconvenience and to work very hard. From morning till late at night with little time left for personal rest, he had to meet people and talk of religious things—about the message of the Master and Swami Vivekananda. But never was his face ruffled and nobody could guess that here was one who was passing through great hardship. The joy of giving was always on his face. To make disciples is to take over their spiritual responsibility. He knew that. But he could not refuse help to anybody who sought it from him. The number of persons who got spiritual initiation from him was very large. He even initiated some children. He would say, 'They will feel the efficacy when they grow up.' But in this there was not the least trace of pride or self-consciousness in him. If people would approach him for initiation, he would very often say, 'What do I know? I am a Khoka.' He would refer them to the more senior Swamis of the Order. Only when they could not afford to go to them, did he give the spiritual help demanded of him.

In making disciples he made absolutely no distinction between the high and the low. He initiated many untouchables also. What was more interesting was that his affection for them was not a whit less than that for those disciples having better status in society or more fortunately placed in life.

Swami Subodhananda was one of the first group of Trustees of the Belur Math appointed by Swami Vivekananda in 1901, and was afterwards elected Treasurer of the Ramakrishna Mission. His love for Swami Vivekananda was next to that for the Master. Swami Vivekananda also had great affection for him. Sometimes when Swami Vivekananda would become serious and none of his Gurubhais dared approach him, it was left to Khoka to go and break his seriousness.

Swami Subodhananda was childlike in his simplicity and singularly unassuming in his behaviour. It was a fitting compliment to this aspect of his character that he was popularly known as Khoka Maharaj. It is said in the Bible, 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.' But rare are the persons who can combine in their life the unsophisticated simplicity of a child with the high wisdom of a sage. One could see this wonderful combination in Swami Subodhananda. Swami Vivekananda and other brother disciples greatly loved this childlike aspect of the personality of Swami Subodhananda. But they would not, therefore, fail to make fun now and then at his cost, taking advantage of his innocence and unsophisticated mind.

Once, while the monastery was at Alambazar, Swami Vivekananda wanted to encourage the art of public speaking among his Gurubhais. It was arranged

that every week on a fixed day one of the brothers should speak. When the turn of Swami Subodhananda came, he tried his best to avoid the meeting. But Swami Vivekananda was adamant, and others were waiting with eagerness to witness the discomfiture of Subodh while lecturing. When Swami Subodhananda rose to speak, lo! the earth trembled, buildings shook and trees fell—it was the famous earthquake of 1897. The meeting came to an abrupt end. The young Swami escaped the ordeal of lecturing but not of the fun at his cost. ‘Khoka’s was a “World-shaking” speech,’ Swami Vivekananda said, and others joined in the joke.

Swami Vivekananda was once greatly pleased with Khoka for some personal services rendered by him and said that whatever boon he would ask of him would be granted. Swami Subodhananda gravely pondered for a while and said, ‘Grant me this—that I may never miss my morning cup of tea.’ This threw the great Swami into a roar of laughter, and he said, ‘Yes, it is granted.’ Swami Subodhananda, it may be mentioned, had his morning cup of tea till the last day of his life. It is the only luxury for which he had any attraction. It was like a child’s love for chocolates and lozenges. It is interesting to record in this connection that when the Master was suffering from his sore throat and everybody was worried and anxious, young Subodh in all his innocence recommended tea to the Master as a sure remedy. The Master would also have taken it but medical advice was to the contrary.

There was nothing of that awe-inspiring and austere reserve in Khoka Maharaj, which sometimes characterizes a saint. He was easy of access, and everybody would feel very free with him. Many on coming in contact with him would feel his love so much that

they would altogether forget the wide gulf of difference that marked their spiritual life and his. Yet he made no conscious attempt to hide the spiritual height to which he belonged. This great unostentatiousness was part and parcel of his very being. It was remarkably strange that he could mix so freely with one and all—with people of all ages and denominations—and make them his own. Many were the persons who, though not religiously minded, were drawn to him simply by his love and were afterwards spiritually benefited.

The young Brahmachâris and monks of the Order found in Khoka Maharaj a great sympathizer. He took trouble to find out their difficulties and helped them with advice and guidance. He would be their mouthpiece before the elders, mediate for them and shield them when they inadvertently did something wrong. One day a Brahmachari committed a great mistake, and was asked to live outside the monastery and to get his food by begging. The Brahmachari failed to get anything by begging except a quantity of fried gram and returned to the gate of the monastery in the evening. But he did not dare to enter the compound. Khoka Maharaj came to know of his plight, interceded on his behalf, and the young member was excused. The novices at the monastery had different kinds of work allotted to them. Often they did not know how to do it, as they had not before acquired the necessary knowledge and experience for such work. Khoka Maharaj on such occasions would come forward to help and guide them.

He was self-reliant and would not accept personal services from others, even if they were devotees or disciples. He always emphasized that one should help oneself as far as possible and himself rigidly adhered to this principle in

his everyday life. Even during times of illness he was reluctant to accept services from others and avoided it until it became absolutely impossible for him to manage without.

His wants were few, and he was satisfied with anything that came unsought for. His personal belongings were almost nil. He would not accept anything except what was absolutely necessary for him. In food as in other things he made no choice and ate whatever came with equal relish. This great spirit of renunciation, always evidenced in his conduct, was the result of complete dependence on God. In personal conduct as well as in conversation he put much emphasis on self-surrender to God. He very often narrated to those who came to him for guidance the following story of Shridhar Swami, the great Vaishnava saint and a commentator on the Gita.

Spurred by a spirit of renunciation, Shridhar Swami was thinking of giving up the world when his wife died giving birth to a child. Shridhar Swami felt worried about the baby and was seriously thinking how to provide for the child before retiring from the world. But he soon found that fresh problems appeared every day and that there was no end to them. One day as he was sitting deeply absorbed with these thoughts, the egg of a lizard dropped from the roof in front of him. He felt curious and watched it keenly. The egg broke as a result of the fall, and a young lizard came out. Just then a small fly came and stood near the young lizard which caught and swallowed it in a moment. At this the thought flashed on the mind of Shridhar Swami that there is a definite Divine plan behind creation and that every creature is provided for beforehand by God. At once all his anxiety for his own child

vanished, and he immediately renounced the world.

Khoka Maharaj was alike under all circumstances. External objects could never disturb the peace of his mind. He was completely indifferent to whether people showed him respect or neglected him. One could visibly see that he was far above these things. His self-effacement was complete.

His spiritual life was marked by as great a directness as his external life was remarkable for its simplicity. He had no philosophical problems of his own to solve. The Ultimate Reality was a fact for him. When he would talk of God, one felt here was a man to whom God was a greater reality than earthly relatives. He once said, 'God can be realized much more tangibly than a man feels the presence of the companion with whom he is walking.' The form of his personal worship was singularly free from ritualistic observances. While entering the shrine he was not obsessed by any awe and wonder, but would proceed as if he was going to a very near relation; and while performing worship he would not care to recite memorized texts. His relationship with God was just as free and natural as human relationship. He realized the goodness of God, and so he was always optimistic in his views. For this reason his words would always bring cheer and strength to weary or despondent souls. Intellectual snobs or philosophical pedants were bewildered to see the conviction with which he talked on problems which they had not been able to solve, all their pride and self-conceit notwithstanding.

Towards the end he suffered from various physical ailments, but his spiritual conviction was never shaken. While he was on his death-bed he said, 'When I think of Him, I become forgetful of all physical sufferings.' During

this time the Upanishads used to be read out to him. While listening he would warm up and of his own accord talk of various deep spiritual truths. On one such occasion he said, 'The world with all its enjoyments seems like a heap of ashes. The mind feels no attraction at all for all these things.'

While death was slowly approaching he was unperturbed, absolutely free from any anxiety. Rather he was ready and anxious to meet the Beloved. The night before he passed away he said, 'My last prayer is that the blessings of the Lord be always on the Order.' The great soul passed away in December 1932.

THE IDEA OF WORLD CITIZENSHIP

BY SHIVA KUMAR SHASTRI, M.A., M.Sc. (LONDON), BAR-AT-LAW

A world State cannot exist without world citizenship. The former is a structure, the latter its foundation, and if the foundation is weak the structure is bound to collapse. All attempts made so far to solve national rivalries have failed, because resort has been had only to the drafting of constitutions without trying to infuse blood in the raw structure by propagating the idea of world citizenship.

Such an idea is nearest to nature. Therefore, a man has only to understand himself in order to grasp the implications of world citizenship. The greatest bond of union between man and man is the faculty of reason. That alone is permanent and will exist so long as mankind exists. Everything else is evanescent, temporary, and circumstantial, and all wars based on religion, economics, class, or race, depend upon a fundamental misunderstanding of the facts of life which reason can immediately kill if it is resorted to. The only intelligible war for mankind is between reason and understanding on the one side and unreason, emotion, hatred, or passion on the other; and in this struggle reason will eventually triumph, for in no other way can mankind reach the highest stature of its potentiality.

No armed revolution in any State can ever create the idea of world citizenship, for it arouses as many problems as it solves. It is engineered usually by a class to serve its own emotional, or economic and material interests. The idea of world citizenship comes to us as individuals not as members of a class, community, or nation. Therefore, the only revolution we can speak of in such a case is a revolution of the mind when reason and knowledge would have transplanted ignorance and passion.

It is the sacred duty of every individual who realizes the power and majesty of reason to develop his faculties to the maximum rationality and then to give his fellow men and women the message of reason. Thus will begin the nucleus of world citizenship.

The earliest co-operation in history is co-operation for self-existence. Co-operation against the forces of nature, co-operation against environment, co-operation against wild beasts and against men who live like wild beasts, co-operation, in other words, against a war of each against all as described by Hobbes.

Once the forces had been conquered, began man's battle with man. The extent of its involvement was deter-

mined by the knowledge of geography and of the rapidity of the means of communication. Family or tribal conflicts, wars of city States, national wars and wars for colonies, or wars for the domination of the whole world, indicate the enlargement of the area of conflict.

All these wars were exercises in co-operation, but co-operation of man with man to destroy his own kind must have been a strange phenomenon and could never have been in conformity with the exercise of reason. For this unnatural outcome it was necessary to drug men against the use of reason, knowledge, and understanding; and the effort, as history tells us, was eminently successful.

For what was required was merely the invention of collective prejudice or hatred miscalled at various times religion, race, or nation.

Morally, men have not advanced since the two thousand years of recorded history in Europe. A perusal of the more ancient civilizations of India and China indicates that we have actually deteriorated in that sense. For thousands of years before Europe could think clearly Hindu philosophers had laid down rules for the guidance of human conduct and given a philosophy of life that stands unequalled in sheer moral excellence and completeness. In it we also find the idea of world citizenship which the present war-infested world will do well to learn and remember.

The only co-operation worthy of mankind at the present time is co-operation against hatred, prejudice, pride, pugnacity, ignorance, cruelty, and lust—and this on a world background. Indeed, if a passionate attitude is at all allowable, it is in the sense of prejudice against prejudice, hatred against hatred, etc.

REASON v. FAITH

This is the eternal problem. Faith, it is argued, is necessary for the mental peace of mankind, reason being ineffective beyond a certain point. Ultimately this is true but only ultimately. Faith is necessary to make one believe in the everlasting beneficence of the Almighty, in the immortality of the soul, in the inevitability of human progress, in the terrible inescapability of divine justice. Reason cannot unravel these problems. It can neither prove nor disprove. But it by no means follows that faith succeeds where reason fails. Reason may falter but faith does not give certainty. Reason may be groping in the dark but faith does not prove. Reason seeks, unsuccessfully though it be, to lift the veil over the Unknown. Faith gives us a working hypothesis as to its nature which we generally accept because it accords with our vanity, or with our desire to seek happiness rather than pain, good rather than evil, immortality rather than unfathomable death.

But these are all problems for an individual having leisure enough to ponder over the Unknown. The intensity of their perception or the nature of their solution is in proportion to the reflective power of man and no two persons are alike in their illuminative potential. It is, therefore, futile and purposeless, and indeed infinitely harmful, to project faith in social relations in terms of group action. Faith arises out of a mystical experience and is thus entirely personal. Group action is a repudiation of faith or at best a travesty of it. To compel men to believe in a certain religion is an outrage upon the infinity of God, for belief in Him arises out of a mystical experience and not out of a readiness to repeat ready-made and unintelligible formulas.

In all the problems of group life and collective action, reason alone is the absolute master. In the intercourse of man with man, that is to say, reason is the only reliable vehicle. Truth will not reveal itself in any other way. This is the first and last law of social life.

Faith and reason are thus not alternative but complementary. Reason deals with the real world, that is, with all the problems connected with human life in society. Faith gives us a hypothesis as to the Unknown until a better one is found. The moment it lends itself to rational discussion it ceases to be unknown. Inferentially the categories comprehended by faith are undiscussable.

In actual practice both reason and faith are subject to gross abuse. While faith is pushed into realms which it is for reason alone to comprehend, the latter is misused to serve the ends of faith thus perverted. Faith in this new and unnatural garb is no longer its old self. It is called passion or prejudice or ignorant fanaticism *ejusdem generis*. Reason, on the other hand, takes the shape of wild and vapid controversy, of stupid charges and counter-charges, of ignorant assertions and counter-assertions. In this medley of desperate chaos the one essential thing is forgotten: That the function of reason is to seek and discover the truth while the competence of faith lies in its being able to satisfy the soul.

The misuse of reason and faith, as pointed out, is responsible for the major ills of the world and the greatest obstacle to the idea of world citizenship. Collective prejudice in the form of a nation, class, or religious denomination wedded to particular dogmas is one result. Racial rivalries and conflicts, so rampant at the present time, have the same origin. War is the

crowning achievement of the misuse of faith and reason.

Mankind has now reached a stage when it is able to comprehend itself, when industry and technology demand a world-wide view, when it is no longer permissible to sabotage the new age of plenty and freedom from economic want by an adherence to the untenable myths of the past.

Blind dogmatism, class, nation, or race are all myths. Mankind has to suffer that they may live. The solution hitherto adopted to destroy a myth is to put against it another myth. This amounts to exchanging one evil for another. A myth is always exclusive and parochial unless it be faith in the sense defined above. Reason is universal and inclusive. Wars cannot flourish unless they have myths to feed on.

Marxism is about the best engine invented by reason to deal with the present age of technology and mechanization. But it is rapidly facing the danger of becoming a new myth. This is so specially among the extremists who forget that socialism, or communism, is a developing system based upon the ever-present competence of reason to analyse new facts and not a fixed and unchangeable dogma like the revealed religions of the past.

It is a fundamental tragedy of human life that irrationality always lurks behind like an assassin to sabotage the achievement of sane and clear thinking. Thus while Marxism is a triumph in matters of social relations and in the analysis of the technical and economic facts of group life, its practical application shares all the drawbacks of religious fanaticism.

It follows, therefore, that the adoption of a rational mode of interpreting social phenomena is not in itself sufficient to ensure the continuation of

reason as the final arbiter in all the problems pertaining to social life and group action. A system is fixed while social life moves and changes. A system is based upon a particular set of categories which shift with every shift in the technique of social and material existence.

To avoid periodic upheavals and revolutions such as Marx indicated, when he referred to an engine of advancement turning into its fetter, it is necessary to accept nothing as permanent and everlasting except the supreme power of reason. In the idea of world citizenship is to be found the final solution of this problem.

WHAT IS WORLD CITIZENSHIP

World citizenship as a constitutional and an administrative reality presumes the existence of a world State. But before that objective is attained is it possible for an individual to style himself as a world citizen?

The answer is emphatically in the affirmative. An individual becomes a world citizen as soon as he attains freedom from the thralldom of irrationality and of the myths of social and collective life. Our ancient Rishis have been world citizens in that sense. So was Socrates.

Those who have the interests of world citizenship at heart will start the mightiest of revolutions in their own person. They will consider the following duties as sacred:

(1) They will seek to pierce the veil of ignorance by contemplation, meditation, and discussion until they have attained to a knowledge of what is good and what is bad, what is virtue and what is evil.

(2) For the purposes of discussion they will accept nothing that does not bear the test of reason.

(3) They will hate nothing except that

which generates hatred, not for a particular thing but the quality itself.

(4) They will develop the mind and body to their highest potential.

(5) In social relations they will be governed by non-violence; but they cannot be its true devotees until they have completely mastered the fear of death, for otherwise non-violence will be a cloak for cowardice.

These five simple rules are clearly not a substitute for any code of conduct, religious or otherwise, but they are most useful in enabling us to give a correct and sensible interpretation to the religious or moral sanctions we obey. They will give us the courage to reject such sanctions as have become outmoded. They will persuade us to fear nothing that we do not understand. They will endow us with the capacity to decide rightly because we shall be thinking clearly. We shall never make the mistake, so dreadful and so common to mankind, of objectifying our own greed and lust into the fundamental truths of mankind. We will achieve the great feat of divorcing our honour from the interest (true or false) of our nation or tribe, or class or religion, and identify it with the much higher and nobler conception of God, that is to say, universal justice, eternal truth or, in short, Universation.

UNIVERSATION

I use the term 'Universation' to imply a body of conceptions which no word hitherto used can singly indicate. It does not, in the first place, mean internationalism, as it does not start with the nation as its unit. It does not, secondly, mean the world in the sense of a collection of all the chaotic political forces discoverable therein. What it means is something quite different. It is a new way of looking at the familiar problems of morals, of society,

and of politics. It is in a sense a more comprehensive philosophy of life suggested by the surrender of isolationism before the advancing tide of material and economic necessities, and requiring an ever widening area for its fulfilment.

Universation requires a new loyalty, as deep and cherished as any hitherto achieved. It transcends national and sectional interests. It makes possible for the first time a complete harmony between individual liberty and organized purposes. It will unite self-interest with the interest of society. It differs from the international way in a fundamental manner. The latter starts with the individual as a member of a nation, proud of his country, its culture and civilization, and willing to show his generosity by complimenting his neighbour from across the border or across the sea on the culture and civilization the latter derives from his country. Since everyone is proud of his own country these chivalrous exchanges are a roundabout method of saying: 'Your country may be good and all that; but really if you knew, mine is the best.'

The international way has, apparently, the germ of conflict from the very beginning. During war-time these chivalrous exchanges give place to mutual hatred and mutual contempt.

The reason is not far to seek. It is the mythical notion that our honour and our self-respect is the same thing as the interest of the 'nation'. The educational system of every country is devised to foster this irrational idea. The mind, drugged in youth by such sentimental nonsense cannot easily extricate itself in later life. It is then difficult to realize that no country has a monopoly of just, brave, cultured, or civilized men. One cannot thereby easily perceive that heroes and cowards are distributed evenly in the whole world by divine providence, and that it

is far better for the good and just men in the world to unite for the purpose of raising the level of the rest of mankind than for them to become the instruments of fratricidal struggles initiated by the cunning in each country with the help of slogans like 'national honour' or 'national patriotism'.

The idea of Universation requires the immediate and ruthless destruction of this unholy alliance between national honour and vested interests. There must be a reformulation of the scope and purposes of the term 'honour'. It must be identified with justice without frontiers, truth without frontiers, nobility without frontiers, in short, honour without frontiers, honour, that is to say, unattached and universal. If a visible symbol is required for the canalization of this loyalty, Universation supplies the answer.

It is really not difficult to outgrow the nation or the concept of national loyalty and achieve the final fruition of Universation, from the point of evolution at any rate. For the nation has been itself a kind of Universation to the much smaller loyalties like the family, class or tribe, or the self-sufficient village or the free city, or racial divisions like the Celts, the Scots, or Welshmen. These distinctions in a manner still exist but the nation engulfs them all. Time has now arrived when the Universation should engulf all the nations.

In a Universation alone will men be really free. In a Universation alone will reason be unchained and superstition dead. Creedal allegiance will acquire its proper sphere as primarily a personal matter and will cease to hamper social progress. Truth will become itself, since men will be free to recognize it. God's justice will reign on earth as a living reality.

Such is Universation.

Such is the idea of world citizenship. Let the just men of the world ponder and ask their conscience if they are truly fulfilling their purpose in life by

pampering to the stupidities of their nation instead of asserting the majesty of reason and working for the inevitable emergence of Universation.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

This instalment of the *Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna* presents the Master in ecstatic moods in the midst of devotees. . . . Miss Dorothy Kruger of Brooklyn, U.S.A. is not unknown to our readers. Her *Sonnet Sequence* is not only poetic but bespeaks the depth of her feelings. . . . Time and tide wait for no one. Another year is wearing away, and the Editor is worried *Lest We Vegetate*. He reminds his countrymen that 'expansion is life, while contraction is death'. . . . Swami Turiyanandaji's spiritual prescriptions stand in no need of recommendation. This time we learn from him *How to Get Rid of Despondency*. . . . We have some new writers this month. Prof. D. N. Sharma in his *Limitations of Physical Science* registers a protest against the undue ambition of science. Our readers will have occasion to meet him again. . . . Mr. Sudhansu Bimal Mukherji, who is already known to the readers, presents this month some of the saints who effected *Religious Synthesis in Medieval India*. . . . Mr. V. R. Talasikar is a new comer among our contributors. He throws some new light on the *Social Implications of Hindu Philosophy*. . . . How often do we decry words as empty sounds! And yet, as Sister Nivedita shows, *The Power of Words* is often far-reaching. . . . Swami Pavitrananda gives us a life-sketch of *Swami Subodhananda* whose childlike, saintly life earned for him the appellation of Khokâ from the

other disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. . . . Last, but not the least, among our new contributors is Mr. S. K. Shastri, who through his intimate contact with the East and the West has a freshness of outlook. We may not often agree with him; but his thought-provoking article on the *Idea of World Citizenship* will repay an earnest perusal, particularly in these disturbed days. . . . We close our forty-seventh year wishing a merry Christmas to all our readers.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Writing in *The Calcutta Review* of September, Mr. P. Kodanda Rao propounds some very revolutionary ideas, revolutionary in the sense that they run counter to all accepted political slogans about a *lingua franca* for India, and if adopted will have to be enforced at the point of the bayonet, perhaps. His 'scientific' study of the relationship between language and culture leads him to formulate the question: 'Is there an organic link between a language and a culture?' The answer is: 'There is no justification to hold that ideas are linked with particular languages. The same idea can and is expressed in a variety of languages. . . . Language is not property to be owned by any set of people. Language is not a biological inheritance; no person was born with a language. Language is acquired. . . . Inasmuch as any language can be learnt by anybody to express any idea, and nobody has a monopoly over any language or over any idea, the feeling

that this is "my" language and that is "your" language has no scientific justification. It is a superstition which has caused much unnecessary human misery and strife. Instead, let a language be selected for its maximum utility, and let historicity be sacrificed, if necessary. . . . There are several languages and dialects in India, particularly those spoken by small groups of aborigines, that must be allowed to fade away, notwithstanding the protest of anthropologists.'

This may be *pure science*, inasmuch as in its characteristic way it fails to take due note of human sentiments. But this is hardly practicable or reasonable. People are often chary of foreign languages, as a racial imperialism creeps in through them. Besides, languages can be developed. If certain languages have won in the race just now, there is no reason to suppose that others may not catch them up. Then, too, people can learn more than one language. They may use one for local intercourse and the others for wider communication. It is fundamentally wrong to suppose that all cultural traits must obey the biological law of the survival of the fittest. Much more reasonable it is to work for harmony amidst variety.

FILM INDUSTRY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

That much of our social activity is uncoordinated will be evident when we look at our film industry. Our scriptures enjoin that enjoyment should be strictly in accordance with Dharma or righteousness. But modern tendencies seem very often to be a-moral. Writes the *Human Affairs* of September: 'Entertainment is food for the mind, and it is essential that it should be pure and unadulterated. It is our duty

to insist that those who cater for such film foodstuffs must supply us in a clear, wholesome condition. But if this desirable result is not achieved, we shall be compelled to boycott such films and ask the Government to stop this vulgarity of the perverse minority of this industry.' The crime has been proved to the hilt by Prof. C. E. M. Joad: 'Of all the expressions of Western civilization the "talkies" are the most striking and the most characteristic. Their production involves a miracle of applied science. . . . And this incredible apparatus is devoted to the representation of a series of dramas in which the warfare of battling stags for the favour of does is regarded as the only legitimate object of human interest, played by elaborately under-dressed women who titillate our senses while they debauch our taste, and men whose carefully ironed features and swelling muscles suggest that brawn has finally and completely triumphed over brain.' But it will be futile to lay the whole responsibility on this 'perverse minority' in the film industry. They are perverse since society connives at, enjoys, and pays for this dereliction. The article under notice goes on: 'We have permitted our children to see anything and everything which the movie world has produced. How can we too strongly condemn the censorship boards when we ourselves have been so careless?' Yes, how can we? The real remedy lies in raising the social morale higher, though preventive measures in the form of a stricter censorship cannot be ruled out of court. Film-going has become a ruinous habit with a section of students in the cities and big towns to the utter dismay of poor parents in the countryside. But the poison has been injected by older people and it is primarily up to them that they must look for the remedy. Unless the social

consciousness is roused, governmental measures are bound to fail.

WORDS AND REALITY

Under the above caption Aldous Huxley writes in part in the *Vedanta and the West* of May-June: 'All men of great religious insight are agreed in regarding the theologian's pre-occupation with words as being almost as dangerous to the individual's chance of liberation as are the pre-occupations of the crusader and the inquisitor with violent action.' The danger of vain theology arises from two sources: 'In spiritual matters, knowledge is dependent upon being; as we are, so we know. Hence words have different meanings for people on different levels of being. The utterances of the enlightened are interpreted by the unenlightened in terms of their own character, and are used by them to rationalize and justify the wishes and actions of the Old Adam. Another danger arises when the words, as words, are taken too seriously, when men devote their lives to analysing, explaining, and developing the utterances of the enlightened ones, imagining that this activity is in some Pickwickian way the equivalent of becoming enlightened. . . . Taken too seriously, theology may lead men away from the truth instead of towards it. . . . Nor is this all: being a theologian is commonly regarded as a highly creditable occupation; consequently it is fatally easy for those who make it their business to manipulate theological language to develop a deadly spiritual pride.' Nevertheless, some people must try to work on the problem of finding the most adequate words in which to adumbrate the transcendent and inexpressible. 'Lacking a proper vocabulary, people find it hard not only to think about the most important issues of life, but even to

realize that these issues exist. Words may cause confusion and create entanglements, but the absence of words begets a total darkness.' If, then, we are forced to use words, we must guard against two pitfalls. First, we must not think that we can do more than indirectly hint at the nature of intuitively known reality. We must not deceive ourselves into believing that a system of doctrine is a good substitute for truth. Secondly we must speak in the right spirit and for the right reasons—with a mind at perfect rest and in order that the truth may be known and glorified.

THE CHURCH AND THE WAR

'What is the Church to do and say in time of war?' asks the Bishop of Chichester in *The Age Literary Supplement* of Melbourne, and he goes on: 'There are some who take it for granted that where the nation leads, the Church must follow. There are others who consider the teaching of the Church and the conduct of war so utterly incompatible that they demand that all churches should be closed for the duration. . . . There are numerous critics who point the finger at the clergy in the different warring nations when they claim that their nation's cause is the righteous cause, and implore God to bless it, and to give their nation the victory. And when the war is over there is plenty of disillusionment. Many of the very people who have thronged the churches will be the first to attack the Church, if they think that the Church has simply echoed the popular cry, if the church leaders have only said what the statesmen have said. What is the function of the Church in war-time? It is the function of the Church at all costs to remain the Church.'

This is a very laudable and radical suggestion quite befitting a church dignitary. But the whole problem seems to be strange to the Hindus, who never identify their religion with any geographical or racial group. There are no churches organized on national lines and depending on the sweet will of statesmen. Consequently the Hindu religious institutions cannot be mobilized for war purposes, nor are they under any duress to pay homage to any one but God. We note, however, that

in recent years unthinking people have made an attempt to convert public temples into centres of national propaganda. To them, perhaps, the Bishop's words may serve as an eye-opener. Why did the Church fail in 1914-18? The Bishop's answer is: 'The Church itself in each nation became more and more the Church of the particular nation. It failed to strike the universal note.' After this diagnosis will the politicians leave the Hindu temples alone?

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY SINCE 1905, VOL. II. PART III. BY BENOY KUMAR SARKAR, M.A., DR.H.C. Published by Messrs Motilal Banarasidass, Saidmitha Street Lahore. Pp. 356. Price Rs. 5.

Dr. Sarkar's books invariably bear evidence of learning and research. By his impartial evaluation of events and literature, his thought-provoking suggestions, and his intense positivism, he has made a mark in contemporary economic, political, and sociological thought in India and abroad. The present work has this 'Sarkarism' deeply impressed on it. One may not agree with all the conclusions, but one cannot fail wondering at the encyclopaedic knowledge and freshness of outlook which at once arrest attention and compel the reader to look at things from a new angle of vision. This extraordinarily comprehensive book presents in a nutshell the thoughts of master minds all over the world from 1929 onward in so far as they bear on political and sociological developments. Indian thinkers and writers like Bankim, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Tagore, Aurobindo, Ranade, Iqbal, and others, of whom, as Dr. Sarkar successfully shows, some at least have profoundly influenced world opinion.

From a study of relevant facts, the author asserts that 'in Hinduism is to be found the cult of power, creativity, and manhood',—a conclusion that should demolish the oft-repeated assertion of the Westerners that the Indians are traditionally slothful. About Iqbal, the protagonist of Islamic hegemony

he writes: 'Iqbal is much too one-sided and unfactual to be acceptable as a reasonable and scientific interpreter of civilization.' In what estimation he holds Vivekananda will be evident from the following: 'Vivekananda may have ostensibly preached religious reform, social reconstruction as well as crusade against poverty. But it is the making of individuals, the training for manhood, the awakening of creativeness and individuality on which his whole soul was focussed.' It is excusable in a writer on sociology to keep religion in the background, as Dr. Sarkar would seem to do in the foregoing extract. But unlike others, he is fully alive to the need of morality: 'In the final consideration the "brass tags" of empires and conquests, as of freedom, democracy, and socialism, are spiritual—States, kingdoms, empires, or commonwealths . . . rise and fall on the strength and weakness of man's moral fibre.' It is to be noted, however, that this morality falls far short of the religious morality. It is interpreted purely from the point of view of the needs of social and political progress.

Dr. Sarkar is strongly of opinion that apart from the State, nationhood is a chimerical idea. It is the State that matters: 'Hetero-racial, multi-coloured, and polyglot States or nations have been historic realities. . . . Such hotch-potch States or nations can likewise be the only political realities to-day and to-morrow.' The bearing of this theory on the Pakistan movement is quite apparent,—it has no foundation to

stand on. Equally startling, but none the less realistic, is the assertion that 'it is unthinking romanticism to sentimentalize over conceptions of Statehood or nationality as something unbacked by the sword'. Every cloud has its white lining and in the Japanese aggressiveness the author finds the possibility of the re-education of Western statesmen about the innate worth of the coloured races. Herein may lie some hope for a better *rapprochement* between the Imperial Powers and their colonies.

The thoughts of modern writers and men of action have been very ably presented under suitable headings such as *General Theories of Progress, Race Questions, East and West, Crime and Punishment, Population Problems, Dilthey and Dewey as Spiritual World-goods*, etc. The sections on *Ramakrishna-Vivekananda, De-imperialization and De-albinization*, and the Appendix entitled *Indian Freedom Movement* are highly illuminating and interesting.

We wish the book every success.

INDIA AND A NEW CIVILIZATION.

BY RAJANI KANTA DAS, M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D. WITH THE COLLABORATION OF SONYA RUTH DAS, D.LITT. (PARIS). *Published from the Prabasi Press, 120-2 Upper Circular Road, Calcutta, Pp. xxxvi+320. Price Rs. 3, or 5 s.*

Dr. R. K. Das has to his credit more than a dozen volumes on social, economic, and labour problems in India. The present book makes a survey of these problems in general against a background of cultural developments. It is meant to be an introduction to a more comprehensive study.

The book is divided into two parts. The first part examines the main features and the outstanding merits as well as demerits of Hinduism, Mohammedanism, and the Western culture, out of the fusion of which a new India is taking shape. The second part examines the new factors, cultural traits, and values struggling for self-expression. Their individual worth is evaluated in the light of present-day theories and future possible achievements. There are also valuable constructive suggestions for bringing into existence a better order of things so that India may occupy her rightful position in the comity of nations. The author is convinced that the new culture that is in travail can only result from a fusion of the best elements in its three component parts: it cannot be fully Hindu,

Muslim, or Western either in its basis or in general superstructure. The book is undoubtedly 'timely, valuable, and useful', as the publishers believe it is, and as such it deserves wide circulation.

If one may be permitted to offer some constructive criticism to such a scholarly work, one would like to point out that the book having been prepared hurriedly, as we learn from the preface, often suffers from avoidable repetitions. Besides, there are a few inaccuracies. We are not sure if history will bear out the statement (p. 12) that 'mild and benevolent Vishnu became the God of the masses, and severe and terrible Shiva, of the upper classes'. In modern India, at least, such a division of the sects on a class basis is highly fanciful. In another place (p. 16) the author hints at an equally baseless distinction between the Vaishnavas and the Bhakti cult. We do not know also if the *Dhammapada* can be enumerated as a work distinct from the Tripitaka (p. 31). The author could have avoided emphasizing direct action against certain minor social evils which can be equally extirpated through indirect methods like education and a proper emphasis on more positive virtues. His criticism of the Hindu civilization is a bit overdone. The defects pointed out by him are,—a spirit of passivity, fatalism, idolatry, and symbolism, hereditary priesthood, and caste, many of which have been misunderstood by him. Passivity is not peculiar to Hinduism, fatalism is not a necessary concomitant of the law of Karma, image-worship is not idolatry, and symbolism is not a monopoly of the Hindus. But what the book suffers from a biased criticism of orthodox Hinduism is partly made up by the author's appreciation of the high metaphysical standpoint and spiritual outlook of the Hindus. Writes he: 'One of the greatest contributions to humanity is the Hindu conception of God. . . . There must be some conception of an ultimate reality in the contemplation and realization of which the human soul may find its best development and highest happiness.'

PAKISTAN EXAMINED. BY REZAUL KARIM, M.A., B.L. WITH A FOREWORD BY MAULAVI SYED NAUSHER ALI, B.L., EX-MINISTER, BENGAL. *Published by The Book Company, Ltd. 4-3 B College Square, Calcutta. Pp. 167. Price Re. 1-8.*

These columns published a review of *Akhand Hindusthan* in June. It is a plea-

sure to be able to review another book which is quite of a piece with the former. The interest is heightened by the fact that Mr. Munshi hails from the west of India and happens to be a nationalist Hindu; while Mr. Rezaul Karim belongs to the Moham-medan community of Bengal which, it is argued by the disruptionists, will greatly benefit by any scheme for the partition of India. It is really wonderful how all the true sons of mother India think alike!

Mr. Rezaul Karim is well known as an author, columnist, and acute thinker on matters political, economic, social, and cultural. The book under review comes fully to our expectation. It reveals that the Mussulmans are slowly but surely realizing the benefits accruing to them from a united India. The hollowness of the 'preposterous' Pakistan scheme which bodes no good either for the Mnsulmans or the Hindus, is very ably exposed from various points of view—cultural, economic, and political. The arguments for disruption can hardly be based on cultural grounds: 'Though the Muslim League lays too much stress on the cultural differences of the people of India, yet to an unsophisticated onlooker who knows how to view things in their true perspective, it would seem that India's vital problem is not cultural but political and economic.' In our daily discussions we are too apt to forget that 'by the gradual processes of adaptation, amalgamation, and assimilation the people of India have been evolving a common culture'. It is easy to fan the flame of mass fanaticism through an undue emphasis on the points of difference rather than on those of similarity, and thus create a situation that can be exploited to the benefit of third parties and the upper ten thousand. The author quotes the creed of the League—'Muslim League under no condition will forfeit the private property of the individual,'—and argues that this can mean only one thing: 'The Pakistan Government will be bound to give statutory protection to the vested interest. . . .'
Politically, the scheme will lead to greater strife within and without the proposed Muslim State. The minorities in the Mnslim State will clamour for safeguards, just as the Mussulmans are doing at present, and they will have to be satisfied. Economically, Muslim India will be faced with a deficit budget and will have to look to Hindu India for charities, to carry on its day-to-day administration and ward off foreign

invasion. Thus the author has demonstrated up to the hilt by marshalling a host of facts and figures that the Mussulmans themselves stand to lose by agitating for Pakistan, and that more pitifully than the Hindus of Hindu India who will really gain by having fertile lands, big ports, factories, and mines at their disposal.

The value of the book is increased by some appendices which give the various schemes of partition of India formulated by the stalwarts of the League. Appendix D reproduces an article from the *Harijan* which with quotations from Lord Morley and Lord Minto traces the origin of the Hindu-Muslim question.

The book deserves a wide circulation among both the major communities of India. It is calculated to lead to better understanding through its clear thinking and clever hints.

YOGA FOR ALL. BY SWAMI DHARMA THEERTHA. *Hindu Missionary Society, Krishnanagar, Lahore.* Pp. 157. Price Re. 1-8.

It is no wonder that the Gita is liked by all people irrespective of their adherence to different religious sects or denominations. It delivers a message which is true for all men of all times and is universal in the true sense of the term. The difficulty arises with its language and high philosophy which are not easy for all. To meet this difficulty we find so many editions of the Gita, interpreted in diverse ways and many languages, coming out every year.

Swami Dharma Theertha's *Yoga for All* is a similar landable attempt to popularize the teachings of the Gita in a very simple and easy style. The majority of the people of the world can appreciate religion if it is put to them with sufficient guarantee for peace and happiness in their lives on the earth. Swami Dharma has, therefore, done a great service to the lay readers and ordinary aspirants of a religious life by explaining how the Yoga of the Gita can be practised by all under all circumstances and how this practice will make their present life sweeter and happier, easier and more peaceful. The explanation in the work under review is substantially true to the original. The author would have done better, however, if he had avoided his diatribes against the caste system as these are out of place. That would surely have added to the dignity of the booklet.

We wish the book a very wide circulation among the English-knowing people.

BENGALI

DARSHAN. EDITED BY DR. SATISCHANDRA CHATTERJEE, M.A., PH.D. *Published from 12, Bipin Pal Road, Kalighat, Calcutta. Yearly Subscription Rs. 4. Single copy Re. 1.*

This is a quarterly magazine published under the auspices of the Bangiya Darshan Parishad, an association devoted to a comparative study of Eastern and Western philosophy and dissemination of the same through publication of books, magazines, etc., in Bengali. Religion and philosophy constituted the outstanding features of Indian civilization. The contribution of Indian philosophy to world-thought can hardly be overestimated. But under the spell of Western influence India became quite oblivious of her past glory and consequently her contribution to contemporary philosophical thought is almost negligible. The foreign tongue through which education is imparted in this land is also greatly responsible for such a state. Original thinking is difficult in a foreign tongue. We, therefore, hail with delight this laudable attempt on the part of the Parishad to encourage philosophical thinking in Bengal in the language of the province by publishing such a high-class magazine in Bengali. All the copies we have so far received speak uniformly of the high standard it is maintaining. We ardently hope that it will attract the attention and sympathy of all thoughtful Bengalees.

HINDI

MERE GURUDEV. BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. TRANSLATED BY SAHITYA SHASTRI PROF. V. B. SHUKLA, M.Sc., P.E.S. *Published by the President, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur, C. P. Pp. 86. Price 7 As.*

This is a translation in Hindi of the original English lecture entitled *My Master*, delivered by Swami Vivekanandaji in New York (America). In this famous speech the Swamiji has given a vivid picture of the most inspiring life of his spiritual Guru

Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. In addition to the delineation of the thrilling incidents in the life of his Master, Swamiji has given an analytical exposition of the same, which has an irresistible charm of its own. He has also herein expounded the real meaning of religion which is realization of Self—the religion which knows no barriers of and is not cramped down by narrow and stifling ideas of sect, creed, or dogma. By comparing the Eastern and Western outlooks on life, Swamiji has brought out the significance of the Sanâtana Dharma and proved beyond doubt that this Dharma really makes for social and national progress. The translator, Sahitya Shastri Prof. V. B. Shukla, M.Sc., P.E.S., has been quite successful in maintaining the true and full import of the original work in simple but elegant and forceful language. The Hindi readers will feel obliged to him for presenting to them the life of this great saint of Dakshineswar as it was actually seen by his own beloved disciple Swami Vivekananda.

PANDIT DWARKANATH TIWARI

VARTAMAN BHARAT. BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. TRANSLATED BY SGT. RAGHUNATH SAHAI. *Published by the President, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur, C. P. Pp. 68. Price 6 As.*

This is a Hindi translation of Swami Vivekananda's original Bengali book *Vartaman Bharata*. The translation has been done by Sgt. Raghunath Sahai. The Swamiji has in this book drawn a fine picture of the ancient glory of India and traced the causes of the national decline. He has preached that the blind imitation of the outward glow of Western civilization should be avoided, the real nature of the Indian culture should be realized, and selfless service and character-building should be made the ideal by every Indian for the uplift of the nation. The translator has successfully expressed these ideas in forceful language. The Hindi readers, by reading this book, will have a glimpse into the national thoughts of the Swamiji. The book though small is worth having.

PANDIT DWARKANATH TIWARI

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION CYCLONE RELIEF

Swami Madhavanandaji, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission writes under date 19th November, 1942 :—

Readers of newspapers are aware of the harrowing tales of devastation caused by the recent cyclone and flood in Bengal and Orissa. The Ramakrishna Mission has organized relief to the sufferers in the Midnapore, 24-Parganas and Balasore districts. In the Midnapore district the Mission has taken up relief work in Unions 4 to 9 of the Khejuri Thana, comprising 115 villages, in the Contai sub-division ; and in Unions 2 and 3 of the Mayna Thana, comprising 25 villages, and in Unions 13 to 15 of the Nandigram Thana, comprising 38 villages, in the Tamruk sub-division. The total area taken by the Mission covers 11 Unions comprising about 175 villages.

In the Mayna Thana 253 mds. 3 srs. of paddy were distributed on the 4th and 11th November in 25 villages from the Srikantha centre. In the Khejuri Thana 240 mds. 26 srs. of paddy were distributed on the 13th November in 25 villages from the Majhirkhauk centre, and a second centre has just been opened at Khadjuri. Work in the rest of the area is being organized as quickly as possible. In the Nandigram Thana the first distribution has just taken place from the Tekhali Centre.

We have sent from Calcutta by boat 1,000 mds. of rice, 3,000 pieces of new cloth, 3,000 cotton blankets, 1,000 mats, 253 shirts and frocks and 5 cases of powdered milk to the Midnapore area. The next consignment will shortly follow.

In the 24-Parganas district a relief centre has been started at Dhablat in the Diamond Harbour sub-division, which distributed 55 mds. 20 srs. of rice and other foodstuffs in 11 villages on the 5th and 12th November. Another centre has just been started at Snmatinagar, a few miles off Dhablat. The Mission has sent from Calcutta by boat 850 mds. of rice, 500 pieces of new cloth and some medicines to this area.

For the relief of the sufferers in the

Balasore district of Orissa, a centre has already been started at Daruha in the Jaleswar sub-division. The condition there is also extremely bad.

Besides large quantities of rice, cloth, blankets, etc., we gratefully acknowledge receipt of Rs. 42,108/- for our Cyclone Relief Fund up to the 18th November. The notable contributions are as follows: The Ananda Bazar Patrika and Hindusthan Standard Bengal Cyclone Relief Fund Rs. 12,000/- ; a friend, Calcutta Rs. 10,000/- ; The President, Midnapore Flood Relief Committee, Gun and Shell Factory, and I. G. U. A., Cossipore 1,000/- ; Sj. Charu Chandra Das, in memory of Sm. Lakshminani Dassi, Calcutta Rs. 700/- ; Sir N. N. Sircar, Calcutta Rs. 500/- ; Rup Chand Trust, Calcutta Rs. 500/- ; a sympathiser Rs. 500/- ; a friend, Poona Rs. 500/- ; Mr. Tulsidas Kalichand, Bombay Rs. 501/- ; a devotee, Cossipore Rs. 500/- ; Sj. Panchu Kali Saha, Calcutta Rs. 501/- ; The Calcutta Iron Merchants' Association Rs. 500/- ; Sm. Saraju Bala Devi, Dacca Rs. 500/- ; a devotee, Bankura Rs. 500/- ; Officers and staff of the office of the Chief Controller of Purchases (Munitions), Calcutta Rs. 427/4/-.

We appeal to the generous public for further contributions in cash and kind, which will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses: (1) The Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Marth, Dt. Howrah. (2) The Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4, Wellington Lane, Calcutta, (3) The Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1, Udbodhan Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

LIBRARIES OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION

For disseminating knowledge of religious and cultural subjects the Ramakrishna Math and Mission centres have almost invariably attached to them libraries stocked with a choice selection of books which are issued to the public free. There are also reading rooms attached to several of them, which are resorted to by a good number of readers.

We give below the number of books and periodicals in 1941 in some of the bigger libraries.

Centres	Books	Magazines	Newspapers
Institute of Culture, Calcutta	26,718	21	5
Students' Home, Madras	15,445	23	4
Society, Rangoon	9,476	67	48
School, Madras	7,978	11	4
Math, Belur	6,500	60	8
Advaita Ashrama, Benares	4,451	13	5
Vidyapith, Deoghar	4,015	20	4
Math, Madras	4,150
Ashrama, Nagpur	3,428
Math, Dacca	3,405	24	1
Ashrama, Rajkot	3,530	7	8
Math, Conjeevaram	2,879	17	12
Sevashrama, Lucknow	2,877	18	3
Sevashrama, Kankhal	2,712	19	4
Students' Home, Calcutta	2,522	21	5
Gadadhar Ashrama, Calcutta	2,076	12	1
Ashrama, Mysore	2,225	6	6
Sarada Vidyalaya, Madras	2,632	11	4
Sevasamity, Sylhet	2,482	19	...
Sevashrama, Tamruk	2,350	15	2
Ashrama, Trichur	2,520	10	7
Ashrama, Sargachhi	2,071	14	1
Ashrama, Bombay	2,331	16	6
Ashrama, Narayanganj	1,960	12	6
Ashrama, Ootacamund	1,389	8	3
Ashrama, Baranagore	1,998	15	1
Society, Jamshedpur	1,829	20	7
Sevashrama, Allahabad	1,450	24	4
Ashrama, Cawnpore	1,250	11	4
Ashrama, Delhi	1,294	20	4
Math, Bankura	1,042	25	3
Sevashrama, Contai	1,050	9	4
School, Chingleput	1,000	3	1
Sevashrama, Silchar	1,045
Ashrama, Habiganj	939	13	1
Mission, Barisal	942	19	3
Ashrama, Jalpaiguri	900	14	2
Ashrama, Sarisha	807	18	1
Ashrama, Karachi	773	14	2
Ashrama, Mymensingh	692	7	...
Ashrama, Patna	655	9	3
Sevashrama, Sonargaon	630	3	1
Sevashrama, Baliati	618	4	2
Ashrama, Shillong	585	7	1
Industrial School, Belur	550	4	1
Math, Chandipur	510	10	2

There are several more libraries containing less than 500 volumes. None the less, they are doing valuable service, as the number of issues is often quite considerable, being no less than 1,144 in the case of the Midnapore Sevashrama with its 366 volumes. The Ashrama at Katihar did equally valuable service with its 403 volumes, the number of issues reaching 794. That all these libraries are very popular will be evident from the fact that at some places, e.g., at Rangoon, Lucknow, Sargachhi, Conjeevaram, Sylhet, and Madras (Home) the number of issues rose as high as 15,989; 7,028; 8,361; 5,840; 5,861; 5,264 respectively. The libraries are often situated in rural areas and are thus in touch with the villagers. It has to be noted that the library at Rangoon had to be closed *sine die* due to the Japanese invasion.

REPORTS PUBLISHED

The following Math and Mission Centres have published their reports for the periods noted against each:—

The Eleventh General Report of the Ramakrishna Mission (Issued from the Headquarters at Belur)	1940-1941
R.K.M. Vidyapith, Deoghar	1941
R. K. M. Students' Home, Calcutta	1941
R.K.M. Vidyalaya, Coimbatore	1941-1942
R.K.M. Sevashrama, Kankhal	1941
R.K.M. Home of Service, Benares	1941
R.K. Mission, Dacca	1940-1941
R.K.M. Sisumangal Prasthan, Calcutta	1941
Ramakrishna Math Dispensary, Madras	1941
Ramakrishna Vedanta College, Bangalore	1940-1941