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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।”

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

TEACHINGS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

By M.

The Master and his beloved disciple Narendra (Swami Vivekananda)—Narendra's reminiscences of the Master.

It was Sunday afternoon when M. came on his third visit to the Master (at Dakshineswar). . . . Sri Ramakrishna was sitting on his small cot. The room was filled with devotees. . . . The Master smiled as he talked with the devotees. He addressed his words particularly to a young man of nineteen, named Narendranath, who was a college student and frequented the Sâdhâran Brâhma Samâj. His eyes were bright, his words were full of spirit, and he had the look of a lover of God.

M. guessed that the conversation was about worldly men, who look down on those who aspire to spiritual things. . . .

Master (to Narendra) : ‘How do you feel about it? Worldly people say all kinds of things about the spiritually minded. But look here! When an elephant moves along the street, any number of curs and other small animals may bark and cry after it; but the elephant doesn't even look back at them.

If people speak ill of you, what will you think of them?’

Narendra : ‘I shall think that dogs are barking at me.’

Master (smiling) : ‘Oh, no! You mustn't go that far, my child! (Laughter). God dwells in all beings. But you may be intimate only with good people; you must keep away from the evil-minded. God is even in the tiger; but you cannot embrace the tiger on that account. (Laughter). You may say, “Why run away from a tiger, which is also a manifestation of God?” The answer to that is : “Those who tell you to run away are also manifestations of God—and why shouldn't you listen to them?”’ . . .

Pointing to Narendra the Master said : ‘You all see this boy. He behaves that way here. A naughty boy seems very simple when with his father. But he is quite another person when he plays in the Chândni. Narendra and

people of his type belong to the class of the ever-free. They are never entangled in the world. When they grow a little older they feel the awakening of inner consciousness and go directly towards God. They come to the world only to teach others. They never care for anything of the world. They are never attached to lust and gold.'

At this point Narendra left the room. . . .

Master : 'You see, Narendra excels in singing, playing on instruments, study, and everything. The other day he had a discussion with Kedar and tore his arguments to shreds.' (All laugh). . . .

The next day, too, was a holiday for M. He arrived at Dakshineswar at three o'clock in the afternoon. Sri Ramakrishna was in his room. Narendra and a few other devotees were sitting on a mat spread on the floor. . . . The Master said to Narendra and M., 'I shall like to hear you speak and argue in English.' They both laughed. But they continued to talk in their mother tongue. . . . Sri Ramakrishna said to Narendra : 'Look here. Come a little more often. You are a new-comer. On first acquaintance people visit each other quite often, as is the case with a lover and his sweetheart. (Narendra and M. laugh). So please come, won't you?'

Narendra, as a member of the Brahmo Samaj, was very particular about his promises. He said with a smile, 'Yes, sir, I shall try.'

As they were returning to the Master's room, Sri Ramakrishna said to M. : 'When peasants go to market to buy bullocks for their ploughs, they can easily tell the good from the bad by touching their tails. On being touched there, some meekly lie down on the ground. The peasants recognize that these are without mettle and so reject them. They select only those bullocks that frisk about and show spirit when their tails are touched. Narendra is like a bullock of this latter class. He is full of spirit within.'

October 22, 1882. *Master* : 'Boys like Narendra, Bhavanath, and Rakhal are my very intimate disciples. They are not to be thought lightly of. Feed them one day. What do you think of Narendra?'

M. : 'I think very highly of him, sir.'

Master : 'Haven't you observed his many virtues? He is not only well versed in music, vocal and instrumental, but he is also very learned. Besides, he has controlled his passions and declares he would lead a celibate life. He has been devoted to God since his very boyhood.'

June 4, 1883. *Master* : 'Now and then Hazra comes to teach me. He says to me, "Why do you think so much about the youngsters?" One day, as I was going to Balaram's house in a carriage, I felt greatly troubled about it. I said to the Divine Mother : "Mother, Hazra admonishes me for worrying about Narendra and the other boys. He asks me why I forget God and think about these youngsters." No sooner did this thought arise in my mind than the Divine Mother revealed to me in a flash that it is She Herself who has become man. But She manifests Herself most clearly through a pure soul. At this vision I went into Samâdhi. Afterwards I felt angry with Hazra. I said to myself, "That rascal made me miserable." Then I thought : "But why should I blame the poor man? How is he to know?"'

'I know these youngsters to be Nârâyana Himself. At my first meeting with Narendra I found him completely indifferent to the body. When I touched his chest with my hand, he lost consciousness of the outer world. Regaining consciousness, Narendra said : "Oh, what have you done to me? I have my father and mother at home!" The same thing happened at Jadu Mallick's house. As the days passed, I longed more and more to see him. My heart yearned for him. One day at that time I said to Bholanath : "Can you tell me why I should feel this way?'

There is a boy called Narendra, of the Kâyastha caste. Why should I feel so restless for him?" Bholanath said: "You will find the explanation in the *Mahâbhârata*. On coming down to the plane of ordinary consciousness, a man established in Samadhi enjoys himself in the company of Sâttvic people. He feels peace of mind at the sight of such men." When I heard this my mind was at ease. Now and then I would sit alone and weep for the sight of Narendra.'

December 24, 1883. *Master*: 'Those who are my own will come here even if I scold them. Look at Narendra's nature! At first he used to abuse my Mother Kâli very much. One day I said to him sharply, "Râscal! Don't come here any more." He slowly left the room and prepared a smoke. He who is one's own will not be angry even if scolded. What do you say?'

M.: 'That is true, sir.'

Master: 'Narendra is perfect from his very birth. He is devoted to the ideal of the formless God.'

M. (smiling): 'Whenever he comes here he brings along great excitement.'

Sri Ramakrishna smiled and said, 'Yes, excitement indeed!'

March 11, 1885. Narendra was sitting beside the Master. The latter looked at him intently and suddenly moved closer to his beloved disciple. Narendra did not believe in God's assuming a human body; but what did that matter? Sri Ramakrishna's heart overflowed with more and more love for his disciple. He touched Narendra's body and said, quoting from a song:

Do you feel that your pride is wounded?
So be it, then; we too have our pride.¹

Then the Master said to Narendra: 'As long as a man argues about God, he has not realized Him. You two were arguing. I didn't like it. . . . The nearer you approach God, the less you reason and argue. When you attain

Him, then all sounds—all reasoning and disputing—come to an end. Then you go into Samadhi — sleep —, into communion with God in silence.'

The Master gently stroked Narendra's body and affectionately touched his chin, uttering sweetly the holy words, 'Hari Om! Hari Om! Hari Om!' He was fast becoming unconscious of the outer world. His hand was on Narendra's foot. Still in that mood he gently stroked Narendra's body. Slowly a change came over his mind. With folded hands he said to Narendra, 'Sing a song, please; then I shall be all right. How else shall I be able to stand on my own legs?' Again he became speechless. He sat motionless as a statue. . . . Narendra sang:

Lord, Thou hast lifted all my sorrow with
the vision of Thy face, . . .

* * *

March 23, 1884. *Master* (smiling): 'Yes, Narendra may thus become a leader of society or something like that. He will be an outstanding man whatever career he follows.'

July 15, 1885. (At Balaram's house).

Master: 'I want to tell you something very secret. Why do I love boys like Purna and Narendra so much? Once, in a spiritual mood, I felt intense love for Jagannâth, love such as a woman feels for her sweetheart. In that mood I was about to embrace Him, when I broke my arm. It was then revealed to me: "You have assumed this human body. Therefore establish with human beings the relationship of friend, father, mother, or son." I now feel for Purna and the other young boys as I once felt for Râmlâlâ. . . . Narendra belongs to a very high plane—the realm of the Absolute. He has a manly nature. So many devotees come here, but there is not one like him.

'Every now and then I take stock of the devotees. I find that some are like lotuses with ten petals, some like lotuses with sixteen petals, some like lotuses with hundred petals. But among lotuses Narendra is a thousand-petalled

¹ These words are addressed to Râdhâ, the beloved of Krishna, by her companions, the Gopis.

one. Other devotees may be like pots or pitchers; but Narendra is a huge water-barrel. Others may be like pools or tanks; but Narendra is a huge reservoir like the Hâldârpukur. Amongst fish, Narendra is a huge red-eyed carp; others are like minnows or smelts or sardines. . . . Narendra is a "very big receptacle", one that can hold many things. He is like a bamboo with a big hollow space inside. Narendra is not under the control of anything. He is not under the control of attachment or sense pleasures. He is like a male pigeon. If you hold a male pigeon by its beak, it breaks away from you; but the female pigeon keeps still. Narendra has the nature of a man; so he sits on the right side in a carriage. Bhavanath has a woman's nature; so I make him sit on the other side. I feel great strength when Narendra is with me in a gathering.'

January 4, 1886. (At Cossipore). At four o'clock in the afternoon, Sri Ramakrishna was sitting in his room . . . Narendra arrived. Now and then the Master looked at him and smiled. It appeared to M. that that day the Master's love for his beloved disciple was boundless. He indicated to M. by a sign that Narendra had wept. Then he remained quiet. Again he indicated that Narendra had cried all the way from home. No one spoke. Narendra broke the silence.

Narendra : 'I have been thinking of going there to-day.'

Master : 'Where?'

Narendra : 'To Dakshineswar. I intend to light a fire under the Bel-tree and meditate.'

Master : 'No, the authorities of the powder-magazine will not allow it. The Panchavati is a nice place. Many Sâdhus have practised Japa and meditation there. But it is very cold there. The place is dark, too.'

Again for a few moments all sat in silence.

Master (to Narendra, smiling) : 'Won't you continue your studies?'

Narendra (looking at the Master and M.) : 'I shall feel greatly relieved if I find a medicine that will make me forget all I have studied.'

Kalipada Ghose had brought a box of grapes for Sri Ramakrishna; it lay beside the Master. The Master gave Narendra a few and poured the rest on the floor for the devotees to pick up.

It was evening. Narendra was sitting in a room downstairs. He was smoking and describing to M. the yearning of his soul. No one else was with them.

Narendra : 'I was meditating here last Saturday when suddenly I felt a peculiar sensation in my heart.'

M. : 'It was the awakening of the Kundalini.'

Narendra : 'Probably it was. I clearly perceived the Idâ and the Pingalâ nerves. I asked Hazra to feel my chest. Yesterday I saw him (meaning the Master) upstairs and told him about it. I said to him : "All the others have had their realization; please give me some. All have succeeded; shall I alone remain unsatisfied?"'

M. : 'What did he say to you?'

Narendra : 'He said : "Why don't you settle your family affairs first and then come to me? You will get everything. What do you want?" I replied, "It is my desire to remain absorbed in Samadhi continuously for three or four days, only once in a while coming down to the sense plane to eat a little food." Thereupon he said to me : "You are a very small-minded person. There is a state higher even than that. 'All that exists art Thou'—it is you who sing that."'

M. : 'Yes, he always says that after coming down from Samadhi one sees that it is God Himself who has become the universe, the living beings, and all that exists. . . .'

Narendra : 'He (the Master) said : "Settle your family affairs and then come to me. You will attain a state higher than Samadhi." I went home this morning. My people scolded me, saying : "Why do you wander about

like a vagabond? Your law examination is near at hand and you are not paying any attention to your studies. You wander about aimlessly.” ’

M. : ‘And then?’

Narendra : ‘I went to my study at my grandmother’s. As I tried to read I was seized with a great fear, as if studying were a terrible thing. My heart struggled within me. I burst into tears : I never wept so bitterly in my life. I left my books and ran away. I ran along the streets. My shoes slipped from my feet—I didn’t know where. I ran past a haystack and got hay all over me. I kept on running along the road to Cossipore.’

Narendra remained silent a few moments and then resumed.

Narendra : ‘Since reading the *Vivekachudâmani* I have felt very much depressed. In it Shankaracharya says that only through great Tapasyâ and good fortune does one acquire these three things : a human birth, the desire for liberation, and refuge with a great soul. I said to myself : “I have surely gained all these three. As a result of great Tapasya I have been born a human being ; through great Tapasya, again, I have the desire for liberation ; and through great Tapasya I have secured the companionship of such a great soul.” ’

M. : ‘Ah!’

Narendra : ‘I have no more taste for the world. I do not relish the company of those who live in the world—of course, with the exception of one or two devotees.’

Narendra became silent again. A fire of intense renunciation was burning within him. His soul was restless for the vision of God. He resumed the conversation.

Narendra (to M.) : ‘You have found peace, but my soul is restless. You are blessed indeed.’

M. did not reply, but sat in silence. He said to himself, ‘Sri Ramakrishna said that one must pant and pine for God ; only then may one have the vision of Him.’

It was about nine o’clock in the evening. Niranjan and Sashi were sitting near the Master. He was awake. Every now and then he talked of Narendra.

Master : ‘How wonderful Narendra’s state of mind is ! You see, this very Narendra did not believe in the forms of God. And now you see how his soul is panting for God ! . . . When the soul longs and yearns for God like that, then you will know that you do not have long to wait for His vision. The rosy colour on the eastern horizon shows that the sun will soon rise.’

This day Sri Ramakrishna’s illness was worse. In spite of much suffering he said many things about Narendra—though mostly by means of signs.

At night Narendra left for Dakshineswar. It was very dark, being the night of the new moon. He was accompanied by one or two devotees. . . .

March 25, 1887. M. arrived at the Baranagore Math to visit his brother disciples. . . . It was evening. When the worship was over, Narendra and M. became engaged in conversation. Narendra was recalling his various meetings with Sri Ramakrishna.

Narendra : ‘One day, during one of my early visits, the Master in an ecstatic mood said to me, “You have come !” “How amazing !” I said to myself, “It is as if he had known me a long time.” Then he said to me, “Do you ever see light ?” I replied : “Yes, sir. Before I fall asleep I feel something like a light revolving near my forehead.” ’

M. : ‘Do you see it even now?’

Narendra : ‘I used to see it frequently. In Jadu Mallick’s garden house the Master one day touched me and muttered something to himself. I became unconscious. The effect of the touch lingered with me a month, like an intoxication.

‘When he heard that a proposal had been made about my marriage, he wept, holding the feet of the image of Kali. With tears in his eyes he prayed to the Divine Mother : “O Mother, please

upset the whole thing! Don't let Narendra be drowned."

'After my father's death my mother and my brothers were starving. When the Master met Annada Guha one day, he said to him: "Narendra's father has died. His family is in a state of great privation. It would be good if his friends helped him now with money."

'After Annada had left I scolded him. I said, "Why did you say all those things to him?" Thus rebuked he wept and said, "Alas! For your sake I could beg from door to door."

'He tamed us by his love. Don't you think so?'

M.: 'There is not the slightest doubt about it. His love was utterly unselfish.

Narendra: 'One day when I was alone with him he said something to me. Nobody else was present. Please don't repeat it to anyone here.'

M.: 'No, I shall not. What did he say?'

Narendra: 'He said: "It is not possible for me to exercise occult powers; but I shall do so through you. What do you say?" "No," I replied, "you can't do that."

'I used to laugh at his words. You must have heard all these things from him. I told him that his visions of God were all hallucinations of his mind.

'He said to me: "I used to climb to the roof of the Kuthi and cry: 'O devotees, where are you all? Come to me, O devotees! I am about to die. I shall certainly die if I do not see you.' And the Divine Mother told me, "The devotees will come.' You see, everything is turning out to be true." What else could I say? I kept quiet.

'One day he closed the door of his room and said to Devendra Babu and Girish Babu, referring to me, "He will not keep his body if he is told who he is."'

M.: 'Yes, we have heard that. Many a time he repeated the same thing to us, too. Once you came to know about your true self in Nirvikalpa

Samadhi in the Cossipore garden house. Isn't that true?'

Narendra: 'Yes. In that experience I felt that I had no body. I could see only my face. The Master was in the upstairs room. I had that experience downstairs. I was weeping. I said, "What has happened to me?"' The elder Gopal went to the Master's room and said, "Narendra is crying." When I saw the Master he said to me: "Now you have known. But I am going to keep the key with me." I said to him, "What is it that happened to me?"' Turning to the devotees, he said: "He will not keep his body if he knows who he is. But I have put a veil over his eyes."

'One day he said to me, "You can see Krishna in your heart if you want." I replied, "I don't believe in Krishna or any such nonsense!" (Both M. and Narendra laugh).

'I have noticed a peculiar thing. Some men, objects, or places make me feel as if I had seen them before, in a previous birth. They appear familiar to me. One day I went to Sarat's house in Calcutta, on Amherst Street. Immediately I said to Sarat: "This house seems familiar to me. It seems to me that I have known the rooms, the passages, and the rest of the house for many, many days. . . .

'I have attained my present state of mind as a result of much suffering and pain. You have not passed through any such suffering. I now realize that without trials and tribulations one cannot resign oneself to God and depend on Him absolutely.

'Well X—is so modest and humble! He is totally self-effacing. Can you tell me how I can develop humility?'

M.: 'Speaking about your ego, the Master said, "Whose ego is it?"'

Narendra: 'What did he mean?'

M.: 'A friend one day said to Radha: "You are egoistic. That is why you insulted Krishna." Whereupon another friend said to the first: "Yes, Radha is egoistic, no doubt. But whose ego is it?"' What she meant was

that Radha was egoistic because she regarded Krishna as her Lord. It was Krishna Himself who kept that ego in Radha. What the Master meant was that it is God alone who has kept this ego in you, so that He may accomplish many things through you.'

April 9, 1887. The members of the Math were resting a little after their meal. Narendra and M. sat under a tree in the garden to the west of the monastery. . . .

M. : 'You must remember vividly your first visit to him (Sri Ramakrishna).'

Narendra : 'Yes, it was at the temple garden at Dakshineswar, in his own room. That day I sang two songs.' . . .

M. : 'What did he say after listening to your songs?'

Narendra : 'He went into Samadhi. He said to Ram Babu : "Who is this boy? How well he sings!" He asked me to come again.'

M. : 'Where did you see him next?'

Narendra : 'At Rajmohan's house. The third visit was at Dakshineswar again. During that visit he went into Samadhi and began to praise me as if I were God. He said to me, "O Narayana, you have assumed this body for my sake." But please don't tell this to anybody else.'

M. : 'What else did he say?'

Narendra : 'He said : "You have assumed this body for my sake. I asked the Divine Mother, "Mother, unless I enjoy the company of some genuine devotees completely free from lust and gold, how shall I live on earth?"' " Then he said to me, "You came to me at night, woke me up, and said, "Here I am!"' " But I did not know anything of this. I was sound asleep in our Calcutta house.'

M. : 'In other words, you may be both present and absent at the same time. It is like God who is both formless and endowed with form.'

Narendra : 'But you must not tell this to anyone else. At Cossipore he transmitted his power to me.'

M. : 'Didn't it happen when you used to meditate before a lighted fire under a tree at the Cossipore garden house?'

Narendra : 'Yes, one day, while meditating, I asked Kali to hold my hand. Kali said to me, "When I touched your body I felt something like an electric shock coming to my body." But you must not tell this to anybody here. Give me your promise.'

M. : 'There is a special purpose in his transmission of power to you. He will accomplish much work through you. One day the Master wrote on a piece of paper, "Naren will teach people."'

Narendra : 'But I said to him, "I won't do any such thing." Thereupon he said, "Your very bones will do it." . . . The Master used to call me Narayana.'

M. : 'Yes, I know he did.'

Narendra : 'When he was ill he would not allow me to pour water to wash his hands. At Cossipore he said : "Now the key is in my hands. He will give up his body when he knows who he is." . . .

M. : 'What other things did he say about you?'

Narendra : 'Once I said to him, "The forms of God and things like that which you see in your visions, are all figments of your imagination." He had so much faith in my words that he went to the Divine Mother in the temple and told Her what I had said to him. He asked Her, "Are these hallucinations, then?"' Afterwards he said to me, "Mother told me that all these are real."

'Perhaps you remember that he said to me, "When you sing, He who dwells here (touching his heart), like a snake, hisses as it were, and then, spreading His hood, quietly holds Himself steady and listens to your music." He has no doubt said many things about me; but what have I realized? . . .

'How many times he prayed to the Divine Mother for my sake! After my father's death, when I had no food at home and my mother and sisters and brothers were starving too, the Master

prayed to the Divine Mother to give me money.'

M. : 'Yes, I know that. You once told me.'

Narendra : '. . . . Now and then I feel great scepticism. At Baburam's house it seemed to me that nothing existed—as if there were no such thing as God.'

M. : 'The Master used to say that he too had passed through that mood.'

Both M. and Narendra remained silent. Then M. said; 'You are all indeed blessed! You think of the Master day and night.'

Narendra : 'But how little it is! We don't yet feel like giving up the body because we haven't realized God.'

RESURGENT HINDUISM

IV. OUR LEADER

BY THE EDITOR

The time has come for the propagation of the faith. . . . The Hinduism of the Rishis must become dynamic.—Swami Vivekananda.

I

Fifty years ago, on Monday, 11 September 1893, there stood on the platform of the Parliament of Religions in the Hall of Columbus at Chicago 'a young man who represented nothing—and everything—the man belonging to no sect, but rather to India as a whole', facing the assembled thousands, deliriously cheering him at his simple words—'Sisters and brothers of America'—uttered from the depth of his heart and with a simplicity of manners that an unsophisticated child of God alone could command. He thanked the youngest of nations in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world, in the name of the mother of religions, and in the name of the millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects. The Master had said that Naren would conquer the world, and Naren had indeed conquered it at the very first contact!

That first contact spoke eloquently of the contrast between the East and the West, and out of that contrast were formulated the most lasting principles of *rapprochement* between the two. The Parliament of Religions at Chicago was organized as a part of the World's Fair

by a young nation noted at once for its high idealism and power of organization, a nation bent on forging ahead by discovering new means of human progress and brotherhood. To this came a non-descript young man, Swami Vivekananda, who was later on acclaimed as the patriot-saint of India, but who till then had no official recognition from any church or sect, but was sent across the Pacific through the enthusiasm of a group of admirers in Madras, who had nothing but the faith of a religious people behind them and who banked only on the inherent goodness of humanity—a group, that was quite innocent of any worldly wisdom and had no notion of what a big Parliament could mean, a group, moreover, that wanted to reap nothing out of that adventure besides broadcasting the high spiritual ideas of the Hindus, which they felt were worthy of the world's consideration. The Madras disciples had simply seen the worth of the man and his ideas; and they had felt sure that he could introduce himself.

Nothing could have been more typical of the unorganized-ness of Hinduism itself than this going forth of its representative unannounced, and without formal credentials, to enter the strongly guarded doors of the world's wealth and power. (Sister Nivedita).

Sri Ramakrishna had once said of the Swami,

But it is not good for him to go to the extreme of denying the Divine Mother. He is now under Shakti's jurisdiction. Even a judge, while giving evidence in a case, comes down and stands in the witness box.

But the God-intoxicated Swami had not learnt the full significance of those pregnant sentences; for the past of his racial consciousness and the tradition of his order stood against a full cognizance of the ways and means of the world and more so against a full acceptance of them. But he had to pay heavily for this ignorance or indifference. He found the doors of the Parliament shut against him. Friendless, penniless, and homeless, he sought the aid of a well-known society, whose President wrote in reply :

Let the devil die of cold.

The devil, however, did not die, but he lived to see the snobbery of the world torn to pieces through his own effort and Hinduism put on a better footing. The very fact that he represented no sect but Hinduism as a whole, proved of immense consequence. But we shall turn to this point later on. The other fact to remember is that he depended solely on God. The age, perhaps, required a practical demonstration of such a self-abandonment, relying, as it did, on mechanical adjustments. And God did come to his rescue in a most unexpected way. The Swami had given up all hope of being present in the Parliament, when by chance he met Mr. J. H. Wright, professor of Greek in the Harvard University, who was highly impressed, and when told of the real difficulties of the Swami, he remarked indignantly :

To ask you, Swami, for your credentials is like asking the sun to state its right to shine.

And he wrote to the Chairman of the Committee for selecting delegates :

Here is a man who is more learned than all our learned professors put together.

That cleared the way for the Swami and gave him a chance to have his

mission fulfilled. Inscrutable are the ways of God !

II

But this was not the end of it all. The real difficulty was inherent in the very mission he had undertaken. There was a mass of ideas called Hinduism. But it had not yet been organized into a single system. The main features had to be carefully chosen and worked into a single pattern which could be accepted by all in India. Secondly, he could not be satisfied with a mere statement of India's doctrines. He had to conquer the West, to make her accept the bounteous spiritual gifts of India in return for her contribution to India's material welfare. His aristocratic mind shrank naturally from an one-sided flow of gifts. In fact each needed the other for her fulfilment, and this was to be achieved through Vivekananda the liaison officer of India.

On 19 September the Swami rose to read his *Paper on Hinduism*.

But when he ended Hinduism had been created. For India herself, the short address forms a brief Charter of Enfranchisement. (Nivedita).

Nay, more. It meant the enfranchisement of humanity. The Swami pleaded not only for tolerance but also for universal acceptance. He called his audience 'the sons of immortal bliss' and said that it was a sin to call men sinners. Men were travelling from truth to truth, from lesser truth to higher truth, and not from error to truth. He spoke of no personal teacher, he gave the message of no limited sect. For him Hinduism was co-extensive with universal religion.

His speech was like a tongue of flame. Among the grey waste of cold dissertation it fired the souls of the listening throng. . . . During the ensuing days he spoke again ten or twelve times. Each time he repeated with new arguments but with the same force of conviction his thesis of a universal religion without limit of time or space, uniting the whole *Credo* of the human spirit, from the enslaved fetishism of the savage to the most liberal creative affirmations of modern science. He harmonized them into a magnificent synthesis, which, far from extinguishing the hope of a single one, helped all

hopes to grow and flourish according to their true proper nature. There was to be no other dogma but the divinity inherent in man and his capacity for indefinite evolution. (Romain Rolland).

Three factors mainly contributed to his success.

First, the breadth of his religious culture: second, the great intellectual newness and interest of the thought he had brought: and thirdly, the fact that his call was sounded in the name of that which was strongest and finest, and was not in any way dependent on the meaner elements in man. (Nivedita).

Besides, he pointed out the need for assimilating Indian thought so that the Western religious consciousness might arrive at a proper understanding with the discoveries of modern science. 'The salvation of Europe lies in a rationalistic religion,' he exclaimed. He described the different religious paths as so many attempts of the human heart to comprehend the same underlying truth. His very last words at the final session of the Parliament were: 'Help and not fight!' 'Assimilation and not destruction!' 'Harmony and peace and not dissension!' In brief, he voiced the very spirit of the Parliament—of the ten thousand intellectuals present there.

Add to all this the personality of the Swami,—his magnificent bearing, the hoary tradition he carried with him, and the religious fervour with which he uttered every word. He spoke like one in authority and not like the Pharisees and Sadducees. All this explains the chorus of appreciation with which his message was hailed by the American public.

III

The Americans, and later on the Europeans, derived immense benefit from the presence of the Swami among them. But greater was the benefit to be derived by his own countrymen. True, the Swami by his breadth of outlook and depth of realization had so fully transcended all limitations of race and country, that he could write:

Do you mean to say I am born to live and die as one of those caste-ridden, superstitious, merciless, hypocritical, atheistic

cowards that you only find among the educated Hindus? I hate cowardice. I will have nothing to do with cowards. . . . I belong to India just as much as to the world, no humbug about that. . . . What country has any special claim upon me? Am I any nation's slave?

Yes, he had been helping others, since his bounteous heart could not do otherwise. But if the spiritual poverty of the West claimed all his ministrations for a time, the physical and mental misery of India was too piteously crying at his door to escape his notice for long. Nay, he was ever conscious of it. Only he was waiting for time and opportunity. Even so early as 20 September 1893 he had declared in the Parliament:

. . . the crying evil in the East is not religion—they have religion enough—but it is bread that the suffering millions of burning India cry out for with parched throats. They ask for bread, but we give them stones. It is an insult to a starving people to offer them religion; it is an insult to a starving man to teach him metaphysics.

And when after his triumph at the Parliament the hospitality of a fashionable home was unreservedly at his disposal, the Swami lay at dead of night on a bed of down drenching his pillow with tears for his miserable countrymen who could not even dream of such abundance and luxury. But still he stayed on in the West in the hope of enlisting the practical sympathy of the rich people in the cause of India's uplift. In this, however, he was far from successful. He got very little material help. But he returned to India with a different kind of capital. The approval of the West had enhanced his authority a thousandfold, and the unknown beggar of yesterday was hailed as the messenger of a new era. A country under political serfdom could not understand greatness unless the ruling races put their stamp of approval on it. The Parliament of Religions had opened the eyes of a self-forgetful nation to its immense superiority and immenser future possibility. The triumphal march of Swami Vivekananda from Colombo to Almora really symbolized the upsurge of Indian ambition from

abysmal depth to Himalayan heights. And into all this the Swami poured his own conviction and galvanizing energy so unreservedly that they fanned the Indian aspiration to white heat.

His expenditure of power in thought, writing, and impassioned speech dangerously compromised his health. . . . All witnesses agree in attesting to his overwhelming expenditure of energy, which at these meetings was communicated to the public like an electric charge. . . . And his was no case of abstract and prepared dissertation. Every thought was passion, every word was faith. Every lecture was a torrential improvisation. (Romain Rolland).

IV

Apart from these two factors—the encomium of the leaders of modern thought and the Swami's personality—there was an intrinsic worth of the message itself. Like a Sri Râmachandra or a Sri Krishna he stood for the realization of the spiritual truths in the daily walks of life—in family relationships and battle-grounds alike. Like a Buddha his heart bled for the poor and the miserable, and he made the message of the Immortal Self accessible to them, so that they too might make a fresh effort, despite their limitations, and thus raise themselves higher and higher. Like a Shankaracharya he systematized the Hindu faith and restated its doctrines with modern clearness and incisiveness of statement. Like a Ramanuja he went along proclaiming his message to the pariahs without caring a jot or tittle for his own salvation. Like a Madhwa he took a very realistic view of this phenomenal world, and put stores by the development of the religious sentiment in the daily walks of life. Like a Chaitanya he galvanized his spiritual programme with pure and intense emotional drive. And like the leaders of the Brâhmo Samâj he made his message all-inclusive. Christianity came in with its share of practical common sense and social service, and Mohammedanism caught his attention for its democratic appeal. He never questioned the fundamentals of the Hindu civilization, but found no diffi-

culty in shaking hands with the modern world. He declared unequivocally that the fate of India was sealed the very day she invented the word *Mlechchha*. But above all these—giving them life, coherence, and beauty—predominated the voice of his own Master Sri Ramakrishna on whom 'all these were threaded like pearls on a string'. It was *his* spiritual realization that furnished a stable basis for this vast and complicated superstructure.

The Swami was convinced that as in individual life so also in the social life, the driving force must come from within. He did not believe in spoon-feeding. It is not strange, therefore, that when other Indian leaders relied on press and platform oratory and agitation and looked at the West for inspiration, the Swamiji thundered :

No religion on earth preaches the dignity of humanity in such a lofty strain as Hinduism, and no religion on earth treads upon the necks of the poor and the low in such a fashion as Hinduism. Religion is not at fault, but it is the Pharisees and Sadducees. . . . No amount of politics would be of any avail until the masses in India are once more well educated, well fed, and well cared for. . . . If we want to regenerate India we must work for them. . . . Can you give them their lost individuality without making them lose their innate spiritual nature? . . . We are to put the chemicals together and the crystallization will be done by Nature according to her laws. . . . Raise them slowly up, raise them to equality. . . . My idea is to bring to the door of the meanest, the poorest, the noble ideas that the human race has developed both in and out of India, and let them think for themselves.

This in itself was an ambitious scheme. But the Swami went farther and elaborated it and worked the whole thing out in details. Unfortunately, however, Providence did not spare him for the Indian work for more than five years. Nevertheless, within that short period he revolutionized the Hindu outlook, and he dragged the Hindu youths from their wonted passivity and pessimism, firing them with new hope and activism. He sowed his seeds on all possible soils. And the coming generations were expected to harvest the

crop, increasing the acreage all the while.

Within that brief period he bestowed his best thoughts on such different questions as the masses, the women, the evils of caste, the problems of conversion, early marriage, marriage of widows, education, research, philanthropic works, industrial regeneration, preaching outside India, and, in a word, on everything that stood in the way of Hindu resurgence. He invited his countrymen to lay more emphasis on the essentials of and permanent values in their culture, morals, religion, and spirituality. The approach was always to be positive and not merely negative. Each soul must have its own positive and dynamic line of progress. Mere giving up of a lower truth was not eulogized by him as an achievement. It was the positive gain that mattered.

No distinction, henceforth, between sacred and secular. To labour is to pray. To conquer is to renounce. Life itself is religion. To have and to hold is as stern a trust as to quit and to avoid. (Nivedita).

According to him Sannyâsa was a very high ideal. But it was not for all and sundry. He did preach renunciation, but with him it means not mere giving up, but positive spiritual uplift—the giving up of the lower for the sake of the immediately higher. A natural counterpart of this was his declaration that Mâyâ is not illusion, that in its latest development it is a simple statement of facts of what we are and what we see around us. Real spiritual worth lies not in submitting to this environment by accepting it as the final truth but in conquering and transcending it by gradual stages. He found India steeped in Tamas. He wanted her to rise to Sattva after passing through a fiery ordeal of Rajas :

‘Did Buddha teach that the many was real and the ego unreal, while orthodox Hinduism regards the One as the Real, and the many as unreal?’ he was asked. ‘Yes’, answered the Swami. ‘And what Ramakrishna Paramahansa and I have added to this is, that the many and the One are the same Reality perceived by the same mind at different times and in different attitudes.’ (The Master as I Saw Him).

This may not be genuine history. It may even lack metaphysical incisiveness. But as a philosophy of practical life, as a fresh way of approach to life, for the generality of our countrymen, required by recent historical tendencies, this succinctly sums up the Swami’s greatest contribution to modern thought.

This positive approach had for its corollary his philosophy of strength. Said he,

Be strong my young friends. That is my advice to you. . . . Strength is life,, weakness is death. Can we ever commit any sin? Impossible! Such a faith is needed, such a faith makes men of us, makes Gods of us. . . . The only religion that ought to be taught is the religion of fearlessness.

With him it was not passive innocence but daring achievement that mattered. And through all these exhortations ran the constantly recurring refrain :

Religion and religion alone is the life of India, and when that goes India will die, in spite of politics, in spite of social reforms, in spite of Kuvera’s wealth poured upon the head of every one of her children. . . . The national ideals of India are renunciation and service.

V

This last word brings us tangibly to the very core of the Swamiji’s message and puts in bold relief the real significance of his life. He did not believe in abstract philosophy alone, he wanted it to be life-giving, life-transforming. Indians are going down since their high philosophy is divorced from practicality. He wanted to make his philosophy practical. And this resulted in his prescription of service as the motive power for Indian regeneration. Why serve others? Because humanity is only a form, the highest form of the Divine. Chandidas of Bengal had declared,

Hear my brother, O Man!
Man is the truth of truths,
And there is nought beyond Man.

And earlier still the *Skandopanishad* had asserted,

The body is the temple, and the soul the spotless Shiva.

It was left for Swami Vivekananda, under the inspiration of Sri Rama-

krishna, to translate this into a practical philosophy for social and individual progress.

The Swami's words, however, carried force, not because they embodied a well-balanced philosophy coupled with practical direction—these elements were undoubtedly there—but because his character set the stamp of authority on every word he spoke. It was no vain oratory when he wrote in the hour of his greatest trouble in America—friendless, penniless, weary, and suffering from cold as he was—

With a bleeding heart I have crossed half the world to this strange land seeking for help. . . . The Lord . . . will help me. I may perish of cold and hunger in this land, but I bequeath to you, young men, this sympathy, this struggle for the poor, the ignorant, the oppressed.

And in the midst of dejection the confident voice rang out :

Glory unto the Lord, we will succeed. . . . Life is nothing, death is nothing. . . . Glory unto the Lord—march on, the Lord is our General. Do not look back to see who falls—forward—onward!

'Forward—onward!'—that is the command of our generalissimo. And he makes himself so endearing by his intense human appeal! We do not think of Vivekananda as a finished product of any great sculptor—perfectly

balanced in every part, but without any life or inspiration. Rather is he a great Man or simply the *Man*! He has his moments of dejection, his moments of heart-searching. Often, too, he is cross with others, impatient at the terrible delay in the execution of his cherished plans. But he can never curse, never leave the task though foiled at every turn. He loves humanity not by superimposing all sorts of imaginary virtues on it, but in spite of—nay, one is tempted to say, because of—all its foibles and frailties.

Feel from the heart. What is in the intellect or reason? . . . Love shall win the victory. Do you love your fellow men?

Aye, it is the unthinking love of a Rantideva, who in the full possession of pelf and power, declared that he liked nothing so much as to draw on himself the miseries of the world so that it might heave at least a short sigh of relief. Energy and tenderness—that sums up the Man in Vivekananda. No wonder that the Swami, who once pined for Samâdhi, for personal salvation, should cry in the moment of his triumph :

May I be born again and again and suffer thousands of miseries, so that I may help the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls ; and, above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races and of all species is the object of my worship.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA : THE MAN AND HIS MESSAGE

BY SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

Eighty years ago, in a respectable Hindu home of Calcutta, was born a child who was destined to revolutionize the thought-current of the world. This was Narendranath Dutt, afterwards known as Swami Vivekananda. Under the liberal education of his parents, the boy grew into a strong-built youth whose intellectual powers were matched by his moral and aesthetic qualities, all of which made him the idol of his fellows. Gifted from an early age with a

high degree of concentration, he showed a marked predilection for religion even while he was in his teens, and was a member of the Brâhmo Samâj, the Protestant wing of Hinduism. His favourite question during his college days to anyone credited with particular religious attainments was, 'Sir, have you seen God?' He was long disappointed in his quest, till one day in 1880 he put the same question to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the Saint of

Dakshineswar—a place four miles to the north of Calcutta—and was amazed to get the reply, 'Yes, I see him just as I see you here, only in a much intenser sense.' That was the turning point in Narendranath's life.

He began to visit Dakshineswar and was more and more struck by the Saint's extraordinary spiritual powers, his frequent complete absorption in God—or Samâdhi, as it is called—his childlike purity, his absolute non-attachment to wealth or possession, his wonderful catholicity of view and capacity of expounding the most abstruse truths in the simplest way, his power of reading a person's mind through and through, and, above all, his super-human love and compassion. At his touch Narendra one day almost lost his body consciousness and begged to be restored to the normal state for the sake of his parents, a request which the Saint granted with a smile. No wonder that Narendranath gradually surrendered himself to Sri Ramakrishna.

The Master, as was his wont, fathomed the rare potentialities of his disciple from the very beginning, and accordingly trained him along the line of least resistance for the highest form of truth, the Advaita, or the absolute oneness of Existence. Narendra at first ridiculed the idea of everything being of the essence of God, but he soon came to grasp the truth of this ancient teaching of the Vedas through personal experience. Thus, under the watchful and loving guidance of Sri Ramakrishna, he understood the full import of the teachings of the Hindu scriptures, and accepted all forms of discipline prescribed in them as helpful to particular types of aspirants. Getting over his earlier beliefs as a Brahmo, he realized that God could be with form as well as without form, nay He was unconditioned as well as conditioned.

His tutelage lasted till August, 1886, when Sri Ramakrishna after a protracted illness gave up his mortal body. The last two years of this period were years of great struggle for him; for shortly

before he got his B.A. degree, he suddenly lost his father through a heart attack, which left the family in dire poverty. He had to maintain his mother and brothers and sisters, and at the same time to allay his burning thirst for God-realization. Particularly, during the last year, Sri Ramakrishna's illness required his constant attendance as a nurse. Yet, so great was his spirit of renunciation that he failed to beg material things of the Divine Mother, although he was thrice sent to the Kâli temple for this purpose by the Master.

On Sri Ramakrishna's passing away, Narendra with his brother disciples moved to a dilapidated house at Baranagore, near Calcutta, which was the first monastery of the Ramakrishna Order, founded by him to carry out in everyday life the teachings of the Master. Here, inspired by Narendranath—now a Sannyâsin under the name of Swami Vivekananda—the monks led a life of great asceticism, combined with a supreme effort for realization. Within two years, he left the monastery to lead a wandering monk's life, which he continued till destiny beckoned him to the distant shores of America in 1893. The intimate knowledge which these five years of travel from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin gave him of the conditions obtaining in the different strata of Indian life, stood him in good stead when later he started the work of regeneration for his motherland.

At the request of some enthusiastic admirers, Swami Vivekananda took upon himself the task of representing Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions, held in connection with the World's Fair at Chicago, U.S.A. Although not equipped with the necessary credentials, he providentially got an opportunity to deliver his message. The ovation which greeted him when he addressed that vast gathering as 'Sisters and brothers of America,' is a matter of common knowledge now. Suffice it to say that this unknown man from India made history for his country that day. There was something in his very appear-

ance that had captivated the audience. His speeches on this occasion touched the inmost core of their hearts by their freshness of approach to the problems of life. During the three years of his stay in that country, he lectured continually from one place to another, and was uniformly appreciated. All homes were thrown open to him. He made numerous friends in respectable circles and had many disciples. His two visits to England were also a great success. In both countries, it was the loftiness of his message, combined with the manner of its presentation, as also his unsullied life, that produced this effect. Although beauty and wealth vied with each other to lure him, he was proof against both, the true child of Sri Ramakrishna that he was. Was it for nothing that the Saint would often go into Samadhi at the very sight of him?

In the West, Swami Vivekananda preached only those great, life-giving, unifying principles for which Hinduism ever stands. The majesty of the Atman—the real Self of man—Its transcendence of the chain of birth and death, Its infinite power, Its eternal purity and freedom—these were his themes. Of his great Teacher he spoke only once in public. He did not believe in conversion; he would only ask a Christian to be a better Christian, a Mohammedan to be a better Mohammedan, and so on; for to him each great faith was a path unto one and the same God—all roads led to Rome. He never imposed his own will on his listeners, although he felt that he had the power to alter their thoughts if he liked. He wanted everyone to develop along his or her particular line, which was the natural way of growth.

While in America, he kept up correspondence with his Indian disciples and admirers, and encouraged them to work for the uplift of their country. The appalling poverty and ignorance under which these countless millions of Indians laboured, drew blood from his tender heart. He was determined to do something for them. In fact, this was one

of his main reasons for going to America—to get some funds for the Indian work. The first famine relief work of the Ramakrishna Mission, in Rajputana, was initiated at his instance in 1894. Feeling the need of his presence in India, he returned home early in 1897, leaving two of his brother disciples to look after the Vedanta work in the West.

The news of his success as a preacher in America and England having long preceded him, the nation rose as one man to do him honour. From Colombo, where he landed, to Almora in the Himalayas, he received innumerable addresses of welcome, and his replies thereto comprise one of his marvellous series of lectures. Through these he sought to rouse his countrymen from their age-long lethargy, telling them again and again that the country was living, that spirituality was its soul, and that they must shake off their self-hypnosis to realize the immortal truths which their forefathers had left for them and share them with the rest of the world. This last was India's special mission, and once again she must carry it out to save the world from the poison of materialism. His prophecy that the whole of the Western world was on a volcano which might burst any day and break it to pieces, has already come true. To save itself, the West, he said, must reconstruct its life on a spiritual foundation, taking a cue from India.

While praising his countrymen for their innate spiritual bent, he called upon them to get rid of their Tamas or inertia, which they in their ignorance were mistaking for Sattva or serenity. The two he said, were as the poles asunder, like pitch darkness and dazzling light, which are similar in their blinding effect. The way to reach Sattva was through Rajas or activity. He exhorted all to have burning faith in themselves and struggle for the emancipation of the masses, to give them back their lost individuality. Realizing that the abject poverty and ignorance of the people were mainly responsible for their degraded condition,

he tried to set up an organization that would work whole-heartedly in a spirit of service to eradicate them. This was the origin of the Ramakrishna Mission, pledged to carry out the national ideals of renunciation and service. To feed the hungry, clothe the naked, treat the sick, educate the illiterate, comfort the afflicted, in short, in every possible way to help people to help themselves—this was the great task before the country. It was not to be mere social service; it was to be a regular worship of God in the many, irrespective of caste, creed or sex. 'The poor, the illiterate, the down-trodden—let these be your God,' he cried. That the country has taken up the idea is a patent fact to-day. Many organizations have sprung up in India, which are trying to work on similar lines.

The Swami lived only five more years. Incessant labour had undermined his health, and his second trip to the West in 1899, which lasted for a year and a half, failed to restore it. In the course of this also he continued his beneficent work of ministration on a somewhat modified scale. Finally, after a short tour in East Bengal and Assam, and further efforts for the consolidation of his work, he burst the bonds of his body at the Belur Math, the head-quarters of his organization, on the 4th July, 1902. It was the anniversary of the American Independence Day—a day which he loved so much and had even commemorated in a poem. He was barely thirty-nine years of age.

But his life-work is not to be measured by the number of years he lived. His was a dynamic personality, which chafed at the very idea of rest. 'It is better to wear out than rust out,' he often said. His desire was to die in the field of battle like a hero, and this he did. On the last day, after meditating in the chapel—behind closed doors, which was an unusual occurrence—for three hours in the morning, he explained a verse from the *White Yajurveda* in his original way, and took a class on Panini's Sanskrit grammar for his monks

for about three hours in the afternoon. Sixteen years ago, after he had tasted the bliss of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, the highest state of mergence in the Supreme Brahman, his Master had said to him: 'Now you know what you are. But the key to this shall be with me, and only when you have finished the Divine Mother's work, will you have it.' Evidently that condition was fulfilled that evening.

Swami Vivekananda's contribution in the domain of religion was immeasurable. He rejuvenated Hinduism, or Vedanta, as he preferred to call it. Through the help of his Master, he saw perfect order in the apparent wilderness of its scriptures.

To put the Hindu ideas into English and then make out of dry philosophy and intricate mythology and queer, startling psychology a religion which shall be easy, simple, popular, and at the same time meet the requirements of the highest minds—is a task only those can understand who have attempted it,

he wrote in 1890 to a disciple, and this is just what he accomplished to perfection. He found that in Hinduism the approach to the highest truth was psychological. In other words, the different philosophies, such as Dualism, Qualified Monism, and Monism, are presentations of the same truth looked at from different angles according to the temperament and capacity of the aspirant. There is no contradiction among them, just as there is none among the different stages of a man's life. To vary the metaphor, each religion is a language to express the highest truth. We travel not from error to truth, but from truth to truth—at best from lower truth to higher truth. So there is absolutely no need for fanatical quarrels over religion. They are all due to ignorance, and must be treated as a disease. This harmony of all religions was the central theme of his teachings.

The Swami may well be called the maker of modern India. At his galvanic touch the moribund nation has grown self-conscious. The ill effects of centuries of neglect and oppression can-

not be removed in a day. But the process of reconstruction has begun, and it is up to the Indians themselves to quicken its pace. The Swami repudiated negative ideas. His was a message of hope and strength. He would not entertain the idea of sin, but call it an error of judgement. Man's potentiality is infinite. A cow never steals nor does a wall tell a lie, but they remain a cow and a wall; man, on the contrary, behaves like a beast or a devil, but he can also realize God if he wants to. All that is necessary for him is to have a sincere determination to reach the goal, no matter what it costs. To hear the Swami proclaim the divinity of man with his characteristic fire was an unforgettable experience. It would resuscitate a dead man!

He believed in giving equal opportunities to all. Or, if there must be difference, let the weaker person have more than the stronger. If a brahmin child needed one teacher, let the pariah child have four, for that was equity. He did not denounce hereditary caste. He knew that divisions in society were natural and inevitable. Only they changed forms in different countries. The caste system in India was introduced mainly to keep out competition, and it was never altogether rigid. Rather our forefathers aimed at levelling up—raising all by slow stages to the status of a brahmin, who was the custodian of the national culture. According to the Swami, this has again to be done, under the guidance of new Rishis or seers of truth, who would be born from time to time and produce new Smritis or law-codes. In India, it is the Shrutis or Upanishads which are held to be unchanging, but not the Smritis, which are adaptations of the principles of the Upanishads to the changing conditions of particular ages. That Swami Vivekananda himself was such a Rishi, we may conclude, not on the authority of his great Teacher alone, but also in view of the Swami's deep insight into the heart of things and his all-comprehensive vision extending far into the future.

Unlike Kipling, the Swami visualized a much-needed union between the East and the West, to be effected by a judicious exchange of Indian spirituality with Western materialistic knowledge. Mere material greatness without a fundamental spiritual outlook that would comprehend the entire human race as one Brotherhood, is bound to lead to wars even worse than the present one. Similarly, the spiritual greatness of only a handful of persons to the exclusion of countless millions who are grovelling in misery, cannot but spell disaster for any country. Indians should first and foremost try to be truly religious, not simply by observing certain rituals nor by giving intellectual assent to certain dogmas, but by realizing the great truths of their scriptures—by actually being and becoming. Keeping this as their ideal, they should, as a step to it, supply those vital needs of the body and mind without which spiritual progress is impossible for the general mass of people. It may take time to do this, but it must be done with all earnestness, through an intelligent organized effort in a spirit of mutual helpfulness and utter absence of jealousy.

The Swami was an advocate of the enfranchisement of Indian women, and regarded the downfall of the country as partly due to their degraded position in society. Citing Manu's well-known dictum: 'The gods are pleased where the women are happy,' he strongly pleaded for their equal partnership with men. A bird with only one wing cannot fly, he used to say. But this uplift must be on strictly national lines, after the model of Sitâ and Sâvitri, and not in imitation of Western standards, for it would be suicidal. Maintaining their traditional purity to the full, Indian women must acquire practicality in the different fields of life. The Swami was an ardent believer in the magical power of education of the right type. It was in a sense his panacea for most of the evils of society. Given proper education, Indian women would solve their own problems.

Swami Vivekananda was an embodiment of the Advaita philosophy that he preached. He was a breaker of bondage *par excellence*. Believing in the omnipotence of the spirit, he wanted to see it applied in every sphere of life, so that an all-round development might result. All that was necessary was to supply the deficiencies, and the best way to do this was by removing the barriers. Then the infinite potentialities of the Soul would automatically manifest themselves. He was a living example of the multi-sided development to which a man could aspire. The readers of his Works cannot fail to be struck by his scholarship and depth of thought, his synthetic vision, his aesthetic sense and humour, his eloquence and power of expression both as a speaker and a writer, his glowing patriotism and love of humanity at large, and, above all, his saintliness and hold on the Reality. He was also a skilled musician with a magnificent voice, whose devotional songs repeatedly threw Sri Ramakrishna into states of Samadhi. No wonder that people adored him in both hemispheres. But

in spite of superhuman honours bestowed on him by thousands of men and women, he was unassuming as a child, and sincerely attributed whatever virtues he possessed to the unbounded grace of his Master. He wanted to be just 'a voice without a form'. Here truly was a case of 'आश्रयो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा'—Wonderful is the expounder of truth and talented its recipient.'

In his Life as well as Works we have an endless storehouse of materials to enlighten and uplift us. Let us delve into them again and again, and assimilate what comes to our hands, with purity, patience, and perseverance. Our labours will not go unrewarded. I conclude this short sketch with the Swami's beautiful summing up of what religion means :

Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within by controlling Nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy—by one or more or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms are but secondary details.

VIVEKANANDA'S WORK

BY SIR JADUNATH SARKAR Kt., C.I.E., D.LIT.

Fifty years have passed away since a young, unknown, quaintly dressed Indian monk proclaimed before the most advanced people in the world that Hinduism was not a contemptible, corrupt superstition, which was constantly trembling in helplessness, ashamed of itself in the modern civilized world, and ever retreating before the assault of Christian missionaries, to live within its own obscurantist shell, like an owl in its hole, afraid of daylight. He boldly claimed that Hinduism had a message for mankind which the modern civilized world sorely needed and which the world would be the poorer for despising. Thus the Hindu philosophy of life and beyond appeared as a challenger in the

arena of the World's Parliament of Religions. And there it has remained ever since.

Europe and America were startled by the boldness of this claim; even *Bhai Pratap* whispered that it was all bunkum and brag. India too was stirred, as never before, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. But has Vivekananda's work ended in merely feeding our national vanity and hardening blind conservatism in Hindu society? No, for then he would have been forgotten by this time, and deservedly so, because the world cannot be for ever deluded by a fraud. In the calm retrospect of the last most changeful half century let us look clearly at Vivekananda's

real achievement and see how we now differ from what we were in 1893.

There had been saints in India before Ramakrishna, and there will be after him. The Census of 1901 returned 52 lakhs of souls as religious mendicants among the Indian population, and some holy men among them have been recognized as possessed of God-vision,—as able to commune at will with the Great Soul of the Universe. Herein there has been nothing peculiar, nothing epoch-making, to distinguish Ramakrishna from other true Sâdhus. But their work has always been personal, their end individual soul-purification by contact. And, therefore, by the inexorable law of Nature, the work of such Sadhus has come to an end with the end of that physical touch, with their bodily death. The living flame has died out with them, and they no longer inspire save faintly by their recorded sayings. Thus has ceased for us that inner purification of the disciple by the Guru so finely described by Tulsidas—

तब कयला का मयला छोड़े जब आग करे परवेश ।

The charcoal loses its blackness only when the fire penetrates into it.

Vivekananda made Ramakrishna's mission on earth complete and permanent, by organization and well planned direction. The torch will burn for ever, unless we cease to be worthy of our ancient Hindu heritage. The Christian scriptures truly say,

As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (*James*, ii. 26).

There had been, I admit, good works in Hindu society before Vivekananda, but they had consisted of alms-giving, with occasional endowment of hospitals and schools; but not social service irrespective of caste or creed, not the type of work we see before our eyes done by the Ramakrishna Mission at Benares, Hardwar, and many other places. What our ancestors thought and how they stood aloof from humanity (except for the giving of doles of rice or pice), we can best see from the following inci-

dents that happened in Calcutta—the capital of British India, the centre of the new light from the West, the seat of the first English College for the Indians (the Hindoo College, founded in 1818), only a hundred and twenty years ago.

In January 1824, Bishop Heber of Calcutta wrote to a friend,

On the whole the Hindus are a lively, intelligent, and interesting people. . . . Their religion, by the institution of caste, hardens their hearts against each other to a degree which is often most revolting. A traveller falls down sick in the streets of a village (I am mentioning a fact which happened ten days ago,) nobody knows what caste he is of; therefore, nobody goes near him lest they should become polluted; he wastes to death before the eyes of a whole community. . . . The man of whom I am speaking was found in this state and taken care of by a passing European, but if he had died, his skeleton would have lain in the streets till the vultures carried it away. . . .

A friend of mine, some months ago, found a miserable wretch, a groom out of employ, who had crept, sick of dysentery, into his courtyard. He had there remained in a corner on the pavement two days and nights. Perhaps twenty servants had been eating their meals daily within six yards of him, yet none had relieved him, none had so much as carried him into the shelter of one of the outhouses. . . . When reproved for this, their answer was, 'He was not our kinsman,' 'Whose business was it?' (*Heber's Narrative*, 2nd ed., iii. 262).

When I read the above for the first time,—it was years before the Chicago speech,—I felt deeply humiliated and ashamed of our Hindu society. That huge elephant was too thick-skinned; it lazily closed its eyes and chewed grass while flies and dirt settled on it and little boys threw stones at it from a safe distance. But I have lived to see a day when the scene described by Bishop Heber is impossible in Benares or Allahabad, Bangalore or Hardwar.

I do not deny that before Vivekananda some uplift work was being done, some service of man irrespective of caste was being rendered by Indians, but they were Indians who had gone out of the pale of Hindu society and they could touch only the bare fringe of the vast body of human suffering in India. The elephant had yet to be

awakened. And that is exactly what Vivekananda did. He switched the vast potential energy, man-power and wealth of Hindu society, on to the pursuit of 'good works' and at the same time linked it with the subtler task of inner purification by the study and popular preaching of Vedantic philosophy as the spring of all our good acts.

It is wrong to say that this transformation of Hinduism is a programme stolen from Christianity in India. I would rather say that modern Christianity by its example helped us to recover our long-lost heritage of Mahayana Buddhism. Vivekananda took his *organization* over from Christian monachism, exactly as the Christian Church in its earliest age borrowed the *organization* of the Roman imperial Government, which according to the latest scholars chiefly helped it to become a world faith. That is why Vivekananda, and following him Sister Nivedita, so deeply loved and admired Buddhism and pursued Buddhistic studies.

He combined faith with work, and the tree he planted will be judged by its fruit. More than sixty years ago, when General Booth founded the Salvation Army and announced its programme of active charity, a rich Englishman sent a cheque for £1,000 to Prof. T. H. Huxley and requested him to pass it on as a donation to the Salvation Army if Huxley judged the new movement to be worthy. Huxley returned the cheque to the donor, saying,

In the Roman Catholic church, many orders of monks were founded in the Middle Ages for serving the poor and the sick, and at first they called forth much enthusiasm and money support. But after some years of good work every one of them degenerated and became a den of idleness, self-indulgence, and vice, forgetting their philanthropic duties, so that the Pope had to dissolve them and found new orders in their place. There is no certainty that the Salvation Army would prove an exception to this historic cycle of enthusiasm, work, wealth, idleness, vice, and downfall.

This is the rock that lies ahead of us in India too. How long will Vivekananda's Order retain the pure ideal of its

founder and continue to pursue the unselfish work of the service of the God in Man (*Nara-Nârâyan*) without flagging, without sliding back? Vivekananda himself foresaw the danger, and when he first entered his newly founded Math at Belur, he turned to his younger brethren and said, 'Take care, that after my death you do not turn this Math into a common Bairâgis' den (*Bâbâjir Akhârâ*).'

In October 1904, when I passed some unforgettable days at Bodh Gaya with Sister Nivedita, Sir J. C. Bose, Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Saradananda, and Gupta Maharaj (*not Mahendranath Gupta*, the author of the *Ramakrishna Kathâmrita*), I had some anxious talks with the last-named Sadhu about the future of the R. K. Mission being dependent on its getting an undiminishing stream of genuine recruits for carrying on the work of the elder Brethren after them.

The Brethren are everywhere working under the eyes of the lay public of Hindu society. Let us not forget that Vivekananda and his 'Master' too are still looking down upon us and our works from on high. We shall not lose their blessings so long as we keep true to their ideals. And there are some effective safeguards too. The Ramakrishna Mission, unlike the monastic orders of mediaeval Europe, is a legally registered charitable society. It works in public and publishes its accounts. The Mission is managed by a Governing Body which is responsible to its members, both lay and monastic, nearly 50 p.c. of the members being laymen. The branch mission centres are almost invariably managed by local committees in which the lay members predominate, and the presidents, secretaries and treasurers are very often public men who are sometimes not even devotees of Ramakrishna. Thus this Mission is working under the salutary glare of publicity, instead of conducting its affairs in the seclusion of a Roman Catholic cloister. It is quite distinct from the Ramakrishna Math.

VIVEKANANDA: A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

BY NANALAL C. MEHTA, I.C.S.

I can hardly recall the time when Vivekananda came into my life. I know, however, that by the time I was seventeen—a student in Cambridge—Vivekananda was already to me an outstanding figure of new India, with this proviso, however, that this new India was still not able to shake off its self-imposed shackles of paying homage to an old fashioned Paramahansa. To my youthful mind the complete surrender of Vivekananda to his illiterate Master seemed to be completely illogical, but then it is the inevitable stage of ignorance through which one must pass before knowledge is attained. A few years ago when I had the privilege of visiting Belur, I realized or rather got a glimpse of the stature of the Master and his great disciple; but this transvaluation took almost thirty years. The supreme quality of Vivekananda which would, perhaps, ever be associated with him, is his masculinity in thinking and expressing himself whether in words or in action. I once inquired from a disciple of his how he came to be a member of the Mission, and whether he had ever met the great Swami. I was told that years before he renounced the world he had had the good fortune of being a host to the Swami; but the only thing which he remembered of those precious days was the expression of the Swami's haunting eyes. It took years before this haunting led the Swami's host to take up the life of dedicated service.

I have sometimes asked myself as to the distinguishing characteristics of Ramakrishna and his Mission. Tolerance and a comprehensive understanding of the viewpoint of others—particularly in matters religious or spiritual—are common to Hinduism and the Hindu mind. There has, however, been considerable divergence between tolerance of the mind and tolerance in practice. I believe that it is in the latter sphere

that Ramakrishna and his great disciple distinguished themselves; and by insisting upon understanding the other man's point of view and treating the various creeds as so many pathways of self-realization and of service they immediately blazed the trail of a Faith Universal in its application. Further, the dynamic personality of the Swami saw to it that this new Faith was not merely lip-service to humanity but meant continuous and enormous sacrifice—in fact a life of dedication in a mood of utter humility and self-understanding. Shankara's brilliant monism and intellectual brilliance were combined in Swamiji's personality with Buddha's own readiness of service. If Ramakrishna had the calm of the Tathâgata, Vivekananda had the fire and brilliance of an apostle. The Swami was quick to realize the reason for his country's decline. It was not any flaw in the intellectual or spiritual evolution of the people but it was because of the want of coherence between thought and practice. Muhammed was quick to notice that righteousness in action was more important even than right thinking, and it was because of the bridge that he was able to throw between precept and practice that even the slaves of Islam wrought miracles within a few years of the demise of this noble son of Arabia. It was because of this instinctive realization of the vital defect in the country's outlook towards the problems of the poor and their poverty that Vivekananda urged the people to awake and to arise and his own disciples to consecrate their endeavours in this great process of uplift.

To people like me the Swami brought a new enlightenment, a deeper insight into the religion in which I was born. What appeared to be mere superstition and empty formulae, acquired significance and the course of India's centu-

ries became alive with meaning and hope. The Swami became a Guru in the sense that he acted as the intermediary in understanding his great Master and thereby in realizing the meaning of the great quest and the way to go about it. Some of us were made to realize that life gained in depth and meaning just to the extent of the elimination of the ego and that the individual efforts were more fruitful and gained in intensity to the extent to which they were dedicated to God. It is not merely a question of an intellectual belief or a dogma but of personal experience. The Swami's teaching like the message of the Gita is simple, but the simplicity itself is baffling; and in order to comprehend it in all its grandeur one requires the highest effort of imagination and of action.

Looking back in retrospect, the very fact that people like Ramakrishna and his great disciple made their appearance at a time when India's star appeared to be hitched on to the new light from the West, shows that the great tradition of spiritual renaissance in this country remains unbroken, because the people instinctively understand the significance of life in spiritual terms despite transient phases of distraction. It now looks as if Ramakrishna and Vivekananda heralded the closing of a chapter which, perhaps, lasted for about a couple of centuries, when the light of her spiritual destiny was dimmed and India had shrunk from her position of leadership to that of a mere beggar. The light was breaking, however, precisely when the sky looked overlaid with clouds. Now despite the sorrow, the misery, and the gloom that seem to pervade the country, there can be no doubt that the country is already on the upward cycle of her renaissance based upon a faith and a genuine understanding of what dedication to God and self-realization mean in actual practice; and here the Swami and his great Master stand for all times the beacons of a new era not merely for this country but for the entire world. The

raising of the Ramakrishna shrine on the banks of the Ganges by an American disciple is both a symbol and a portent of the light that is already streaming out and filling the souls of people who will understand what life is for and what realization should mean in practice. The lives of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda acquire a new meaning. The light within must illumine every phase of activity and the realization has to be sought not merely within oneself as an isolated entity but in the service of mankind. It is amazing how the teachings of Ramakrishna appear appropriate for people who still retain pristine faith and for people of my kind who are not wedded to any particular creed or doctrine but still feel an urge for the Supreme Reality. The teachings, in other words, constitute a kind of ladder to be used according to one's capacity to climb. All that is desired is earnestness, a real longing—something akin to the urge of the child to lose itself within the mother's fold. The demand is modest, but how difficult it is to live up to it! In his flashes of illumination the Swami indicated the nature of the divine, when he said that the nearest thing to divinity is the love of a mother for the child—profound, selfless, and completely disinterested. All that one has to do is to prove oneself worthy of it, to seek it and to realize it in everyday life. If the Swami's eloquence rose like a mighty stream, the simple words of his Master embodied the profoundest wisdom which illumine like a flash of lightning the dark and impenetrable recesses of mind. The words of the Gita ring with new solemnity and the illumination rushes in as if all the entrances were suddenly ajar. The Swami looks so distant in time simply because he crowded his brief hours on earth with an epoch's activities and is looking down upon the world from a pinnacle of spiritual glory. Blessed are those indeed who can catch a glimpse of that radiance—radiance which is the power to lift the common man and turn him into an instrument of God.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BY DR. R. C. MAZUMDAR, M.A., PH.D.

Men have a natural tendency to fix a label on all great men. Almost by instinct we come to regard them as a spiritual leader, patriot, hero, poet, scientist, artist, etc. But one feels some difficulty in putting such a label against the name of Swami Vivekananda. A great spiritual leader and religious teacher he undoubtedly was, but somehow one feels that that does not seem to describe him correctly or fittingly. Most of us had not the privilege or good fortune to come into personal contact with him, and form our ideas about him only from his writings. As we go through his speeches, letters, and books they conjure up before our vision different figures at different times. Sometimes we find before us a great religious teacher imbued with the highest spiritual force; sometimes a great Indian patriot or social reformer burning with a fervent desire to free the country from political bondage and shackles of superstition which are sapping the strength and the vitality of the nation; and some times he towers high as a superman above the narrow limitations of countries and peoples, a prophet of the brotherhood of man and international love and goodwill the lack of which is for the present the greatest blight upon human civilization. Each of these visions, to which others may be added, is equally deep and impressive, and gains hold of us and crowds out others according to our own mood and the need of the moment and the particular message of the Swami which for the time being engages our attention.

India has produced numerous saints and religious teachers, but it would be difficult to detect in their messages an appreciation of the present-day problems of life and a heart bleeding for the suffering millions of India such as

we find throughout the writings and speeches of the Swami. Sometimes he even goes to the length of subordinating religion to other interests of life. Take for example the following :

At the present time there are men who give up the world to help their own salvation. Throw away everything, even your own salvation, and go and help others. . . . Give up this little life of yours. What matters if you die of starvation, you and I and thousands like us, so long as this nation lives? The nation is sinking, the curse of unnumbered millions is on our heads . . . here is the greatest of all works, here are the sinking millions . . . first bread and then religion. We stuff them too much with religion, when the poor fellows have been starving.

Like the most advanced political thinkers he had no illusion of the past, but dreamt of a glorious future for his motherland.

You, the upper classes of India . . . you are but mummies ten thousand years old . . . you merge yourselves in the void and disappear and let New India arise in your place. Let her arise—out of the peasant's cottage, out of the huts of the fisherman, the cobbler, and the sweeper.

Such passages, reflecting what we may call the most advanced views on the secular problems of life, may be quoted in any number.

This diversity in the personality of the Swami at first appears to be somewhat puzzling. But with the advance of years and a closer study of his teachings one slowly realizes that this apparent plurality is the real key to the proper understanding of his personality. It becomes increasingly clear that the great lesson which the Swami's teaching holds out before us is the indivisibility of a human being, in spite of the multiple manifestations of his emotion and intellect, and the consequent unity of the problem which faces society; for society is after all a mere aggregate of individuals and, therefore, partakes of

their essential character. Let us examine this a little more closely.

Ordinarily we are apt to look upon a human being as composed of so many watertight compartments, each unregulated by and independent of the other. Thus we conceive of him as religious, educated, wealthy, social, artistic, and so on; and we talk and behave as if these different aspects of men are not interdependent but separate entities. Similarly we look upon a society or community from different angles and consider separately its political, social, economic, or religious condition. The practical consequence of this process of thought is that our attempts at improvement or reform proceed upon compartmental basis and only one or another aspect, either of individual or of society, receives our attention at one and the same time. The same process of thought leads us to devote our attention exclusively to one section of humanity—mostly to the community or society to which we ourselves belong—and the rest does not appear to be of primary concern to us.

The whole life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda seem to be a crusade against this narrow conception of man and society. To him each individual human being is not a mere bundle of different intellectual and emotional attributes, but an organic entity whose diverse component elements are bound up together by one indivisible force. This constitutes the main spring which guides his life and actions, and so long as this is not brought under control, all attempts at reform are bound to prove futile. Religion, education, wealth, or social influence would not vitally change his outlook or character so long as this unifying vital force in him is not properly regulated. 'I do not believe in reform,' said he, 'I believe in growth.' That one sentence contains the gist of the teachings of the Swami. Individual as well as society must grow on proper lines. A plant will grow on a healthy soil, and spread its foliage and blossom into flowers under natural laws of

growth; but you cannot add branches and flowers to the dead or diseased trunk of a tree.

The force that would renovate individual and society and make them grow must come from within. As Swami Vivekananda pointed out again and again, the root cause of all our evils and failure is the lack of faith and physical strength. 'Our young men must be strong first of all. Religion will come afterwards,' said he. Again, 'You will understand the Gita better with your biceps muscles a little stronger.' With strength must grow faith—faith in our purity and ability to do great things and become great. This faith and strength must come from the Upanishads or Vedanta, the rich heritage of our ancient philosophy which formed the basis of all religions that flourished in India. It is derived from the idea of the *Ātman* or the soul whom the sword cannot cut and the fire cannot burn. Each of us must believe that 'I am the soul' and that would give him strength and faith. The Swami brought this noble teaching of the Vedanta to bear upon everyday life. The Upanishadic teachings are not merely for a *Sannyâsin*, but for every occupation of life.

These conceptions of the Vedanta must come, must remain not only in the forest, they must not only go into the cave, but they must come to work out in the Bar and the Bench, in the Pulpit, the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish and students that are studying.

The Swami indulges in no mere platitudes when he says this, but he firmly believes that 'if the fisherman thinks that he is the spirit, he will be a better fisherman; if the student thinks he is the spirit, he will be a great student;' and so on. A realization of the soul-force and the divinity of man gives us that strength and fearlessness, that faith in our greatness, which helps us to grow from within and solve our own problems—and this is the only right method of curing the ills and miseries from which we suffer. The infusion of this spirit in man was held out by Swami Vivekananda as the key to the solution of all

problems of life, individual, social, national, and even international. His great ideal was to spiritualize the material civilization of the world on the basis of this great truth. Religion, as ordinarily understood, forms only a minor point. But the great spiritual truth taught in Vedanta that 'I am the soul', that 'I am He', not only gives each individual the true conception of his own life, but serves to put on an unshakable basis that unity of

mankind which must form the basis of all social and national life and international goodwill. Thus Swami Vivekananda put all these problems on a common platform and offered a common solution to all of them, broad-based on the great spiritual truth taught by the Rishis of India. His speciality lies in this that he brought this spiritual idea to bear upon the common problems of life, and viewed them as parts of a great whole.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT CHICAGO AND LAHORE

BY DR. PRABHU DUTT SHASTRI, M.A., PH.D.

We frequently think of the memorable day, fifty years ago, when Vivekananda addressed the Parliament of Religions at Chicago. All representative religious bodies had been invited to send their delegates but none had been invited to represent *Hinduism* because of the colossal ignorance of the Western people in imagining this great religion to be nothing but heathenism. Vivekananda, however, happened to arrive there just at the psychological moment, and was introduced to the organizers by a seeker after truth. When he spoke, he made a tremendous impression on the vast audience assembled on that occasion, who were now curious to know more of Hinduism and prevailed on the Swami to prolong his visit and arrange a more or less permanent basis for the propagation of the doctrines of the Vedanta—the universal religion. His work lives to-day in the form of a number of Vedanta centres in charge of well-trained and intellectually well-equipped monks of the order founded by him later on his return to India. The Chicago Parliament made Vivekananda a world-figure overnight, and pronounced him as the best and the most powerful speaker on the occasion. Interest in Hinduism was aroused, and gradually a good deal of ignorance about its doctrines was removed. People

were taught that the conception of the eternal separation of God and man was not valid, that man was not born in sin and did not remain a sinner until he believed in a certain historical Jesus having died for the sins of humanity—that the fact was, on the other hand, that man was only a manifestation of God, in no way intrinsically and eternally different from Him, that the totality of existence was nothing but God in the form of unity manifesting itself in multiplicity in *name* and *form*. The One alone is real. The One is not transformed into the many. It does not undergo any *change* (*Vikâra*). It only *appears* to be many, because of the limitations of our intellect.

Vivekananda was not eager to visit Europe and America, but welcomed the suggestion of his admirers in India, when he felt that he could thereby command a better appreciation from his country. The exuberance of his vitality, which made him anxious to do every good thing immediately rather than postpone it, was a contrast to the habitual indolence and listlessness of our people. When he felt the urge of establishing something permanent for carrying on the great work of Sri Ramakrishna, the preaching of the gospel of peace and harmony, and noticed that his own people did not respond in the

way he should expect, he accepted the suggestion of a visit to America, which turned out to be most successful, and a number of Americans became curious to know something of Sri Ramakrishna and to help in carrying out Vivekananda's scheme of work in India—some even expressed their willingness to come out to India and devote their lives in a spirit of fellowship and service under his guidance. We all know how the Swami was welcomed and feted on his return from America, how those who had been apathetic, indifferent, and even hostile, showed their eagerness to offer him a befitting welcome. In many cases, India's appreciation of her great men comes into evidence only *after* they have secured a recognition in foreign lands—an index to a type of servile mentality that is regrettable.

Vivekananda's work in America proved to be of an abiding value and of immense benefit to the people whose spiritual hunger is more intense than of most of the other people in the West. Many Sâdhus and lecturers have gone to the United States after Vivekananda, but the deep impression left by the Swami's spiritual power and inimitable eloquence remains unsurpassed. During my flying visit to the States more than twenty years ago, I had occasion to meet a number of people who spoke of the great inspiration they had received from Vivekananda's most powerful addresses. I also saw that the Vedanta centres organized in that country were doing excellent work in interpreting the Vedanta to the people eager to know and seek the truth, conducting classes for the practical training of the students, and in many other ways trying to uplift the people spiritually and guide them generally in a real missionary spirit. I was especially happy to have come in close touch with Swami Bcdhananda at New York. I attended his sermons and talks several times, and most gladly responded to his kind invitation to address his Vedanta Society. Here was a most worthy upholder of the great tradition of Sri Ramakrishna's

message of love, peace, and harmony—a Swami who was devoting his whole life in the service of India in far distant lands. To know him was to admire him. In his presence one felt exalted, and one could not fail to be charmed by his simple, unostentatious, and deeply spiritual life of true Sâdhanâ. He had quite a large following among some of the thoughtful people there, and his work was greatly appreciated. Although I stayed there for a few weeks only, people were so kind and loving that they would not let me leave New York without a promise to return to them again. The following letter I received on my return to India from a great, thoughtful, and spiritually minded American, then President of the Vedanta Society of New York, would go to show how Vivekananda's visit to America left an everlasting impression and began to be looked upon as an epochmaking event. The letter runs :

. . . I wrote Dr. Adler in substance that in your field of Mental and Moral Philosophy, Psychology and Metaphysics, you transcended — and all the other Hindus since Vivekananda, and that on your return to this country I hoped the Society might hear you lecture. . . . I hope you can come back to us . . . for your rapid and incisive style in discourse should captivate our people. All our philosophers and psychologists and spiritual teachers need the link you can supply to bring them to the higher truths. . . .

Sd/ Edward Shaughnessy,
President of the Vedanta Society,
New York

March 1, 1921

Leaving aside the complimentary expressions, which only show the unprejudiced and unsophisticated responsiveness of thoughtful Americans, the point worthy of note is the expression '*since Vivekananda*', which at once reveals the permanent mark left by Vivekananda's Chicago address and several other powerful speeches he delivered as a living Vedantist. Such addresses do not flow forth from mere erudition but from a thorough-going realization of the great Vedantic truths of eternal values, which Vivekananda had in abundance.

Before speaking of the fundamental

conceptions of man's divinity and the unity of existence, which were frequently expounded by Vivekananda on various occasions, I should refer to his visit to Lahore in October 1897, after his return from America. That was also a unique occasion—for me more memorable than even the address at Chicago, since it was then that I actually saw the Swami and listened in pin-drop silence to his address, which left an abiding mark on my memory and hypnotized me. The spot at which he spoke in the big compound of Raja Dhyān Singh's Haveli is visited by many admirers of the Swami who happen to visit Lahore. I have a clear picture in my mind of the vast audience that gave him a most enthusiastic ovation—people occupying every inch of ground in the spacious compound, the platform, the opposite stairs, parapets, and even clinging to the large branches of the big tree that stood there. By that one speech alone, Vivekananda had conquered the Punjab, as he had previously conquered America by his one speech alone at Chicago.

Now, as to the Vedantic conception of the divinity of man, this forms the corner-stone of our religious philosophy, and was often referred to in his speeches by Vivekananda. We are quite familiar with the great sayings of the Upanishads like 'Tat tvam asi', 'Soham', 'Aham Brahmāsmi' and the later 'Jivo Brahmaiva na aparah', etc., which clearly speak of the identity of the individual spirit with the Absolute Spirit, the identity of man and God. Such identity is not demonstrated to those who remain steeped in ignorance and make no efforts to move towards the path of spiritual perfection by practising Yama, Niyama, etc., without which they cannot be in a position to understand the higher truths of the Vedānta. To the dogmatic Christian theist, the very name 'pantheism' has become anathema, and he cannot tolerate the very idea of man being one with God. He must stick to the theory of the eternal separateness of man and God,

which to him is the basis of theism. A complete change of outlook is necessary in order to see the truth of man's divinity. When Spinoza spoke of Substance (God) being the only reality, he was accused of atheism, and when Kant said that on the basis of pure reason and within its limits there could be no religion, people did not understand him and accused him also of atheism, so much so that he was called upon by the Prussian Government to desist from writing any more in that strain. In fact, all those who attempt to leave the charmed circle of commonplace dogmatic theology passing for religion, are looked upon with suspicion.

The potential divinity of man is changed into a fact of realization by means of Sadhana, by self-realization, by practising all such qualities as are essential to the very existence of the spiritual life. When the mind is purified, desires are curbed, the senses are brought under control, the spirit of detachment awakens, one is on the way to *discover* one's true nature, to *discover* one's divinity, to find out once more that man and God are intrinsically the same, and their re-discovered identity becomes a fact of experience when one lives a life of the spirit, pure in mind and pure in body, finding joy in meditation, controlling the senses, radiating sweetness and kindness all around, and not giving the slightest offence to others. The greatness of Hinduism lies among other things in the fact that it does not merely preach the doctrine of man's divinity, but stresses the ways in which we can practically attain to that standpoint from which this fact could be realized as a fact of our own individual experience. Transcendental knowledge seems impossible without transcendental perception which in other words is Bhakti, and which presupposes mental equipoise and mental purity that are only possible by Karma as enjoined in the Shāstras. In this way, the triplicity of Karma, Bhakti, and Jnāna becomes a unity with its aspects interdependent. What

is then the principle which makes the divine man appear to be eternally separate from and other than God? This is the principle of individuation. It is due to our ignorance, which in its aggregation is the same as Mâyâ, the great cosmic wonder.

The conception of the unity of all existence is also closely akin to the doctrine of the divinity of man. If 'All is God' and God is the only reality, then the idea of God as the absolutely abiding Unity becomes the foremost conception in religious philosophy. We say 'Sarvam khalu idam Brahma', but this does not imply that every finite thing as such, bearing a fictitious name and form, is God. This is a wholly false interpretation coming from those who can never understand this idea. This kind of pantheism is never the basis of any religion, not to speak of the Vedanta. Even Hegel, who never studied the Vedanta and its characteristic doctrines, condemns this kind of misinterpretation, commonly indulged in by the Christian theist. He says:

Pantheism has usually been taken to mean that everything, the All, the Universum, this complex collection of all that exists . . . is God, and philosophy is accused of maintaining that All is God—that is, this infinite manifoldness of single things; not the Universality which has essential being, but the individual things in their empirical existence, as they are immediately. Pantheism of this kind is not to be found in any religion, and the statement that it is so discoverable is wholly false.

The universal content in everything is the divine, and in that sense everything is God. Spinoza rightly said that it was useless to speak of the existence of God, since he believed in *Existence*

as *God*. That is what we mean when we speak of Brahman as Sat, Absolute Existence. There is nothing beyond existence, this being the most universal category of thought, and so Existence should be one of the nearest attributes of God in human intelligence, as in the outer nature we take Âkâsha as all-pervading and, therefore, a symbol of God. The whole world is in a sense composed of symbols, but the essence of each symbol is divine. Everything is ultimately identity, unity with itself, and if the same Universal Spirit pervades all existence, then we see everywhere God and nothing but God, if only we develop such capacity to see. The Vedanta teaches us the way in which we could gradually develop such capacity, and attain to that vision, which sees everything *sub specie aeternitatis*, as Spinoza would say. A Yogi attains to that perfect vision, and is intoxicated with the joy of self-realization. He is the true philosopher, as he by his intuition has obtained a direct view of things, while we remain groping in the dark. He can penetrate into the inmost depths of being, into the very core of reality, while we with the limitations of our intellect keep on moving round and round the same object, without entering into its heart.

The Vedanta has an eternal message of hope, a message of moral and spiritual regeneration for humanity, a message that would help us ultimately to live a life of supreme joy and supreme bliss—a life sanctified by the thought of the divinity of man and the unity of all existence.

Blessed are we that we are given the privilege of working for Him, not of helping Him. Cut out this word 'help' from your mind. You worship. When you give a morsel of food to the dog, you worship the dog as God. God is in that dog. He is all in all.

VIVEKANANDA ON ISLAM AND BUDDHISM

BY V. SRINIVASAN, M.A., A.I.I.B.

'I do not care whether they are Hindus, Muhammedans, or Christians, but those that love the Lord will always command my service,'—so wrote Swami Vivekananda in the course of a letter to his Gurubhâis. Though he was the incarnate voice of Hinduism in modern times, the Swami's heart was large; and he did not make any distinction between his co-religionists and the adherents of other faiths. His extensive travels and constant contemplation on eternal verities convinced him of the essential unity of all faiths and of the glory of Asia as the mother of them all; and when it is considered how profoundly the life and thought of the West have been influenced by the East, need we wonder that the spirit of Vedanta as a universal religion formed an integral part of the Swami's message?

His disciples stood amazed at his great reverence for Buddha and Christ and 'his veneration for Muhammed and for Krishna was alternately in the forefront of his thought'. The swami was impressed with the similarity between the ritualism and symbolism of Christianity and Hinduism and with the serenity and grace of Buddhist art as well as with the strength of the Islamic brotherhood. The lives and teachings of the great masters of these and other faiths formed the theme of his discourses both in India and in the West; and the growth and development of the religions when considered in their respective historic and ethnic backgrounds yielded him much for thought and contemplation.

The Swami's knowledge of the holy books of Christianity astonished his friends. He was conversant with the Higher Criticism of the Gospels and admired the strength of organized Christianity. The profound piety of

Thomas á Kempis's *The Imitation of Christ* impressed him the most, and he carried a copy of the book with him during his Parivrâjaka days. He held the Nazarene in great veneration and considered him to be an Avatâra in the sense in which the word is understood in India. 'Had I lived in Palestine in the days of Jesus of Nazareth,' he told a lady friend, 'I would have washed his feet not with my tears but with my heart's blood.' He had a picture of the crucified Christ prominently in the Baranagore Math and a group of missionaries who visited him, found sandal paste placed at the feet of Christ as a mark of worship. It is a tribute to the Swami's understanding of the Christian way of life that he had not much difficulty in hypnotizing the 'Churchy West' into acquiescence with the Vedanta philosophy.

The Swami was struck, however, with the more effective role of Islam and Buddhism in the history of his country, and he had several admirers and disciples among the adherents of those faiths. There were, for instance, the refugee Sardar whom he met in the Himalayas as also the Muhammedan nobleman who was introduced to him at Nainital by the Maharajah of Khetri. There was again the Muhammedan Tahsildar in charge of the Swami's trip to Amarnath: he became a disciple of the Swami. We learn that the Swami's popularity with the Muhammedan community was so great that he did not hesitate to comply with the ardent desire of the Maulavi friend at Alwar who invited him to his abode and offered Bhikshâ. Many times, it is recorded that, the Swami, on seeing a Muhammedan, would salute him with great affection as he considered him to be the representative of a great Asiatic culture. It is also recorded of the Swami that

on arriving at Trivandrum in December 1892 he declined to have his meal and honours until (as we learn from an account left by Professor Sundararaman, then tutor to the Travancore prince) the Muhammedan guide who had accompanied him from Cochin, had his food and departed. The biographies of the Swami are strewn with numerous instances of this kind, and it is not surprising that this great warrior-monk of the Hindu faith was venerated among the Muhammedan community. He is known to have helped in the solution of differences between the Arya Samajists and the Muhammedan community, and a Muslim Councillor of State in Mysore hailed him as the born knower of all religious truth.

Expressing himself on one occasion about the merits of the various religious scriptures of mankind, the Swami considered it an excellence of the Quran that it had escaped the 'text torturing' which has been the fate of many other holy books and that it has come down more or less in pristine purity, free from interpolations. The Swami also considered that, like Buddha, the Prophet had admirers as well as traducers, whose existence made the historicity of his life less doubtful than in the case of Jesus, the events of whose life have been matters of scepticism to some extent, and 'Krishna among all teachers was the most shadowy'.

Very often while contemplating on the Muhammedan religion, the Swami was struck by the fact that neither the Muhammedans nor the Protestants were able to do away with rituals. Man always wants something concrete, said the Swami, to hold on, which will be the centre of all his thought forms in the mind, and so rituals have crept in even with the Moslems and the Protestants. It is significant that a Muhammedan who thinks that every non-Muhammedan ceremony is sinful, does not think so when worshipping at the Kaaba and when he impresses his kisses on the stone walls of the temple, the kisses become so many witnesses for

the benefit of the Faithful on the Judgement Day. Moreover, the Muhammedan belief that whosoever draws a little water from the well of Zimzim will have his sins pardoned and will, for ever, live with a fresh body after resurrection, lends support to this view. As for the Protestants, they have the symbol of the Book, said the Swami, the idea of which is, to them holier than all other symbols. Thus great reformers have fought in vain against symbols.

One feature of Islamic life is the perfect equality recognized among the members of the congregation. As soon as a man becomes a Muhammedan he is received as a brother by all the Islamic world, and no distinction is made in that fold between the rich and the poor. This equality is the supreme excellence of Islam, as the Swami observed in a lecture at Pasadena, California (1900). Two other features of Islam which appealed to the Swami were, its attitude towards the vanquished races of aborigines and towards science and intellectual advancement. Wherever Islam went, it preserved the aboriginal inhabitants. 'Those races still exist and their nationality abides to this day.' That this could not be claimed for Christianity was borne out by the fate of the Arabs in Spain and of the indigenous races in America, not to speak of the treatment accorded to the Jews in Europe. With the exception of organizations of charity no other work is to-day, in harmony with the teachings of the Gospel, said the Swami. Whatever heights of progress Europe has attained, every one of them has been gained by its revolt against the religion of Christianity, by its rising against the Gospel. If it had the old paramount sway, Christianity would have set in motion the obnoxious Inquisition against Pasteur, and Darwin would have been burnt at the stake. Civilization, luckily, girded its loins against such a fate.

The record of Muhammedanism stood in refreshing contrast. Instituting a detailed comparison of the early fortunes

of Christianity and Islam in the world the Swami observed in a thoughtful contribution in the *Udbodhan*, that during the first three centuries of its life Christianity was not successful in making itself known, and its progress was very slow even when Constantine made it the religion of the State. 'What support did it give to civilization and culture', asked the Swami, 'what reward did it offer to the European Pundit who sought to prove for the first time, that the earth was a revolving planet? What scientist has been hailed with approval and enthusiasm by the Christian Church? Can the literature of the Christian flock consistently meet the requirements of legal jurisprudence, either civil or criminal, or of arts and trade policies?' Even now the church does not sanction the diffusion of ideas that are anathema in its view. In the New Testament there is no covert or overt praise of any science or art that is sanctioned and held up for encouragement directly or indirectly in the Quran or in the many passages of the *Hadis*, the traditional sayings of Muhammed, in the light of which the greatest thinkers of Europe, denounced by Christianity, are not unbelievers but only wanting in faith in the Prophet.

It is also interesting to indicate in this connection, how the Swami viewed the different religions of the world in the perspective of what he referred to as the three essential stages in the spiritual growth of mankind. To the Swami all religions were contained in the three stages of the Vedanta philosophy, Dvaita, Vishishtâdvaita, and Advaita, coming one after the other, which, he said, should be understood in relation to the various ethnic aspects of the country. The application will vary according to the different needs and surroundings of the nations concerned. The first stage, Dvaita, applied to the ideas of the ethnic groups of Europe is Christianity; applied to the Semitic groups, Muhammedanism. Advaita as applied in its Yoga perception form, is

Buddhism, observed the Swami in a letter written from America in 1895.

It was the view of the Swami that the tree of Indian music ceased to grow after the advent of Islam. The Muhammedans, he said (in an interview) took up the Râgas and the Râginis and put such a stamp of their own colouring on the art of Tappâ songs that all the science in music vanished.

The Swami considered the life of the Buddha to be an embodiment of the true ideas of renunciation and service, which have profoundly directed the course of Indian civilization and culture. Buddhism, said the Swami, was reformed Jainism and it was an offshoot of Hinduism itself, and the Buddha was an Avatara. What was striking about the Buddha was that, though a perfect agnostic with little belief in God or in soul, he lived and spent Himself out for the sake of mankind. 'He fought all through His life for the good of all and thought only of the good of all. He was born for the good of the many, as a blessing to the many,' said the Swami in a lecture at Los Angeles. The Buddha did not live for himself alone. He was indeed the George Washington of Hinduism as the Swami described him.

The Buddha set in motion the highest moral ideas that any nation can have and 'wherever there is a moral code, it is a ray of light from that man', was the opinion of the Swami. 'Was there one like him?' asked the Swami. The works of Mahayanism were avidly studied at the Barnagore Math. The desire to become Arhat stole upon the disciples and the fervour of the Sramana seized them so often that they cried, 'Om namo Bhagavate Buddhâya.' The Swami, it may be added, held that the Catholic idea of the priestly tonsure was derived from the shaven head of the monks in India and that the Shâlagrama Shilâs worshipped by the Bauddhas passed on to Vaishnavism.

The realization of all that Sakyamuni and his faith meant inspired many acts of devotion and social service on the

part of the Ramakrishna Mission. The Swami sponsored the idea of Mrs. Higgins for a school for Buddhist girls. The Swami had the privilege of knowing the venerable Bhikku, Anagarika Dharmapala and also the celebrated abbot of Japanese Buddhism, the Rev. Oda. He accompanied the latter in the company of Mr. Okakura on a pilgrimage to the holy places of Buddhism. The Swami had another friend in Mr. T. G. Harrison of Ceylon, a Buddhist gentleman, who accompanied the Swami from Colombo as far as Madras on the return journey from America. Some time before attaining Mahâsamâdhi the Swami was engaging himself in the study and contemplation of some aspects of Buddhist culture which was supplemented by a tour in the Nepalese Terai and the other regions of the Buddha's ministrations. He felt purified by contact with every place where Gautama lived and moved. He was struck by the artistic impulse of the Buddhist creed and his mind was spontaneously carried back to the olden days of Buddhism, to the days when Ashoka consecrated the resources of his far-flung empire to the spread of the Dhamma and when in latter day, Fa-Hien and Hiouen Tsang came from the far-off Celestial Empire to seek light and solace in Aryavarta. The Swami was happy to be at Bodh Gaya and to visit the Lumbini Garden, the Bethlehem of Buddhism. He was impressed by the serenity and grace of a lovely statue of the Buddhadeva in the vicinity of the Pandrenthan shrine on the Jhelum. He was equally impressed by the relics of Buddhism in Java and Sumatra. Once he wrote to Swami Swarupananda that there was ancestor worship at Gaya before the days of the Buddha and that the worship of the footprint was derived from the Hindus.

The Swami was a great critic of art, and comparing the Greek representations of Christ with those of the Bodhi-zattvas he expressed the view that the models of Jesus did not fully emphasize the internal development of the indivi-

dual. The muscular features of the representations of Christ bore this out, and so the Swami thought that the images of Buddhadeva were more in keeping with the spirit of the religion. This is an example of the great discernment which the Swami brought to bear on matters which came within his purview.

But the Swami held the view that though India heard the voice of the Buddha she did not fully assimilate his message. He felt gratified, however, that thanks to Buddhism, drunkenness and wanton animal slaughter ceased to find favour with millions in India. The Swami also held that the decay in the influence of the Buddha in this age was due to the fact that it had fallen among nations which had not come up to the stage of evolution of proper ideas of marriage and social conduct and so made a travesty of monasticism, through which alone the Buddhist Command could be carried out.

Regarding the monastic ideal the Swami said that the place given to the monk in Buddhism made women inferior, as the abbesses could not take any important step except on the advice of the abbot who had a supreme place. This ensured the solidarity of the faith in former days; but the latter-day results were deplorable as this perpetuated the subordination and inferiority of women. The inequality of women, whenever it exists, is due to the influence of Buddhism. (*Prabuddha Bharata*, 1898).

It was a tribute alike to the greatness of the Buddha and to the tolerance of Hinduism that though he was an agnostic he lived to an old age and that he was able to preach his message without let or hindrance. The Swami was surprised when a great savant of science in the West, who was also a devoted student of Buddhism, did not, however, like the manner of the Buddha's natural death without crucifixion or some such thing. The Swami considered it a mistaken notion that a Teacher was less great because his end was not

sensational, and because he was not murdered.

The Swami's abundant love for the Buddha probably inspired the authors of his biography to explain several events in his life in the phraseology of Buddhism. It requires to be mentioned, for instance, that the Swami appeared to his disciples to be another radiant Buddha and his trip to Bodh

Gaya at the time of the Epiphany in the last year of his life was deemed by the disciples to be a fitting end to the Swami's travels. And it is characteristic of the authors of his biography, from which the above crotchets have been gleaned, that when describing the Swami's end they stated that he 'fled finally beyond the boundaries of all sensation and idea until his soul merged in the infinite Bliss of Nirvana'.

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN APPRECIATION

I

PERSONAL OPINIONS

The Hon'ble Mr. Merwin-Marie Snell, President of the Scientific Section of the Parliament of Religions wrote: 'One of the chief advantages has been in the great lesson which it (the Parliament) has taught the Christian World, especially the people of the United States, namely, that there are other religions more venerable than Christianity, which surpass it in philosophical depth, in spiritual intensity, in independent vigour of thought, and in breadth and sincerity of human sympathy, while not yielding to it a single hair's breadth in ethical beauty and efficiency.

'No religious body made so profound an impression upon the Parliament and the American people at large as did Hinduism. . . . And by far the most important and typical representative of Hinduism was Swami Vivekananda, who, in fact, was beyond question the most popular and influential man in the Parliament. He frequently spoke, both on the floor of the Parliament itself and at the meetings of the scientific section, over which I had the honour to preside, and on all occasions he was received with greater enthusiasm than any other speaker, Christian or 'Pagan'. The people thronged about him wherever he went and hung with eagerness on his every word. . . . The most rigid of

orthodox Christians say of him, "He is indeed a prince among men! . . ."'

The Rev. J. H. Barrows, Chairman of the General Committee of the Congress, said, 'Swami Vivekananda exercised a wonderful influence over his auditors.'

II

PRESS OPINIONS

'He is undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation.' (*The New York Herald*).

'He is a great favourite at the Parliament, from the grandeur of his sentiments and his appearance as well. If he merely crosses the platform he is applauded; and this marked approval of thousands he accepts in a childlike spirit of gratification without a trace of conceit. . . . At the Parliament of Religions they used to keep Vivekananda until the end of the programme, to make people stay till the end of the session. On a warm day, when a prosy speaker talked too long and people began going home by hundreds, the Chairman would get up and announce that Swami Vivekananda would give a short address just before the benediction. Then he would have the peaceable hundreds perfectly in tether. The four thousand fanning people in the Hall of Columbus would

sit smiling and expectant, waiting for an hour or two of other men's speeches, to listen to Vivekananda for fifteen minutes. The Chairman knew the old rule of keeping the best until the last.' (*The Boston Evening Transcript*).

'Vivekananda is really a great man, noble, simple, sincere, and learned beyond comparison with most of our scholars.' (*Ibid.*).

'The Hindu monk's eloquent and thoughtful discourse before the Parliament of Religions at Chicago Fair, made a profound impression not only on the audience who listened to him, but on the religious world generally.' (*The Rutherford American*).

'Professor Vivekananda, who is of pleasing appearance and young, and being well filled with the ancient lore of India, made an address which captured the Congress, so to speak. There were Bishops and ministers of nearly every Christian Church present and they were all taken by storm. The eloquence of the man with intellect beaming from his face, his splendid English in describing the beauties of his time-honoured faith, all conspired to make a deep impression on the audience. (*The Press of America*).

'And yet was the man who of all speakers on the platform of the Parliament of Religions awoke the most uproarious applause and was called back again and again.' (*The Interior Chicago*).

'But eloquent as were many of the speeches, no one expressed so well the spirit of the Parliament of Religions and its limitations as the Hindu monk. . . . He is an orator by *Divine Right*, and his strong intelligent face in its picturesque setting of yellow and orange was hardly less interesting than those earnest words and the rich rhythmical utterance he gave them.' (*The New York Critique*).

'But woe to the man who undertook to combat the monk on his own ground, and that was where they all tried it who tried it at all. His replies came like flashes of lightning and the venturesome questioner was sure to be impaled on the Indian's shining intellectual lance. The

workings of his mind, so subtle and so brilliant, so well stored and so well trained, sometimes dazzled his hearers, but it was always a most interesting study. Vivekananda and his cause found a place in the hearts of all true Christians.' (*Iowa State Register*).

'One of the most popular of these Hindu representatives was Swami Vivekananda. . . . He showed himself to be one of the best of orators at the Congress, speaking faultless English without notes, and with an utterance that many of his hearers declared would of itself have been music had you not understood a word.' (*Detroit Free Press*).

III

OTHER OPINIONS

'A striking illustration of what in another case would be termed insularity of outlook was brought to view by a noted Hindu when addressing a vast audience at the World's Congress of Religions in America, in the city of Chicago, in 1893. Pausing in the midst of his discourse, the speaker asked that every member of the audience who had read the sacred books of the Hindus, and who, therefore, had first-hand knowledge of their religion, would raise his hand. Only three or four hands were raised, though the audience represented, presumably, the leading theologians of many lands. Glancing benignly over the assembly, the Hindu raised himself to his full height, and in a voice every accent of which must have smote the audience as a rebuke, pronounced these simple words, "And yet you dare to judge us!"' (*Historians' History of the World*, Vol. II. pp. 547-8).

'To Swami Vivekananda,—India
'Dear Friend and Brother,

'As members of the Cambridge Conference devoted to comparative study in ethics, philosophy, and religion, it gives us great pleasure to recognize the value of your able expositions of the philosophy and religion of Vedanta in America and the interest created thereby

among thinking people. We believe such expositions as have been given by yourself and your co-labourer, the Swami Saradananda, have more than mere speculative interest and utility,—that they are of great ethical value in cementing the ties of friendship and brotherhood between distant peoples, and in helping us to realize that solidarity of human relationships and interests which has been affirmed by all the great religions of the world.

‘We earnestly hope that your work in India may be blessed in further promoting this noble end, and that you may return to us again with assurances of fraternal regard from our distant brothers of the great Aryan family, and the ripe wisdom that comes from reflection and added experience and further contact with the life and thought of your people. . . .’

‘We remain,
‘Cordially and fraternally yours,
Lewis G. Janes, D.D., Director,
(President, Brooklyn
Ethical Association),
C. C. Everett, D.D., (Dean of
the Harvard Divinity
School),
(Prof.) William James,
(Prof.) John H. Wright,
(Prof.) Josiah Royce,
J. E. Lough,
A. O. Lovejoy,
Rachel Kent Taylor,
Sara C. Bull,
John P. Fox (Acting
Secretary).’

IV

THE WORLD'S PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

We cull the following excerpts from *The World's Parliament of Religions*, Vol. I.

‘The First Day.—Monday, September 11.

‘Long before the appointed hour the building swarmed with delegates and visitors, and the Hall of Columbus was crowded with four thousand eager listeners from all parts of the country

and foreign lands. At 10 o'clock there marched down the aisle arm in arm, the representatives of a dozen world-faiths, beneath the waving flags of many nations, and amidst the enthusiastic cheering of the vast audience. The platform at this juncture presented a most picturesque and impressive spectacle. In the center, clad in scarlet robes and seated in a high chair of state, was Cardinal Gibbons, the highest prelate of his Church in the United States who, as was fitting in this Columbian Year, was to open the meeting with prayer. On either side of him were grouped the Oriental delegates, whose many coloured raiment vied with his own in brilliancy. Conspicuous among these followers of Brahma and Buddha and Mohammed was the eloquent monk Vivekananda of Bombay, clad in gorgeous red apparel, his bronze face surmounted with a huge turban of yellow.’ (P. 62).

‘In the afternoon session Swami Vivekananda, of Bombay, India, was next (after Dr. Momerie of England) introduced (by Dr. Barrows). When Mr. Vivekananda addressed the audience as “Sisters and brothers of America,” there arose a peal of applause that lasted for several minutes.’ (P. 101).

‘The Fifth Day.—Friday, September 15.

‘Just before the close of the afternoon session, the Chairman invited some remarks from the Hindu monk Swami Vivekananda, of Bombay, who responded with a little fable intended to illustrate the variance among men of different races and religions.’ (P. 118).

‘The Ninth Day.—Tuesday, September 19.

‘At the Afternoon Session.

‘The Rev. Dr. F. A. Noble in the Chair.

‘*Hinduism*; by Swami Vivekananda of Bombay. (P. 124).

‘The Tenth Day.—Wednesday, September 20.

‘The (evening) session was concluded by a brief speech from Swami Vivekananda.’ . . . (P. 128).

'The Sixteenth Day.—Tuesday, September 26.

'The Evening Session.

'*A Presentation of Buddhism; . . . Mr. Swami Vivekananda of India.*' (P. 148).

IN THE SCIENTIFIC SECTION OF THE PARLIAMENT

'Parallel with the meetings of the Hall of Columbus, were sessions in Hall III, where papers of a more scientific and less popular character were read. These papers were often followed by free conferences over the topics treated.' (P. 152).

'Friday, September 22, 10-30 A.M.

'Address by Rev. Swami Vivekananda. *Conference on Orthodox Hinduism and the Vedanta Philosophy.*

'Afternoon Session.

'Address by . . . Swami Vivekananda, a Sannyâsi, or Monk, . . .

'*Conference on the Modern Religions of India.*

'Saturday, September 23.

'Address by Swami Vivekananda.' (P. 153).

'Monday, September 25.

'Afternoon Session.

'The Essence of the Hindu Religion; by Rev. Swami Vivekananda.' (P. 154).

THE CLOSE OF THE PARLIAMENT

'On Thursday evening, September 14, Mrs. Potter Palmer, President of the Board of Lady Managers, gave a reception to the delegates attending the Parliament, at the Woman's Building at Jackson Park. . . . It was Mrs. Palmer's earnest wish to secure authoritative statements with regard to the condition of women in other lands, and appropriate addresses in response to her desires were made by the Archbishop of Zante, Hon. Pung Kwang Yu, Mr. Dharmapala, Mr. Mazoomdar, and Mr. Vivekananda.' (P. 156).

'Swami Vivekananda, having been presented (at the final session of the Parliament), made his final address. . . . Swami Vivekananda was always heard with interest by the Parliament,

but very little approval was shown to some of the sentiments expressed in his closing address¹.' (Pp. 170-1).

EXCERPTS FROM CHAPTER XI

'With the eleventh day of the Parliament came the consideration of the practical problems of human society and the actual facts of human life. On the previous day Swami Vivekananda, the Hindu monk, had criticized the greater readiness of English Christianity to supply metaphysics and doctrine to Hindus by missionaries than to give them bread when starving by thousands and hundreds of thousands. To this, on the eleventh day, Bishop Keane said: "I endorse the denunciation that was hurled forth last night against the system of pretended charity that offered food to the hungry Hindus at the cost of their conscience and faith. It is a shame and a disgrace to those who call themselves Christians." . . . and in addition to endorsing the denunciation by Mr. Vivekananda of Christian charity any way limited to converts, he pronounced justifiable, from the Hindu point of view, "the denunciation of the Christian system of the atonement, that came also from the heart of the Hindu monk". He declared that we do not hear half enough of such criticism, and that if by these criticisms Vivekananda can only stir us and sting us into better teachings and better doings in the great work of Christ in the world, he for one would only be grateful to our friend the Hindu monk.' (Pp. 228-9).

¹ Some of the sentiments are: 'But if anyone here hopes that this unity would come by the triumph of anyone of these religions and the destruction of the others, to him I say, "Brother, yours is an impossible task." . . . If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this: It has proved to the world—holiness, purity, and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world, and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character.' The cause for the reporter's disapproval is obvious. It is noteworthy, too, that while other speakers are introduced in the final session with eulogistic remarks by the Chairman, Swami Vivekananda, the most popular orator, gets nothing of it, at least in the printed report.—Ed., P.B.

CONTEMPORARY OTHER APPRECIATION

PRESS OPINIONS

‘Occasional echoes may still be heard of the Parliament of Religions at the great Chicago Exposition in 1893—an assembly designed, with the superb optimism of States. The Parliament of Religions melted away, leaving, it is surmised, a single vivid memory with those who listened to its prelections. That was of an apostle from Hindoosthan, a young man, exquisitely dressed and groomed, with smooth, rounded face, a glorious robe, impressive turban, a voice in which his captivated auditors heard all the wonder and depth, all the solace and solemnity and passion of the pristine faith of India.

‘By the side of this dazzling apparition the ambassadors of all other religions paled into cheerless insignificance. The Chicago assembly was carried away by the messenger from the East. He traversed the States, followed everywhere by eager disciples. He unfolded the inwardness of the Yoga, spoke of the universal soul, of freedom from the toils of the flesh, of the liberation of the soul—that is, the divinity within—by the pursuit of perfection according to the methods of those who in the dim dawn of things on the highlands of Northern India had followed the way.

‘Men and women, with souls desiccated by doubt and by the formulas of a faith which, for one reason or another, had ceased to have a meaning for them, heard gladly the gospel that came in such undeniably picturesque and distinguished garb. They subscribed money to the apostle’s philanthropic schemes. The apostle himself they followed and feted in the incomparable trans-Atlantic fashion. . . .

‘Then he came to Chicago with the

result we have seen. To the impressionable American audiences he appeared as the revealer of the hidden spiritual treasures of the East. Vivekananda returned to India after a few years of lecturing in the West, and India gave him a triumphant welcome. In Bombay, in Madras, in Calcutta the people turned out to greet the man who had interpreted their ancient customs to the nations of the West. There were processions and triumphal arches, music and acclamations; the country rang with the Yogi’s praises, the native press was full of his movements and addresses. . . .’
(*The London Leader*).

‘At the memorable Parliament of Religions in Chicago, his superb appearance and the fascination of his speech swept the great assembly off its feet. In England, also, he was admired by numbers of more or less thoughtful people who, for all kinds of reasons, had ceased to find satisfaction in the religion of their fathers. . . . They drank of the waters of healing that he seemed to draw from the wells of the Vedanta philosophy. Fluently, impressively, with unvarying solemnity, he delivered his message: that the goal of all the Indian religions is one, the liberation of the soul through perfection: that every soul is potentially divine: that the aim of the soul is to be free, and to manifest the divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal; that this is to be done by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy,—by one, or more, or all of these; and that herein is the whole of Religion. To minds that had lost anchorage in evangelical Protestantism and were wandering in mazes of doubt and disillusion, seeking by any means that offered to untie the master-knot of human fate, the Swami’s message from the remote East and the remoter

past seemed to furnish a clue at least worth following for a little way. . . . There can be no question that the increased interest in the ancient thought and creeds of India, which is so noticeable a feature in Western life to-day, is largely due to the influence of Swami Vivekananda.' (*The Statesman*, Calcutta).

'Even before he began his public career as a teacher, commencing it by his ringing exposition of Hinduism in the Chicago Parliament of Religions, his earnestness and power were known to

almost everyone who had come in contact with him. But it is the Parliament of Religions in Chicago that revealed him even to his mother country. With that revelation came to him the great scope that he has had to work out the mission of his Master, and when, after his tireless toil in America and England, he returned to India, the reception that Madras gave him was so grand and enthusiastic that we still see the events connected with that reception pictured before our mind's eye.' (*The Hindu*, Madras).

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

Were it not for war conditions, India would certainly celebrate in a befitting manner the fiftieth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda's advent at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago in September 1893. Despite all adverse circumstances we present in these pages a few articles in his memory. The writers in this issue are: Swami Madhavanandaji, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission; Sir Jadunath, who is too well known to need any introduction; Mr. N. C. Mehta of the Imperial Government, Simla; Dr. R. C. Majumdar, former Vice-chancellor of the Dacca University; Dr. P. D. Shastri of Lahore; and Mr. V. Srinivasan of Bangalore.

ENJOYMENT FROM RENUNCIATION

The ideal of enjoyment from renunciation (as preached in the *Ishopanishad*) was for long unintelligible to me. I asked friends

who were scholars, and they too were unable to explain. The commentators, as usual, only add to the obscurity. It suddenly struck me one day, when I was not thinking about the subject at all, that the explanation was quite simple. It is within the experience of every human being. What greater enjoyment is there than that of giving to those whom we love? Which father or mother will not go in rags to feed and clothe the children. The extension of this feeling to all humanity is the way in which the Kingdom of Heaven can be soonest realized. The association of pleasure with possession is the cause of the world's misery. The Sannyasin has dissociated the two. It is said that Swami Vivekananda had an exquisite carving in ivory presented to him by a Maharaja. A visitor admired it. As the visitor rose to leave, the Swami took the carving and handed it to him. 'It is yours,' said the Swami, 'Take it.' The visitor protested. 'No,' said the Swami, 'your admiration for it has made it yours.' The visitor had to accept the gift. But the Swami enjoyed giving it to the visitor more than he would have done by seeing it in his study daily. That is how renunciation brings enjoyment more than possession. That, it struck me, was the meaning of the seer of the *Ishopanishad*.

—Recluse in *The Indian Social Reformer*
of 3 July.

'In India social reform has to be preached by showing how much more spiritual a life the new system will bring; and politics has to be preached by showing how much it will improve the one thing that the nation wants—its spirituality.'

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

INDO-ANGLIAN LITERATURE. BY K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR. *The International Book House, Ltd., Bombay. Pp. ix+70. Price Re. 1-8.*

This is the third brochure, so far published, of the Indian Literatures Series of the P.E.N. Books, and shares equally the merits of its preceding companions, as regards the get-up and typography.

The word 'Indo-Anglian' has called for an explanation from the author, who has done it in his Foreword. It has not been, however, defined, and is left very vague, with the result that Shrimati Sophia Wadia is included in the list and Dr. Besant and Sister Nivedita, whose contribution to the literature under review, and love and adoration for the country of their adoption yield to none, have been left out. Dr. Cousins is another yet. Evidently it is not very easy to define the word. Again from another point of view the inclusion of the Goanese Christians offers some difficulty, as many of them (like the descendants of the non-English settlers of America or the Parsis of Gujarat) have adopted English as their mother-tongue, though they might know one or more Indian languages in addition. Had he attempted to give a precise definition of the word, the author would have had reasons to exclude some from the list and/or to include many more.

Coming, however, to the body of the book, we find the author in his element. We come across, fine appreciations, couched in terse and epigrammatic expressions, of the grace and beauty of the matter and style of the worthy writers, and gashing digs, followed invariably by the application of some soothing ointments, at the snobbish and the spurious. We find ourselves in entire agreement with the author's points of criticism, which are generally appreciative and generous. But we are afraid most of his quotations are far from being representative—a fact, that is specially deplorable in a book, which, unlike its published sister volumes, is shorn of its anthological section, much to the detriment of its worth.

Translations, as a rule, are not included in the survey of a language into which they are done; nobody reviews Tolstoy's books when considering English literature, though most of us know him through the medium

of that language. And if they are at all to be taken into consideration, we are to see that we are fair to all. Translation of Dr. Tagore's *Gitanjali* might fetch him that world-fame, but that is no reason why it should come under review of the Indo-Anglian Literature—surely, we do him no honour that way. And are we sure that all his books referred to here in the book under review are his own translations? We have taken Dr. Tagore only as an instance.

There are some serious omissions and underratings; we mention a few: in dealing with fictions Dr. Shahani of Sind has been omitted; in essaying periodicals, *Social Reformer*; in politics and history and autobiography Drs. Majumdar, Ghosal, and many others as well as Subhas Chandra Bose (*Indian Struggle*); in philosophy and religion, Dr. Dasgupta; scant courtesy has been shown to Sir Surendranath's autobiography, which surely has got a more honourable place as a piece of literature than many others in the field. We do understand that in a small brochure like this it is not possible to give all names or to do full justice to all writers. But when one finds some given undue place of honour and others more or equally deserving ignored, one is led to suspect a smelly atmosphere. Hence the necessity of pointing out the defects. But the funniest piece of execution is to include Sri Ramakrishna as a poet (p. 24). At first we could not believe our eyes and took him to be somebody else. When, however, we read the names before and after, we were convinced of the identity. The learned professor was thinking of Gray's *Elegy*—Sri Ramakrishna was a mute poet.

On the whole, the book has attained its object, viz, creation of interest in the Indo-Anglian literature in a considerable degree, and the 'Suggested Reading List' is fairly representative—the publishers of some of these books might have occasions to thank Dr. Iyengar. When one closes the book, one remembers long the regale in subtle wit and humour, choice expressions, and wise remarks on the various spheres of literature. In his 'Anticipations' the learned author is in good company.

THE STREAM DIVINE. COLLECTED BY HIRALAL C. TARKAS AND TRANSLATED BY PROF. P. M. TRIVEDI, M.A., F.R.G.S., OF WILSON COLLEGE, BOMBAY. WITH A FOREWORD BY

MANUBHAI C. PANDYA, M.A., LL.B. *Published by Shri Shukadeo Mandir, Ankleshwar, Gujarat. Pp. 152+x. Price Re. 1.*

Shri Shukacharya was a great saint of Gujarat with a large following. He was born in 1876 and passed away in 1929 living and preaching at Ankleshwar. He is regarded by his followers as an Incarnation of Bhagwan Shukadeva, the teacher of *Srimad Bhâgavata*. The Shukadeo Mandir at Ankleshwar, founded in memory of the great saint, has published a good number of books on the life and teachings of Sri Shukadeoji in Gujarati, Sanskrit, and Hindi. The book under review is the latest of them and consists of nine illuminating discourses given by Shukadeoji at different times in Gujarati. Mr. Tarkas, a learned disciple of the saint, has collected and compiled the original Gujarati discourses into a voluminous work, a small part of which is translated and published as the present book, the greater part remaining still unpublished. This is the first English publication of the Mandir and readers, ignorant of Gujarati, are grateful to Prof. Trivedi for making available to them these discourses in English. The discourses published in this small book deal with various aspects of Hinduism and practical religion. They are simple and full of spiritual fervour and their lucidity has been further enhanced by homely illustrations. They will be very useful to all spiritual aspirants.

S. J.

THE CRUSADE OF FREE SPIRITS
(A DRAFT OF PEACE CONDITIONS). BY THE
RT. HON. ALEXANDER WAMWETZOS, LL.D.,
M.P., (HELLAS). *Published by the New Book
Co., Hornby Road, Fort, Bombay. Pp. 292
+xv. Price Rs. 14.*

Dr. Wamwetzos is a Greek barrister at the Areopagus and the Council of State as well as a former professor of Law in Athens. He left the shores of Greece with his wife in April 1941, when the avalanche of Nazi aggression rolled on into the land of Hellas, and came to India for a compulsory sojourn. On his way to India through countries under Allied control he had to stop for want of transport at some places where he could study conditions. But, unfortunately, in those places he was very shabbily treated by local Governments as a 'poor relative', 'undesirable emigrant' and was 'scorned', 'humiliated', and even 'persecuted'. This compulsory travel extending over many months served as an eye-opener to him to the real conditions; and he has kindly

promised in the introduction of the book under review to tell the civilized world in another work the unpleasant experiences of his sad adventure.

The learned author, though master of several European languages, 'never learnt English' and 'had no idea of English grammar' before coming to India. It must be said to his credit that within a surprisingly short stay in India he has picked up the foreign tongue, read a good number of newspapers and books in that language and has prepared in it this big book of great merit. He, however, humbly confesses that this 'audacious undertaking' was possible out of 'necessity'.

The book is divided into five chapters which are—*Freedom from Fear, New Aspect of the World, Retribution, Non-interference, and Freedom from Want*. The second chapter contains a survey of the conditions obtaining in almost every country of Europe and Asia since the present war began. The book is replete throughout with quotations from speeches delivered from time to time by prominent statesmen of Allied Powers and with extracts from resolutions adopted by them in course of the war to enforce peace in the post-war world. The book is mainly occupied with a critical analysis of the Atlantic Charter, and attempts to outline the possibility of world peace and the solution of the Indian problem on its basis. He visualizes in his mind's eyes how a United States of the world may be formed when the Atlantic Charter is given effect to and as its consequence the world may enjoy the threefold freedom from fear, want, and interference. The Greek Doctor of Law fails to see the impracticability of fully working out the implications of the said Charter as the mind of at least one author of the Charter is not yet free from imperialistic obsession as is evident from the following unequivocal statement of Mr. Churchill quoted in this book: 'We mean to hold our own. I have not become the King's First Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire.'

The object in writing this book, according to the author, is 'nothing but an attempt to put questions, to suggest some solutions which should prevent mankind from a third world war and to stir up a serious discussion about particulars by avoiding nice but empty and meaningless phrases'. The author is in complete agreement with Mr. Attlee when the latter observes: 'The deep-seated evil from which the world is suffering to-day will not be cured by some

cheap and easy remedy. It is useless to treat the symptoms of a disease while neglecting to deal with the real cause. The experience of the last twenty years has shown the danger of half measures.'

The author has devoted a pretty large number of pages (98-145) to the elucidation of the Indian problem. He is of opinion that the Indian problem has been ingeniously complicated and wrongly presented as insoluble; and he sincerely believes that all these alchemist's mysteries are but pretexts in order to continue the present untenable situation, and remarks that there is not a single difficulty about the Indian problem which could not be solved! It is much to be regretted that he lays all the blame at the door of the Indian nationalists for the present deadlock. He goes even to the length of observing that the nationalists and especially the extremists, the Indian officials, and above all, the Indian princes are helping the prolongation of the war. Whether this accusation is true or false the world knows fully well. This view of the Indian situation is, no doubt, one-sided, biased, and superficial. In pointing out what the author terms the tactical blunders of the Indian nationalists the author says: 'They (the Indian nationalists) have bargained in the beginning of the war instead of enthusiastically supporting the war effort through rising in a body. They would then morally as well as by physical force obtain their independence.' We are afraid the Greek friend of India has not properly understood the Indian problem; hence his suggestions for its solution are so shallow and silly.

The author seems to be an advocate of democracy but he shuts his eyes to its failure in modern Europe. Democracy having failed in Europe has given way to dictatorship. As long as dictatorship, which is the latest form of imperialism dominates the world and consequently a nation considers another nation its victim and a source of exploitation, world peace is a day-dream. The author has quoted the pious prayer of the United Nations of June 14, 1942, as follows: 'If our brothers are oppressed, then we are oppressed, if they hunger we hunger. . . . If their freedom is taken away, our freedom is not secured.' (P. 18). If the prayer has to be realized in the national and international life the fighting nations have to make a great sacrifice, nay they must pay a heavy penalty. Unless they are inspired with the spirit of equality, brotherhood, and freedom of all nations, giving up for good their

imperialistic greed, world peace will remain as distant as ever. Complete freedom of subject nations and total abolition of imperialism from free nations are the *sine qua non* of world peace.

S. J.

SANSKRIT-ENGLISH

ATMABODHA OF SRI SHANKARACHARYA. EDITED AND PUBLISHED BY P. N. MENON, B.A., B.L. WITH A SANSKRIT COMMENTARY BY SWAMI KRISHNANANDASHRAMI AND ITS EXPLANATORY TRANSLATION, ENGLISH WORD-FOR-WORD MEANING AND RENDERING OF THE TEXT, A CRITICAL, EXHAUSTIVE SKETCH OF SHANKARA'S LIFE, WORKS, AND PHILOSOPHY, AS WELL AS A SHORT INDEX. NICELY GOT UP AND CLOTH-BOUND. *To be had of Indian Classics, Palghat, Malabar. Pp. 127. Price not mentioned.*

At least for the rare commentary published for the first time, if not for anything else, this excellent edition of *Atmabodha* is a precious and permanent addition to the Vedanta literature. Swami Krishnanandashrami, the commentator of *Atmabodha* was born in the village of Vishnumangalam a few miles to the south of Mangalore. He was a disciple of Swami Dakshinamoorthy and was himself a religious teacher with some following. Besides this *Tikâ* which is the only available commentary on *Atmabodha*, he appears to have written a commentary on *Vedanta-sâra-sangraha* of Sri Sadashivabrahma Yatishwara and himself composed a work called *Atma-tattva-subodhakah*. Except this meagre information, nothing more about him is known at present. He, however, seems to have been a master of Advaita Vedanta as is evident from his commentary on *Atmabodha* which is written in the classical style and is on a par with standard Sanskrit commentaries. The editor deserves hearty congratulations of the students of Advaita Vedanta for bringing out this correct and fine edition of the commentary. *Atmabodha* is an original composition of Shankara and is an important Prakarana work. The reader will find in *Atmabodha* and its commentary published in the book under review the essence of Advaita philosophy devoid of its abstruse technicalities. The prefatory sketch contains among other valuable things an interesting discussion on the date of Shankara.

S. J.

HINDI

PARIVRAJAKA. (SECOND EDITION). BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA. TRANSLATED BY PT. SURYAKANTAJI TRIPATHI (NIRALA). *Published by the President, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur, C. P. Pp. 128. Price 10 As.*

The President Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Nagpur, has brought out the second edition of *Parivrâjaka* which contains the account of travels of Swami Vivekananda in the Western countries. Originally this account was written in Bengali by the Swami in the form of a diary. While travelling, the Swami closely studied the customs and manners and cultural traits of different Western countries and drew conclusions therefrom, which if brought in practice would help a great deal in regenerating India. Sahitya Shastri Prof. V. B. Shukla,

M.Sc., Ph.D., P.E.S., College of Science, Nagpur, has thoroughly revised the first edition and inserted the marginal notes that have made the reading of the book easier. We hope the Hindi-knowing public will appreciate and like this second edition of *Parivrajaka*.

UTTARPARHA ABHIBHASHAN. BY SRI AUROBINDO. *Published by Sri Aurobindo Granthamâlâ, 16 Rue Desbassin De Richemont, Pondicherry. Pp. 16. Price 4 As.*

This is a translation of Sri Aurobindo's *Uttarpârhâ Speech* which he delivered after his incarceration for one year, during which period he rethought his life's programme and arrived at newer conclusions. The speech marks a turning point in his life. The translator, Pandit Madangopal Garhodia, has done his work faithfully.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH AND MISSION IN FOREIGN LANDS

Since 1893, when Swami Vivekananda made his first public appearance in the West at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago, the Ramakrishna Math and Mission have been trying their best to spread India's message of spirituality and service in lands beyond the seas. The countries nearer home had greater need for philanthropy, while those in the West were eager for a deeper spiritual life. The Math and the Mission have, accordingly, adopted two distinct lines of work.

IN THE BRITISH COLONIES

In the Eastern centres in Burma, Ceylon, Fiji, the Straits Settlements, and Mauritius the emphasis has been laid on social welfare, though spirituality is by no means neglected. Thus, before the Japanese invasion, Rangoon had not only a big hospital administering to the needs of all irrespective of caste, creed, and race, but it had also a cultural and spiritual centre, the Ramakrishna Mission Society, with its fine library and reading-room and lecture hall.

The Mission centre at Singapore had had under it a Tamil School, an English School,

a Night School, and a Vocational School. 'The fate of the centre since the Japanese invasion is not known.'

The centre at Nadi in Fiji has been trying under Swami Rudrananda for the educational and cultural uplift of the Indian community in that distant island. The Swami conducts a 'Students' Home' at Nadi and carries on an intense spiritual activity in the shape of lecture tours, interviews, worships, festivals, and Bhajana.

The Mission has got a permanent centre at Port Louis in Mauritius which is making the local people conscious of the glorious cultural and spiritual heritage of India. Swami Ghanananda in charge of the centre, has also succeeded in starting many Night Schools, with several hundred boys and girls on their rolls. A Parents' Association has been formed to help the teaching of Indian languages in the schools of the colony.

In Ceylon, the main centre at Colombo confines itself mainly to spiritual activity, while those at Batticaloa, Trincomalie, and Jaffna under it run several schools and 14 Tamil Schools. Besides, there is an Orphanage for girls attached to the Girls' School at Karativu, in Batticaloa.

IN EUROPE

A Vedanta centre was opened in Paris in 1938 by Swami Siddheswarananda, from where he had to shift to Montpellier in September 1940 due to the exigencies of the War. The Swami holds weekly classes and delivers lectures on Vedanta and other aspects of Indian spirituality.

Swami Yatiswarananda, who had been spreading the message of Vedanta through lectures, classes, interviews, and correspondence in continental Europe, had to sail for New York from Bergen a few hours before the town fell into German hands.

Swami Avyaktananda, who started work in England in 1934, has since then been conducting weekly and summer classes in the country, drawing-room meetings, meditation classes, and interviews in London, Surrey, Bath, and Bristol despite war conditions.

IN AMERICA

There are 11 centres in the United States of America and 1 in Argentina.

New York has two Vedanta centres, one under Swami Bodhananda and the other under Swami Nikhilananda.

Swami Akhilananda carries on the work of the centres at Providence and Boston.

The centre at Chicago is under Swami Vishwananda.

The Vedanta centre at St. Louis is being organized by Swami Satprakashananda.

The Hollywood centre under Swami Prabhavananda conducts a monthly journal, *Vedanta and the West*, in addition to its usual preaching work.

The San Francisco and Berkeley centres are under Swami Ashokananda, who also manages the peaceful retreat on Lake Tahoe in the solitude of the Sierra Nevada.

Swami Devatmananda, who is in charge of the Portland centre, has also built an Ashrama as an annexe to the main one in a hilly place twenty miles from the city.

The centre at Seattle under Swami Vividishananda has been placed on a permanent footing, now that it has got a home of its own.

The Buenos Aires Ashrama under Swami Vijayananda moved to its own beautiful home at Bella Vista in July 1941.

A common feature of all these American centres is that they concentrate all their energies on spreading the spiritual message of India through weekly classes, lectures, broadcast talks, meditation classes, ceremonial dinners, public celebrations, etc. Some of them also publish books.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION RELIEF WORK

REPORT

Flood Relief Work :

On receipt of the news of floods in Damodar the Ramakrishna Mission had promptly sent a batch of workers to Satgachia within the flood affected areas of the Sadar Sub-division of the Burdwan District where 50 mds. of Chira and 10 mds. of Gur were immediately distributed. Since then our workers had proceeded to still worse affected areas within the Sub-division and notwithstanding difficulties of transport, particularly due to want of boats, conducted rescue operations which were of immediate necessity, in the course of which they also distributed loaves of 2 mds. of flour. A centre has subsequently been opened to give relief in some of these worst affected places, where the first dole of rice must have been distributed by now though the reports have not yet arrived. A second centre has also been opened at Sultanpur in the Kalna Sub-division of the same district where 15 mds. of rice and 15 mds. of Dal have already been distributed. Although this work needs immediate expansion, we are afraid, it will not be possible to extend it or continue it for long, unless liberal contributions be forthcoming.

Distress Relief Work :

The serious nature of the food problem in Bengal is now a matter of common experience. The condition of the poor and the middle class people is worsening day by day. Extensive relief work should be started immediately to save the lives of thousands of starving men, women and children. Through our Mission centres at Taki and Sarisha (24-Parganas), at Sonargaon and Baliati (Dacca), Sargachhi (Murshidabad) and at Dinajpur, Barisal, Bankura and Midnapore we have been all along trying to render, in our own humble way, as much service as we could, to the local people, by way of gratuitous relief, pecuniary help and by way of sale of rice at cheaper rates.

Up to the 15th of August, from our centres at Taki, Sarisha, Barisal, Bankura, and Dinajpur, Baliati and Sonargaon we distributed free 291 mds. 32 srs. of rice ; 15 mds. 13 srs. of Dal and Chola ; 26 mds. 35 srs. of Atta, flour and Chhatu ; 5 mds. 6 srs. of maize and 30 pieces of new cloth as well as Rs. 844-4-6 as pecuniary help to more than 5,575 recipients. We hope to increase the quantity of rice to 350 mds. per month in the near future. Besides, we have been able to distribute 2,849 mds. of rice at controlled rate to those families who were not able to procure it in the open market. These recipients also were selected after careful inspection. All this is quite insignificant in comparison with the extent and acuteness of the distress, to cope with which, even partially, large sums of money will be necessary.

Cyclone Relief Work :

The work started in October 1942, is at present being conducted over an area covering 200 villages of Midnapur and 24-Parganas. During the first half of August we distributed from our 8 centres 5,800 mds. of rice and 414 pieces of new cloth to 62,843 recipients as well as 10 srs. of barley and 10 srs. of sugar for children and patients. Besides, we have constructed 690 huts and cleaned 162 tanks up till now. Homoeopathic medicines and diet etc. are also given from three of our centres. An allopathic medical unit has recently been sent to the field to combat, as far as possible, the various diseases prevalent in the cyclone affected area, particularly malaria, which has broken out in an epidemic form and has been taking a heavy toll. Arrangements are being made to send more such units in the area but we

are very much handicapped in this task for want of quinine.

APPEAL

Bengal faces a great calamity to-day. Cyclone, flood, disease, specially malaria in epidemic form, and above all the acute shortage of food and clothing have brought the people on the verge of death. Wide scale relief is badly needed at this grave hour, but for which famine and death will stalk through the land. The funds at our disposal for the Flood and Distress Relief in particular, are meagre and the total amount of contributions so far received by us for these works is very small.

We convey our grateful thanks to all donors through whose generosity we have been able to conduct our relief work so far, and we earnestly appeal to the benevolent public to make further sacrifices to save thousands of our helpless sisters and brothers. Contributions however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses:—(1) Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah ; (2) Manager, Udbodhan Office, 1 Udbodhan Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta ; (3) Manager, Advaita Ashrama, 4 Wellington Lane, Calcutta.

Donors are requested to kindly specify the particular Relief Work for which their contributions are meant and cheques, if any, should be made payable to the "Ramakrishna Mission".

SWAMI MADHAVANANDA

Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission

24. 8. '43



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The Hindoo Monk of India.