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"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।"

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

ON RECORDING VIVEKANANDA'S LECTURES

By Ida Ansell

Swami Vivekananda's second trip to the West occurred in 1899-1900. During the first half of 1900 he worked in and around San Francisco, California. I was a resident of that city, twenty-two years old at the time. . . . I heard him lecture perhaps a score of times from March to May of 1900, and recorded seventeen of his talks. . . .

The lectures were given in San Francisco, Oakland, and Alameda, in churches, in the Alameda and San Francisco Homes of Truth, and in rented halls. Some were free to the public, and others were given in courses of three for a dollar. Altogether Swamiji gave, besides nearly daily interviews and informal classes, at least thirty or forty major addresses in March, April, and May. He was phenomenally prolific. How he could speak so often and yet always with such originality is something no one has ever been able to explain. He himself confessed that time after time on his lecture tours he felt exhausted intellectually and incapable of appearing the next day. Then, as his authorized *Life* explains, he would be aided in various ways: 'For instance, at dead of night he would hear a voice shouting at him the very thoughts he was to speak on the morrow. . . . Or again it would be like someone delivering a lecture alongside of him, as he lay on his bed listening. At other times two voices would argue before him, discussing at great length subjects that he would find himself repeating on the following day upon the platform or in the pulpit. Sometimes these discussions involved ideas that he had never heard or thought of previously. . . . To his disciples he would explain that these incidents betrayed the powers and potentialities of the Self.' . . .

I was long hesitant about transcribing and releasing these lectures because of the imperfectness of my notes. I was just an amateur stenographer at the time I took them. The only experience I had had in recording and transcribing lectures was in connection with the talks of Miss Lydia Bell, the leader of one of the Homes of Truth of San Francisco. Miss Bell spoke slowly and deliberately, and I could

almost always get down every word. But one would have needed a speed of at least three hundred words per minute to capture all of Swamiji's torrents of eloquence. I possessed less than half the required speed, and at the time I had no idea that the material would have value to anyone but myself. In addition to his fast speaking pace, Swamiji was a superb actor. His stories and imitations absolutely forced one to stop writing, to enjoy watching him.

Since his death in 1902, Swami Vivekananda has become an international figure. The religious ideas he taught are being considered and accepted by people all over the world. Now we see that Swamiji was a special messenger from God and that every word he said was full of significance. So, even though my notes were somewhat fragmentary, I have yielded to the opinion that their contents are precious and must be given for publication.

Swamiji's speaking style was colloquial, fresh, and forceful. No alterations have been made in it; no adjusting or smoothing out of his spontaneous flow for purposes of publication has been done. Where omissions were made because of some obscurity in the meaning, they have been indicated by three dots. Anything inserted for purposes of clarification has been placed in square brackets. With these qualifications, the words are exactly as Swamiji spoke them.

Everything Swamiji said had tremendous power. These lectures have slept in my old stenographer's notebook for more than fifty years. Now as they emerge, one feels that the power is still there.

CONCENTRATION

By Swami Vivekananda

All knowledge that we have, either of the external or internal world, is obtained through only one method—by the concentration of the mind. No knowledge can be had of any science unless we can concentrate our minds upon the subject. The astronomer concentrates his mind through the telescope . . . and so on. If you want to study your own mind, it will be the same process. You will have to concentrate your mind and turn it back upon itself. The difference in this world between mind and mind is simply the fact of concentration. One is more concentrated than the other, gets more knowledge.

In the lives of all great men, past and present, we find this tremendous power of concentration. Those are men of genius, you say. The science of yoga tells us that we are all geniuses, if we try hard to be. Some will come into this life better fitted and will do it quicker perhaps. We can all do the same. The same power is in everyone. The subject of the present lecture is how to concentrate the mind in order to study the mind itself. Yogis have laid down certain rules and this night I am going to give you a sketch of some of these rules.

Concentration, of course, comes from various sources. Through the senses you can get concentration. Some get it when they hear beautiful music, others when they see beautiful scenery. . . . Some get concentrated by lying upon beds of spikes, sharp iron spikes, others by sitting upon sharp pebbles. These are extraordinary cases [using] most unscientific procedure. Scientific procedure is gradually training the mind.

One gets concentrated by holding his arm up. Torture gives him the concentration he wants. But all these are extraordinary.

Universal methods have been organized according to different philosophers. Some say the state we want to attain is superconsciousness of the mind—going beyond the limitations the body has made for us. The value of ethics to the yogi lies in that it makes the mind pure. The purer the mind, the easier it is to control it. The mind takes every thought that rises and works it out. The grosser the mind, the more difficult [it is] to control [it]. The immoral man will never be able to concentrate his mind to study psychology. He may get a little control as he begins, get a little power of hearing . . . and even those powers will go from him. The difficulty is that if you study closely, you see how [the] extraordinary power arrived at was not attained by regular scientific training. The men who by the power of magic control serpents will be killed by serpents. . . . The man who attains any extraordinary powers will in the long run succumb to those powers. There are millions [who] receive power through all sorts of ways in India. The vast majority of them die raving lunatics. Quite a number commit suicide, the mind [being] unbalanced.

The study must be put on the safe side: scientific, slow, peaceful. The first requisite is to be moral. Such a man wants the gods to come down, and they will come down and manifest themselves to him. That is our psychology and philosophy in essence, [to be] perfectly moral. Just think what that means! No injury, perfect purity, perfect austerity! These are absolutely necessary. Just think, if a man can attain all these in perfection! What more do you want? If he is free from all enmity towards any being . . . all animals will give up their enmity [in his presence]. The yogis lay down very strict laws . . . so that one cannot pass off for a charitable man without being charitable. . . .

If you believe me, I have seen a man who used to live in a hole and there were cobras and frogs living with him. . . . [*Ed. note*: The reference is evidently to Pavhari Baba, a saint who lived in such complete surrender to God that he referred to a cobra by which he was bitten as 'a messenger from the Beloved.'] Sometimes he would fast for [days and months] and then come out. He was always silent. One day there came a robber [. . . who had come to steal from his Ashrama, and who at the sight of the saint got frightened and ran away, leaving the goods he had stolen in a bundle behind; . . . the saint took the bundle up, ran after the thief, and came up to him after miles of hard running; . . . the saint laid the bundle at the feet of the thief, and with folded hands and tears in his eyes asked his pardon for his own intrusion, and begged hard for his acceptance of the goods, since they belonged to him, and not to himself. (*Ed. note*: Above story completed from Vivekananda's *Complete Works*, IV, 239.)]

My old master used to say, 'When the lotus of the heart has bloomed the bees will come by themselves.' Men like that are there yet. They need not talk. . . . When the man is perfect from his heart, without a thought of hatred, all animals will give up their hatred [before him]. So with purity. These are necessary for our dealings with our fellow beings. We must love all. . . . We have no business to look at the faults of others; it does no good. We must not even think of them. Our business is with the good. We are not here to deal with faults. Our business is to be good.

Here comes Miss So and so. She says, 'I am going to be a yogi.' She tells the news twenty times, meditates fifty days, then she says, 'There is nothing in this religion. I have tried it. There is nothing in it.'

The very basis [of spiritual life] is not there. The foundation [must be] this perfect morality. That is the great difficulty. . . .

In our country there are vegetarian sects. They will take in the early morning pounds of sugar and place it on the ground for ants, and the story is when one of them was putting sugar on the ground for ants, a man placed his foot upon the ants. The former said, 'Wretch, you have killed the animals!' And he gave him such a blow that it killed the man.

External purity is very easy and all the world rushes toward [it]. If a certain kind of dress is the kind of morality [to be observed], any fool can do that. When it is grappling with the mind itself, it is hard work.

The people who do external, superficial things are so self-righteous! I remember, when I was a boy I had great regard for the character of Jesus Christ. [Then I read about the wedding feast in the Bible.] I closed the book and said, 'He ate meat and drank wine! He cannot be a good man.'

We are always losing sight of the real meaning of things. The little eating and dress! Every fool can see that. Who sees that which is beyond? It is culture of the heart that we want. . . . One mass of people in India we see bathing twenty times a day sometimes, making themselves very pure. And they do not touch anyone. . . . The coarse facts, the external things! [If by bathing one could be pure,] fish are the purest beings.

Bathing, and dress, and food regulation—all these have their proper value when they are complementary to the spiritual. . . . That first, and these all help. But without it, no amount of eating grass . . . is any good at all. They are helps if properly understood. But improperly understood, they are derogatory. . . .

This is the reason why I am explaining these things: First, because in all religions everything degenerates upon being practiced by [the ignorant]. The camphor in the bottle evaporated, and they are fighting over the bottle.

Another thing: . . . [Spirituality] evaporates when they say, 'This is right and that is wrong.' All quarrels are [with forms and creeds] never in the spirit. The Buddhist offers for years glorious preaching; gradually, this spirituality evaporated . . . [Similarly with Christianity.] And then began the quarrel whether it is three gods in one or one in three, when nobody wants to go to God Himself and know what He is. We have to go to God Himself to know whether He is three in one or one in three.

Now, with this explanation, the posture. Trying to control the mind, a certain posture is necessary. Any posture in which the person can sit easily—that is the posture for that person. As a rule, you will find that the spinal column must be left free. It is not intended to bear the weight of the body. . . . The only thing to remember is the sitting posture: [use] any posture in which the spine is perfectly free of the weight of the body.

Next [*pranayama*] . . . the breathing exercises. A great deal of stress is laid upon breathing. . . . What I am telling you is not something gleaned from some sect in India. It is universally true. Just as in this country you teach your children certain prayers, [in India] they get the children and give them certain facts, etc.

Children are not taught any religion in India except one or two prayers. Then they begin to seek for somebody with whom they can get *en rapport.* They go to different persons and find that 'This man is the man for me,' and get initiation. If I am married, my wife may possibly get another man teacher and my son will get somebody else, and that is always my secret between me and my teacher. The wife's religion the husband need not know, and he would not dare ask her what her religion is. It is well known that they would never say. It is only known to that person and the teacher. . . . Sometimes yon will find that what would be quite ludicrous to one will be just the teaching for another. . . . Each is carrying his own burden and is to be helped according to his particular mind. It is the business of every individual, between him, his teacher, and God. But there are certain general methods which all these teachers preach. Breathing, meditating are universal. That is the worship in India.

On the banks of the Ganges, we will see men, women, and children all [practicing] breathing and then meditating. Of course, they have other things to do. They cannot devote much time to this. But those who

have taken this as the study of life, they practice various methods. There are eighty-four different asanas. Those that take it up under some person, they always feel the breath and the movements in all the different parts of the body. . . .

Next comes *dharana* [concentration]. . . . *Dharana* is holding the mind in certain spots.

The Hindu boy or girl . . . gets initiation. He gets from his guru a word. This is called the root word. This word is given to the guru [by his guru], and he gives it to his disciple. One such word is OM. All these symbols have a great deal of meaning, and they hold it secret, never write it. They must receive it through the ear—not through writing—from the teacher, and then hold it as God himself. Then they meditate on the word.

I used to pray like that at one time, all through the rainy season, four months. I used to get up and take a plunge in the river, and with all my wet clothes on repeat [the mantra] till the sun set. Then I ate something—a little rice or something. Four months in the rainy season!

The Indian mind believes that there is nothing in the world that cannot be obtained. If a man wants money in this country, he goes to work and earns money. There, he gets a formula and sits under a tree and believes that money must come. Everything must come by the power of his [thought]. You make money here. It is the same thing. You put forth your whole energy upon money-making.

There are some sects called Hatha yogis. . . . They say the greatest good is to keep the body from dying. . . . Their whole process is clinging to the body. Twelve years training! And they begin with little children, otherwise it is impossible. . . . One thing [is] very curious about the hatha yogi: When he first becomes a disciple, he goes into the wilderness and lives alone forty days exactly. All they have they learn within those forty days. . . .

A man in Calcutta claims to have lived five hundred years. The people all tell me that their grandfathers saw him. . . . He takes a constitutional twenty miles, never walks, he runs. Goes into the water, covers himself [from] top to toe with mud. After that he plunges again into the water, again sticks himself with mud. . . . I do not see any good in that. (Snakes, they say, live two hundred years). He must be very old, because I have travelled fourteen years in India and wherever I went everybody knew him. He has been travelling all his life. . . . [The Hatha yogi] will swallow a piece of rubber eighty inches long and take it out again. Four times a day he has to wash every part of his body, internal and external parts. . . .

The walls can keep their bodies thousands of years. . . . What of that? I would not want to live so long. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' One little body, with all its delusions and limitations, is enough.

There are other sects . . . They give you a drop of the elixir of life and you remain young. . . . It will take me months to enumerate [all the sects]. All their activity is on this side [in the material world]. Every day a new sect. . . .

The power of all those sects is in the mind. Their idea is to hold the mind. First concentrate it and hold it at a certain place. They generally say, at certain parts of the body along the spinal column or upon the nerve centres. By holding the mind at the nerve centres, [the yogi] gets power over the body. The body is the great cause of disturbance to his peace, is opposite of his highest ideal, so he wants control: [to] keep the body as servant.

Then comes meditation. That is the highest state. . . . When [the mind] is doubtful that is not its great state. Its great state is meditation. It looks upon things and sees things, not identifying itself with anything else. As long as I feel pain, I have identified myself with the body. When I feel joy or pleasure, I have identified myself with the body. But the high state will look with the same pleasure or blissfulness upon pleasure or upon pain. . . . Every meditation is direct superconsciousness. In perfect concentration the soul

becomes actually free from the bonds of the gross body and knows itself as it is. Whatever one wants, that comes to him. Power and knowledge are already there. The soul identifies itself with that which is powerless matter and thūs weeps. It identifies itself with mortal shapes. . . . But if that free soul wants to exercise any power, it will have it. If it does not, it does not come. He who has known God has become God. There is nothing impossible to such a free soul. No more birth and death for him. He is free forever.

RESURGENCE OF ASIA—II

THE HURDLE OF RELIGION

By the Editor

Asia's problems are many and varied. Unless they are solved to the satisfaction of all the countries, barring permanently the formation of antagonistic groups, there is little hope of a true resurgence of the continent, on whose efforts, as the political situation of the world stands, depend the peace and prosperity of mankind. Ideals and materials are ready, the people of these countries are eager, after long suffering and stupor, for the sacrifice needed for the great task, and fortunately most of these nations have produced leaders who are truly swayed by the ideal of universal brotherhood of man. But the deterrents being deep-rooted their eradication is not easy, especially when modern education is so meagre; and in almost all the countries there are outside interferences which incite the inflammable elements of the masses to take retrograde steps.

Most of these peoples being medieval in outlook, they have stuck to the forms of their religions with an amazing degree of fanaticism, which, unless properly handled, runs the risk of spoiling the grand prospect. This problem is the greatest headache to the leaders. Europe by-passed it through the Industrial Revolution but, having now realized the mistake as a result of the two World Wars, is trying to return to religion—a fact which should make the Asian leaders all the more wary of discarding religion. Communist and semi-communist countries, which eschewed religion formally, are led to rethink of the wisdom of the step in the light of the recent attitude of their people.

Mr. Toynbee has sung paeans to the 'higher religions', and hopes that mankind would be delivered of the present crisis by them. If, however, the needed transformation in them fails to come in time, religion will go overboard, and mankind will be destroyed by men flying at one another's throat. Man's reason should be developed to discriminate between eternal verities and the passing phases thereof, between God and the paths leading to Him on the one hand and the circumstantial socio-political laws on the other. Religious histories of nations show, without exception, that God revealed Himself to man when he was running after fleeting enjoyments, and as such religions are encumbered with many things that were originally meant for social well-being and not for the realization of God. As society is dynamic and progressive and not static its laws are bound to vary with the change of circumstances. Yet man is not a wholly social being, not one who is a mere flux, having nothing abiding in him. He has a core that does not change; this is the divine that belongs to God,

his peripheral existence being social, with reference to which Christ advised his followers to 'render unto Caesar things that are Caesar's.' Lest God and society pull man in two directions, society, which is a means and a lesser entity, should be orientated to God, should be so adjusted from time to time as to be helpful to the realization of God. Society in its onward march, however, leaves behind heaps of discarded laws, which get mixed up with religion and form its dangerous elements which check further progress. Hence a proper sifting of these non-essentials is necessary. The problem is extremely delicate and needs very great caution; but it should be tackled and that as early as possible, for the reforms are overdue.

These reforms in the non-essentials of religions are known as religious reforms, otherwise religions as individual's approaches to the Universal need no reforms. These religious reforms are brought about for the good of men and women belonging to particular religions and as such they affect comparatively small number of persons; and, unless a rite or custom of one religion clashes directly with that of another, reform may be left to the people themselves. Although no modern state can afford to allow any section of its people to lag behind others and prove a drag on the whole nation it is nevertheless wiser to leave the task of religious reforms to be effected by the people themselves, rather than provoke unnecessary opposition from them by governmental initiation. But when tenets or customs produce inter-group jealousies and feuds and endanger public peace, it becomes an imperative duty of the state to intervene and carry out reforms even in the teeth of violent opposition.

If, however, the state be theocratic and adopt a particular scripture and faith as its guide and state religion, and administer justice according to the laws laid down in that scripture then those nationals who do not follow that faith have either to leave the country or renounce their faith; for they cannot expect justice against a custom, which affects them adversely but which is justified by the scripture of the state-religion. Leaving the country means mass migration, which may go against the immigration laws of other countries. There may be many other reasons as well. In case of neighbouring states there may be a demand for extension of boundaries; and no modern government can take the risks of unscientific unstrategic agreements on boundaries these days when the clouds of a global war are hovering above. With most people in the orient, change of faith is an unthinkable proposition. Hence theocracy in modern times is a dangerous experiment. It not only jeopardizes the safety of the state concerned, by keeping within its boundaries permanently disaffected people, but it also endangers the peace and order of the neighbouring states. A country may not have a theocratic constitution and still prove as dangerous, if its masses are so motivated. What is needed therefore is a broader outlook, a real understanding of the content and meaning of religion, of the spirit of the scriptures rather than the letter. And the inculcation of this outlook and spirit in the people is the duty of each state. Any government that fails to take effective steps not only to check this undesirable tendency of the medieval period but also positively to implant in the minds of its nationals the wholesome spirit of brotherliness, irrespective of faiths and cults, is a menace to the peace of the world.

There are countries in Asia which do not recognize this as a piece of medievalism; and there are others that are not even conscious that it exists. What is more dangerous is the existence in many countries of some people who brand themselves as the custodians of the national culture, by which they mean this formal religion; and their success in creating a fright in unwary minds of losing their heritage has an ominous bearing on the whole nation. Hence the best way to deal with the problem is not to treat it countrywise, but to look at it as a psychological problem of a peculiar group mind that is found in almost all countries. A good percentage of these people are persons whose interests lie in keep-

ing others steeped in ignorance in order to continue enjoying the privileges that the *status quo* of society ensures to them. Their number would not allow the progressives to be indifferent to them, though they do not deserve any better treatment. The exposure of their selfishness and of the hollowness of their arguments is a real service to society.

There are others in this group who deserve better consideration and treatment, for they are really honest people with character and intelligence, which can be utilized for the good of society if they can be won over. They are what the Hindus call *karma-kāṇḍins,* persons who give a higher place to rites and observances associated with religions than to the incorporation in life of those ideas and ideals whose symbols and representations these rites are. And the strict and punctilious observance of these rites and ceremonies under all manner of circumstances for years and sometimes for generations has endowed them with a stoic character and scholarship that draw admiration from all sections of society. With due exceptions, the emotionalism, shallowness, and impatience of the progressives are no match to the stoicism, forbearance, and erudition of the *karma-kāṇḍins.* Yet psychology and the time-spirit being in favour of the advanced group, they can win the race with sweet reasonableness and proper reverence for the character of their adversaries and by the emulation of their personal excellences.

In any case people should not be allowed to fall victims to the call to this medievalism. Strictly speaking religion means an approach to God or the Cosmic Consciousness that moulds and breaks this universe of things and beings; and rites and ceremonies are helps to raise man gradually to this Universal Consciousness through evoking a genuine aspiration for and communion with It. So the test of religious progress lies in man's broadening out and embracing wider and wider circles of beings in and through whom this Consciousness reveals Itself. Anything, be it a religious rite or a social custom or an attitude or way of life, that stands against this expansion of personality is irreligion, a sin against God and humanity. Man being the highest expression of consciousness so far known, must be held most sacred—more than any rite or ceremony; and the greatest man, i.e. one with the widest heart and the keenest intellect, must get the highest honour, as he is the nearest approach to God. Hence, to drive away or exclude man from a holy precinct or a certain ceremony is to dishonour God, who seeks fuller and fuller manifestation through him as Buddhas and Christs. We must always bear in mind that all ceremonies are meant for man as much as they are performed by man—the performance is the means and the middle portion of what starts with and ends in man as the agent and the enjoyer of its fruits—man is supreme throughout. Nevertheless, as the success of any rite depends mainly on the true attitude of man, on his faith and aspiration, anyone lacking the spirit—be he a priest, a 'Maulana', or a 'Father', any casual looker-on, or a curious foreign observer—has no right to be present there, for his presence leads to the diminution of the tense holy atmosphere that ensures success. Given the faith and purity, however, nobody should be debarred from attendance; it makes no difference if he be a Pañcama or a Brāhmaṇa, a Muslim or a Christian. For it is by such attendance and such breathing of the spirit of one another's religion that catholicity develops, faiths and sects come nearer to one another and the presence of Universal Consciousness is felt and imbibed. We must devise all possible ways and means to inculcate in the mind of every child that it is this feeling of the presence of God in ourselves and everything around us, and of our kinship with all living creatures, especially man, that constitutes real religion; and that this important factor is present in all faiths, if correctly interpreted and understood. Any idea or rite that appears to be contrary to this fundamental idea must be considered to be either an old shibboleth temporarily adopted by a society to overcome a situation which is no more, or a new intro-

duction into a faith by vested interests to serve an ulterior motive. Religions must be freed from these dangerous adjuncts, if they are to be useful to man and fulfil their purpose. Education, all kinds of social and political training, must emphasize this true and abiding aspect of religions in order to free individuals and nations from these shackles.

Hindus and Muslims, like their medieval Christian brethren, are noted as God-fearing people. Why was it then thought necessary to suppress the orthodox Muslim brotherhood in Turkey and Iran, and now in Egypt? The political leaders were not irreligious far less anti-religious. They were honest God-fearing people. But when they saw that selfish persons were exploiting the religious convictions of innocent men and women and thus dragging the nations down and that all persuasions and entreaties to wean them from these sinister activities proved unavailing, the leaders found themselves compelled to take this drastic step, taking care to restore religions in their true glories at the earliest opportunity. Other countries need not follow Turkey and Egypt. Drastic steps are taken when the proper time to take true steps is missed or when leaders lack in imagination. True pictures of religions must be held before the people in hundred and one ways, and by precepts and examples, so that they may follow the right track and may not be sidetracked by selfish people or by those who have failed to read aright the time-spirit.

Almost all the Asian countries being multi-religious and religion being still a living force in them, they can never make progress without a true understanding and practice of religion. Hence every government must guide the people along this line. But there are religions which sprang in opposition to earlier faiths obtaining in the land or to those in the neighbouring countries having political, economic, and other rivalries, and whose scriptures naturally contain passages that speak ill of certain tenets and practices of other faiths; and these religions incite their followers to inimical action against those of the latter, thus keeping up old hostilities between sections of the same people or between nations. Such passages, though few, are to be found in the Old and the New Testament, in the Quran, and in the Purāṇas and the Smṛitis. People, in their zeal to follow scriptures, lay greater emphasis on these passages and create ugliest possible scenes which bring slur on humanity. Scriptures being the highest authority to these peoples, appeal to reason and common sense goes unheeded. Fortunately for the Hindu India the Ṛiṣis have placed the Vedas on the top; and in case of contradictions between them and the later scriptures they have enjoined that the Vedas, and not the Purāṇas, are to be followed. As the Vedas were composed at a time when religious rivalries were unknown, they do not contain such hostile passages; they are either the outpourings of devotion or high philosophical discourses, and as such they breathe universal thoughts and sentiments. For the Hindus therefore—whether they respect it or not—there is an appeal to a higher authority, the Vedas, from the lower courts of the Smṛitis and Purāṇas, an appeal that is lacking in case of other religions. For the followers of Islam and Christianity, as for the Jews, there is no higher court except that of reason. But reference to reason is for the cultured people only, those who can read, understand, and interpret others' scriptures as well as their own in the light of history and modern knowledge and who can distinguish and discriminate between the essentials and non-essentials of various religions. The general masses, however, must needs be referred to the scriptures. Hence a very grave responsibility rests on the shoulders of the cultured section of the followers of these religions; it is to re-interpret their scriptures for the good of the masses and for the peace and prosperity of the whole continent. The more fanatical the people are, the greater and more urgent the need is. For nothing is holding back the progress of the southern and western countries of Asia more than this religious fanaticism, which has so far been defeating the attempts of leaders to

unite the peoples. The Arab countries are mostly homogeneous in this respect and yet this kind of zeal being against the time-spirit, it is retarding the progress of the people, though they are not to fight other faiths within their countries. Men of all races and all faiths must be delivered of this inhibition if they are to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Asian countries are to understand their religious problems in the light of the above remarks. They are also to take note of the mistake the Western countries committed in founding society on the basis of economics. Modern Communism is the logical outcome of this view. If money brings happiness, surely the happiness of the greatest number, viz. of the masses, must be the ideal; so money goes to the masses, which is the aim of Communism. The foundation of the Eastern societies is sound. Religion, which is an approach through love to God, who is love, and which is a lifelong attempt on the part of man to become perfect 'as the Father in Heaven is perfect' can never be taken away from man, for this is the very law of his being, to love and to be perfect. So, not by driving religion from the national life but by true interpretation and organic incorporation of it that oriental nations will rise to prosperity themselves and bring peace to others. Love begets goodwill, and goodwill co-operation. Expansion of love leads to expansion of co-operation. When this love, by strenuous and ceaseless efforts, becomes universal, co-operation transcends all limits, geographical and historical. So any state or government that directs its best energies to making its nationals truly religious rears up a nation of tremendous love and goodwill for all the other nations of the world and so solves international problems along with its own.

Asia has been brought up in this tradition —not that her kings and emperors never waged wars or oppressed their own people or others; but that the people themselves, coming in contact with saints and Ṛiṣis more often and revering them more deeply than their kings and emperors, have been brought up in this tradition of love and divinity. And it is these oriental peoples and not their kings or political leaders or commercial magnates that are coming to the forefront. It is but natural that they will bring with them what they possess and value wherever they will go, whether to their national councils or to international bodies. When so many delegates argue and vote, all in love and with consideration, for a certain step in any sphere, big or small, what selfish interest can dare to challenge or defeat it, or stalemate or veto it? Asian countries are to pause and ponder over this possibility, which is quite within their reach, and to decide whether they will take to this path of love and puissance or that of hatred and annihilation. They are to consider some other factors too. If they can willingly bind themselves in love and amity through the bondage of Divine Love, the greatest stretch of land, the highest population of mankind, and richest mineral and other resources are all theirs. They will then be true labourers in the vineyard of the Lord. Their happiness and prosperity will overflow to the world outside.

If the Asian and African nations, who will soon meet together in the Afro-Asian Conference, can bring this heart and integral outlook into it an irresistible flow of goodwill and benediction rising automatically from the best of humanity in all countries of the world will crown their effort with unique success. But the delegates are to bear in mind that nobler the cause upheld, the greater the sacrifice demanded, and that wary feet run no thorn. Given love, sacrifice, and patience, their deliberation and consequent practical steps will be a landmark in the progress of humanity.

NEW DISCOVERIES REGARDING SWAMI VIVEKANANDA—II

By An American Devotee

In the previous article, which dealt with the few weeks of Swami Vivekananda's life prior to the Parliament of Religions, some hitherto unknown facts were disclosed. We come now to the days of the Parliament itself, and I must warn the reader at the outset that not all the material presented will be, strictly speaking, new, nor will it all directly pertain to Swamiji, for most of the present article is devoted to a presentation of the salient features of the Parliament. I believe, however, that the expression "new discoveries" is nonetheless pertinent, for, although much of the material has been gathered from various histories of the Parliament, I think it is reasonable to assume that very few of the readers of *Prabuddha Bharata* have dipped into those ponderous and unwieldy tomes or are likely to do so in the future, for they are becoming increasingly difficult of access.

One reason why I feel that a resumé of the Parliament should be presented to the readers of *Prabuddha Bharata,* even though all the material does not directly relate to Swamiji, is that an accurate account of the proceedings of that gathering will explain, at least partly, the nature and direction of his post-Parliament activities. While it is true that the facts given regarding the Parliament of Religions in "The Life of Swami Vivekananda" are accurate, they are so stringently selected that the total impression which emerges is not entirely representative of the proceedings. By focusing upon particular incidents which relate to Swamiji alone, his biographers have inevitably blurred the background against which those incidents took place, with the result that they are no longer seen in their proper perspective and lose some of their intrinsic values.

Another reason for giving a brief history of the Parliament is that I myself need the story in order that the new material which I will later present may be seen in its correct setting. In this connection, I should perhaps say that it is not my intention in this series of articles merely to file new materials or give what Swamiji might call "a tradesman's catalogue" of facts and newspaper clippings, but rather to offer the new material, of which there will be an abundance, against its historical background that it may be better evaluated and better enjoyed. In the meantime, I beg the reader's patience.

Aside from contemporary periodicals and journals, which will be cited in the course of this article, my sources are for the most part: "The World's Parliament of Religions," Volumes I and II, edited by Rev. John Henry Barrows, and "Neely's History of the Parliament of Religions," edited by Walter B. Houghton. Other sources referred to are: "Chorus of Faith as Heard in the Parliament of Religions," by J. L. Jones; "Reviews of the World's Religious Congresses," by L. P. Mercer; and "World's Congress of Religions," by C. M. Stevens and H. W. Thomas.

I

The primary purpose of the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 was to bring together the fruits of man's material progress. Every thing imaginable was on exhibit—not only the achievements of Western civilization, but, the better to show these off, life-

size replicas of the more backward cultures of the world. The Fair, however, would not have been complete without a representation of the world's thought. "Neely's History of the Parliament of Religions" tells us that "the idea of a series of congresses for the consideration of the greatest themes in which mankind is interested, and so comprehensive as to include representatives from all parts of the earth originated with Charles Carroll Bonney in the summer of 1889." Mr. Bonney was a well-known lawyer of that time. From 1890 he had held the position of president of the International Law and Order League and was the author of many important constitutional and economic reforms. His voice being one which when lifted was heard, his idea was given wide publication and was met with general approval. A committee was formed, and on October 30, 1890, the World's Congress Auxiliary of the Columbian Exposition was organized with Mr. Bonney as its president. For the next two and a half years elaborate and complex plans were made, involving an untold number of letters to and from all corners of the earth. The congresses which finally met, between May 15 and October 28, 1893, were twenty in all and embraced such things as woman's progress, the public press, medicine and surgery, temperance, commerce and finance, music, government and law reform, economic science, Sunday rest, and—"since faith in a Divine Power . . . has been like the sun, a life-giving and fructifying potency in man's intellectual and moral development"—religion. "So numerous," says Houghton, "were these congresses and so extensive the proceedings that their *programmes* bound in one volume constitute an interesting book of 160 pages." (Italics mine.)

Of these congresses, the Parliament of Religions was by far the most famed and widely heralded. "No one gathering ever assembled," says Barrows, "was awaited with such universal interest." The Parliament was, indeed, a unique phenomenon in the history of religions. It is true that throughout the history of India meetings of religions had taken place; it is also true that before 1893 there had been from time to time ecumenical conventions of Christians and Mohammedans. But it can be correctly said that never before had the representatives of the world's great religions been brought together in one place, where they might without fear tell of their respective beliefs to thousands of people. It was an unparalleled meeting, and when first proposed in that day of intolerance and materialism, it seemed to many impossible of human achievement. To even a casual observer it might almost appear that some superhuman force were propelling it forward, and one is not surprised to learn that Swamiji, before embarking for America, had said to Swami Turiyananda, "The Parliament of Religions is being organized for this (pointing to himself). My mind tells me so. You will see it verified at no distant date."

That was a reason, however, least thought of by those who were most instrumental in bringing the religions of the world together. Whatever the divine motives may have been, the human motives lying behind the Parliament were mixed. Swamiji later wrote in a letter: "The Parliament of Religions was organized with the intention of proving the superiority of the Christian religion over other forms of faith . . ." And again, during the course of an interview, he said, "The Parliament of Religions, as it seems to me, was intended for a 'heathen show' before the world . . ." It has sometimes been thought that Swamiji may have been unfair in this judgment of the Congress which introduced him to the Western world, but a reading of the accounts of both the preparations and the proceedings leave one without a doubt that the Parliament was permeated with Christian prejudice. That Christianity would gloriously and unequivocally prove its superiority was a foregone conclusion in the minds of many of its promoters.

On the other hand, there were some connected with the Parliament who, having no religious commitments—no religious ax to grind—conceived of it in broader and more realistic terms. To them it was an unprecedented opportunity for promoting understanding and good will between all seekers of truth. Among these was President Bonney, of whom Swamiji wrote: "Think of that mind that planned and carried out with great success that gigantic undertaking, and he, no clergyman, a lawyer presiding over the dignitaries of all the churches, the sweet, learned, patient Mr. Bonney with all his soul speaking through his bright eyes . . ." Bonney himself described his dream of what the Parliament might accomplish: ". . . I became acquainted with the great religious systems of the world in my youth, and have enjoyed an intimate association with leaders of many churches during my maturer years. I was thus led to believe that if the great religious faiths could be brought into relations of friendly intercourse, many points of sympathy and union would be found, and the coming unity of mankind in the love of God and the service of man be greatly facilitated and advanced." But although it was Bonney's inspiration that lay behind the Parliament, it was actually not he but the Rev. John Henry Barrows, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago, who was Chairman of the General Committee, and responsible for carrying out the elaborate preparations.

The work of the Committee was voluminous. More than 10,000 letters and 40,000 documents were sent out, and answers from all parts of the globe were received by the bushel. Barrows writes pridefully: "For thirty months nearly all the railroads and steamship lines of the world were unconsciously working for the Parliament of Religions. The post-office clerks at Chicago handled great bundles of letters which had previously passed through the brown fingers of the postal clerks in Madras, Bombay and Tokio." Advisory Councilors were selected from all parts of the world, their number finally reaching 3,000. Among the Councilors chosen from India were G. S. Iyer, Editor of the *Hindu*, B. B. Nagarkar of Bombay and P. C. Mazoomdar of Calcutta, the last two of whom represented the Brahmo Samaj at the Parliament. The Committee was also in communication with Dharmapala, the General Secretary of the Maha-Bodhi Society in Calcutta, who later became the delegate for the Southern Buddhists of Ceylon, and Muni Atmaramji, High Priest of the Jain Community of Bombay.

This abundance of correspondence was not all: articles, lectures, sermons and editorials were written which either extravagantly praised or bitterly condemned the attempt to bring together all the religions of the world. It was through articles in the *Hindu* by its editor, G. S. Iyer, that the plans of the Parliament were made generally known in India, and it is probably through this channel that Swamiji, not being affiliated with any sect or organization, came to learn of what was afoot in America.

The task of assembling this unprecedented gathering was not only cumbersome but delicate. The initial action of the Committee, which was appointed in the spring of 1891 and was formed largely of zealous Protestant ministers, was to advise religious leaders of the proposed objectives of the Parliament, which were in brief: "1) To bring together in conference, for the first time in history, the leading representatives of the great Historic Religions of the world. 2) To show to men, in the most impressive way, what and how many important truths the various Religions hold and teach in common. . . . 4) To set forth, by those most competent to speak, what are deemed the important distinctive truths held and taught by each Religion, and by the various chief branches of Christendom. . . . 7) To inquire what light each Religion has afforded, or may afford,

to the other Religions of the world. . . . 9) To discover, from competent men, what light Religion has to throw on the great problems of the present age, especially the important questions connected with Temperance, Labor, Education, Wealth and Poverty. 10) To bring the nations of the earth into a more friendly fellowship, in the hope of securing permanent international peace."

At first the responses that flowed in were mostly favorable and enthusiastic. To be sure, a missionary of the Presbyterian Board in India expressed some "misgivings through fear lest the faith we loved and the Saviour we preached might seem to us to be dishonored." But further acquaintance with the plans served to remove these misgivings and to bring about his hearty approval.

In what this further acquaintance consisted may be gathered from a quotation in Barrows' "History." "The Christian conviction back of this Parliament," he writes approvingly, "was well expressed by Père Hyacinth in the *Contemporary* for July, 1892: 'It is not true that all religions are equally good; but neither is it true that all religions except one are no good at all. The Christianity of the future, more just than that of the past, will assign to each its place in that work of evangelical preparation which the elder doctors of the church discern in heathenism itself and which is not yet completed'."

But this patronizing self-complacence was not enough to remove all misgivings, and as the plans became more widely known, dissent was soon loud and strong. Many Christian journals in America came out in decided opposition, largely on the grounds that gave pause to the Presbyterian missionary, but also out of fear that the Parliament would only aggravate discord. The worst blow of all, however, was one struck by the powerful Archbishop of Canterbury, who after due consideration finally wrote in a letter to the Committee: ". . . The difficulties which I myself feel are not questions of distance and convenience, but rest on the fact that the Christian religion is the one religion. I do not understand how that religion can be regarded as a member of a Parliament of Religions without assuming the equality of the other intended members and the parity of their position and claims."

Echoes were heard. For example, a letter from a minister in Hong Kong: ". . . If misled yourself, at least do not mislead others nor jeopardize, I pray you, the precious life of your soul by playing fast and loose with the truth and coqueting with false religions. . . . You are unconsciously planning treason against Christ."

Although the stand of the Archbishop and those like it were criticized by many, the opposition to it was, for the most part, based on the conviction that, after all, Christianity had nothing to fear. "In my judgment," wrote one bishop in America, "no Christian believer should hesitate one moment to make the presentation of the Religion of Jesus Christ grand and impressive, so that it may make itself felt powerfully in the comparison of religions. . . ." "Who can tell," he went on, "but that the great Head of the Church may, in his providence, make use of this immense gathering to usher in the triumph of his truth, when at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow?"

"One result," wrote another bishop, "will be to show that the Christian faith was never more widely or more intelligently believed in, or Jesus Christ more adoringly followed. Civilization, which is making the whole world one, is preparing the way for the reunion of all the world's religions in their true center—Jesus Christ."

Dozens of similar letters flowed in, approving of the Congress for evangelical reasons. Barrows, without the slightest consciousness that these letters were anything but in the

spirit of the proposed objectives, added his own voice to them. He found it part of his work in replying to the criticisms of the Parliament to write articles and give many public addresses explaining the Christian and scriptural grounds on which its defence, as he says, "securely rested," namely, that St. Paul "was careful to find common ground for himself and his Greek auditors in Athens, before he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection." "We believe," Barrows went on to say, "that Christianity is to supplant all other religions, because it contains all the truth there is in them and much besides, revealing a redeeming God." Patronization was taken for enlightened brotherly love. "Though light has no fellowship with darkness, light does have fellowship with twilight. God has not left himself without witness, and those who have the full light of the Cross should bear brotherly hearts toward all who grope in a dimmer illumination."

This was as liberal as the Christian ministry could get. There were, of course, letters and articles which expressed the thought of more open minds. But in Barrows' "History," these are in the minority and, significantly, almost all come from the pens of laymen. Representative is the following from Count Goblet d'Alviella, of Brussels: "The significance of such an attempt cannot be too much insisted upon. In opposition to sectarian points of view which identify Religion with the doctrines of one or another particular form of worship, it implies, 1. That religious sentiment possesses general forms and even a sphere of action independent of any particular theology; 2. That men belonging to churches the most diverse can and should come to an understanding with each other in order to realize this program common to all religions."

But views such as this, though they represented a large portion of public opinion, missed the main point as far as the General Committee was concerned. "The Parliament was conceived and carried on," Barrows says, "in the spirit of Milton's faith, that 'though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worst in a free and open encounter?' " Truth, in this instance, was, of course, Christianity; falsehood, every other faith.

While this sort of thing had the effect of allaying the fears of the more bigoted section of the Christian Church (though not those of the Archbishop of Canterbury), it also had the effect of repelling the leaders of other religions. It became necessary for Barrows hastily to assure certain alarmed foreign delegates that "the spirit of kindness and fraternity would prevail in the Parliament."

The General Committee had many a delicate problem on its hands. There were, it is true, some failures beyond its control. At the last moment, for instance, in the summer of 1893, the Baptists and the Christian Endeavor Society withdrew all connections with the World's Fair, the reason being that after long-drawn-out debates, the managers of the Fair had decided that its doors were to remain open on Sundays—a decision which was obviously the work of Satan. The Anglican churches for other reasons also withdrew. Russia refused to send a representative, as did Turkey.

But at length all plans were in order, and on August 11, 1893, the General Committee sent out a request for Universal Prayer ". . . to the advance of spiritual enlightenment, to the promotion of peace and good will among nations and races, and to the deepening and widening of the sense of universal human brotherhood."

It must be said here, that despite the obvious and strong prejudice of a large portion of the Christian ministry, and despite the rampant materialism of the age, thousands

of men and women trustingly looked to the Parliament for the fulfillment of the first and more broad objectives laid down by the Committee. There was in America a sincere and open-minded search for spiritual truth and an eagerness to welcome it wherever it might be found. But while a profound readiness existed in the American soul for spiritual food, a truly liberal attitude could not, in those days, obtain acceptance among the clergy of the public as a whole, and it was only in spite of itself that the Parliament became an instrument for offering that food.

Although the attitude of the General Committee seems appalling to us today, actually there was no way in the year 1893, when bigotry was at one of its peaks, that the Parliament could be convened other than through a spirit of Christian evangelism.

II

The Parliament of Religions opened on the morning of September 11, 1893, at the Art Institute of Chicago, which is not to be confused with the "Art Palace"—a temporary though grandiose structure in the Fair Grounds. The Art Institute was a permanent and newly constructed building on Chicago's Michigan Avenue, not yet ready to house the art exhibits for which it was intended. Except for the fact that its many large halls accommodated at various times all the Congresses, it had no connection with the Fair, nor did it vanish into smoke as did the Exposition buildings, but stands today, a large stone building of classical design, serving as one of America's finest museums of art. It was in the Institute's great Hall of Columbus that the delegates of the Parliament gathered on that memorable morning.

At ten o'clock, ten solemn strokes on the New Liberty Bell, which was inscribed, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another," proclaimed the opening of the Congress—each stroke representing one of the ten chief religions, listed by President Bonney as: Judaism, Mohammedanism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shintoism, Zoroastrianism, Catholicism, the Greek Church, and Protestantism. It is not likely, however, that any of the delegates heard this proclamation, for the bell was one of the curiosities of the Fair, and was located at a considerable distance from the Parliament. Nor did the bell serve to summon the spectators. A multitude of people had long since besieged the doors of the Institute; four thousand had crowded onto the floor and into the gallery of the Hall of Columbus and were waiting in an expectant silence for the delegates to appear. The hush was like that of a church. It is said that this "mass of people was so wonderfully quiet that the flutter of wings was heard when a tiny bird flew through an open window and over the vacant platform."

There is no written description of this platform to be found, but to judge from pictures of the Parliament, it did not run the full width of the auditorium and was approximately a hundred feet long and ten feet deep. Vacant of delegates it must have presented a somewhat dreary and unsuccessful attempt at universality. Against the back wall, upon which hung what appear to be a Japanese and a Hebrew scroll, two giant marble statues of Greek philosophers stood some forty feet apart and brooded over the scene. Next to the philosopher on the right, a comparatively small and sprightly bronze goddess—possibly the Goddess of Learning—lifted an encouraging hand. But the most extraordinary object was a thronelike chair, made, it is said, of iron, its high back intricately wrought. This chair was centered between the statues and, on this opening day, was reserved for Cardinal Gibbons, the highest prelate of the Catholic Church in America.

On either side of it, about thirty ordinary wooden chairs of normal proportion spread three rows deep over the platform and awaited the delegates, the officials of the Parliament and invited guests. A speaker's rostrum completed the setting.

Not on the opening day, but later, a sign was hung on the front of the rostrum, which read: "No Admittance Except to Authorized Representatives of The Chicago Daily Press." This admonition referred to the pit directly below, in which reporters and official stenographers sat at small tables and recorded the daily proceedings. It was no doubt made necessary by the curious and reverent crowds who pressed forward to reach the stage. Indeed, one of the now aged women members of the press (of whom there were but one or two) told not long ago of how crowds used to rush forward to touch the hem of Swamiji's robe, and of how deeply she was impressed by his supreme and unbroken humility in the face of such adulation.

But to return to the vacant platform of that opening day, it had a makeshift air about it and was certainly not what one would call prepossessing. However, as the Reverend Barrows explained in another connection: "It would have been unworthy of the moral dignity, the serious purpose of the occasion, if there had been any attempt at mere pageantry."

Pageantry there was enough without a studied attempt at it. In another part of the building, the delegates, Swamiji among them, were preparing to make their appearance, forming in pairs to walk to the platform, escorted by the managers of the Parliament. At the appointed hour of ten the group started out. Heading the long procession came President Bonney and Cardinal Gibbons, arm in arm, the Cardinal resplendent in his crimson robes, the President somber and dignified in his morning coat. Following these two were the President and Vice-President of the Board of Lady Managers of the Exposition, Mrs. Potter Palmer and Mrs. Charles H. Henrotin, in silk dresses with puffed sleeves and bustles. The procession slowly and majestically entered the back of the auditorium, the crowd making way for it. Then beneath the flags of many nations and amid wave upon wave of cheers it marched down the center aisle and ascended the platform.

"The sight," says Houghton, "was most remarkable. There were strange robes, turbans and tunics, crosses and crescents, flowing hair and tonsured heads." Cardinal Gibbons sat in the center of the group on the iron throne. On his right were the five Buddhist priests of China in their long, flowing white robes, and on his left, the black-garbed patriarchs of the old Greek Church, "wearing strangely formed hats, somber cassocks of black, and leaning on ivory sticks carved with figures representing ancient rites." The First Secretary of the Chinese Legation in Washington, who had been deputed by the Emperor of China to present the doctrine of Confucius, wore the robes of a mandarin. His pictures show him sitting bolt upright, squarely facing the audience with immense dignity and looking somewhat like a huge Chinese doll with a round and moon-like face. To quote again from Houghton: "The high priest of the state religion of Japan was arrayed in flowing robes, presenting the colors of the rainbow. Buddhist monks were attired in garments of white and yellow; . . . the Greek Archbishop of Zante, from whose high head-gear there fell to the waist a black veil, was brilliant in purple robe and black cassock, and glittering as to his breast in chains of gold. Dharmapala ['whose slight, lithe person was swathed in pure white, while his black hair fell in curls upon his shoulders'] was recognized in his woolen garments; and in black clothes hardly to be distinguished from European dress, was Mazoomdar, author of the 'Oriental Christ.'" The closing sentence of an eye-witness account by the Rev. Mr. Wente (from

which the above bracket regarding Dharmapala is taken) is worth quoting here to complete the picture: "The ebon-hued but bright faces of Bishop Arnett, of the African Methodist Church, and of a young African prince, were relieved by the handsome costumes of the ladies of the company, while forming a somber background to all was the dark raiment of the Protestant delegates and invited guests."

In the midst of this impressive array sat Swamiji, conspicuous, according to all accounts, for his "orange turban and robe," or, as better put by the Rev. Mr. Wente, for his "gorgeous red apparel, his bronze face surmounted with a turban of yellow."

This, then, was the scene on the platform. Facing it was the vast audience of men and women, filling every seat of the floor and gallery and comprising representative intellects of the day, both clerical and secular. "Such a scene," writes Houghton, "was never witnessed before in the world's history." Swamiji later wrote, "My heart was fluttering and my tongue nearly dried up." And it is little wonder, for he had suddenly found himself surrounded on all sides by solemn and august personages in full regalia, who represented the religious thought of the whole world. Although, as was seen in the preceding article, he had spoken to small gatherings in America, never before had he addressed such a crowd as this.

Suddenly the great organ in the gallery burst forth with the strains of a familiar hymn, and the entire assembly arose to sing the "Doxology": "Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly hosts; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost." There were more verses, and one can be sure that the hall resounded. At the end of the hymn a deep silence was sustained by the uplifted hand of the Cardinal. Then into this impressive hush he began the words of the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father who art in heaven . . ." and every voice in the hall joined with his. "The supreme moment of the nineteenth century," says Houghton, "was reached."

The Parliament of Religions had begun. Seventeen days of continual speech-making, morning, afternoon and evening, followed. Each session was attended by an audience that, big to start with, grew in volume as time went on until by the fourth day the crowd became so great that it overflowed into the neighboring Hall of Washington, where the entire program was repeated word for word. On the fifth day, however, the Scientific Section of the Parliament was opened, and thenceforth the spectators were divided between the Parliament proper and this adjunct, in which the more erudite papers—those dealing with the science of religion—were read. As is known, Swamiji spoke at the Scientific Section on several occasions, and one cannot help wondering if the diversion of the crowd from the Hall of Columbus was not, in part at least, due to his presence rather than to the presentation of the science of religion.

One fortunate thing about the Parliament which might be noted here was that it was held in the early autumn, when the days were no longer stifling hot. With the exception of that overcrowded fourth day, when the temperature rose to an unprecedented 95°, and of a morning toward the end of the Parliament when it fell to an unprecedented 39°, the days, as far as temperature went, were mild. It was windy, however, and sometimes it rained. Indeed, such a storm blew one evening that rain was driven into the building, forcing many to protect themselves with umbrellas, and pounded on the roof with such a roar that often the speakers' voices were drowned out.

The first day of the Parliament was devoted to speeches of welcome from the officials

and speeches of response from the delegates. There were seven of the former, delivered in high oratory and consuming a large part of the morning session, which was concluded by eight short speeches of response. To some of the latter the audience was wildly demonstrative. The first delegate to speak was the Archbishop of Zante, representative of the Greek Church, who expressed the sentiment that "all men have a common Creator and consequently a common Father in God," and concluded with, "I raise up my hands and I bless with heartfelt love the great country and the happy, glorious people of the United States." "This is indeed glorious!" cried President Bonney, and the audience burst into prolonged cheering. Mazoomdar, the representative of the Brahmo Samaj in Calcutta, who had been in America ten years before and was known to many, was also loudly cheered. But the expressions of welcome given to Pung Kwang Yu "were surpassed in the case of no other speaker on the platform," says Barrows. "Men and women rose to their feet in the audience, and there was wild waving of hats and handkerchiefs." This not because the audience was in sympathy with Confucianism, but because, as President Bonney had said in his introductory remarks, "We have not treated China very well in this country."

To judge from a quotation from the *St. Louis Observer* of September 21, 1893, which is reproduced in Barrows' "History," Dharmapala, the Buddhist from Calcutta—whom Swamiji later spoke of as "a nice boy"—somewhat startled the pnblic. "With his black, curly locks thrown back from his broad brow, his keen, clear eye fixed upon the audience, his long brown finger emphasizing the utterances of his vibrant voice, he looked the very image of a propagandist, and one trembled to know that such a figure stood at the head of the movement to consolidate all the disciples of Buddha and to spread 'the light of Asia' throughout the civilized world."

Through all this, as is known, Swamiji remained seated, meditative and prayerful. It was not until the afternoon session, after four other delegates had read their prepared speeches, that he arose to address the Congress and, through it, the world. The electric effect on the audience of the first words Swamiji spoke is well known. Both Barrows and Houghton comment on the fact that "when Mr. Vivekananda addressed the audience as 'Sisters and Brothers of America,' there arose a peal of applause that lasted for several minutes," and Swamiji himself tells us that "a deafening applause of two minutes followed . . ." As has been seen however, the crowds had not sat glum and silent until he spoke: they had cheered a few others vociferously. As far as spiritual perceptiveness was concerned, this audience was an average one, its spiritual yearnings moving invisibly, even to itself, beneath layers of material tradition. This was not India, where greatness has but one meaning—spiritual greatness—and where, when it is seen, it is understood. The audience of the Parliament, as a whole, could not have known precisely why it cheered for Swamiji at his very first words. In other cases there had been obvious reasons: political or religious sympathy, previous knowledge of the speaker, or atonement for national sin. In Swamiji's case there was nothing like this, nor could the applause have been inspired by his words alone, for sentiments of universal brotherhood had been given voice throughout the whole morning and half the afternoon. Rather, it was inspired by Swamiji himself and by something unspoken that came through his words, making them not sentiment but fact and recalling some long forgotten sense of spiritual unity in the hearts of the people—a recollection that would henceforth work in its secret but ineluctable way in changing the face of civilization and bringing about a true harmony of religions. If for nothing else—and actually there was little else—it was for this, as

Swamiji had said, that the Parliament was convened. But few at the time were aware of it.

Four talks followed Swamiji's address before the opening day came to a close. Throughout the morning and afternoon twenty-four talks in all had been given; and now, the foreign delegates and the American people having greeted one another, the serious business of the Parliament could begin.

III

There are several contemporaneous descriptions and appreciations of Swamiji quoted in "The Life" from various journals and periodicals such as the *Boston Evening Transcript* and, in the first edition, *The Rutherford American, The Interior Chicago* and *The Critic* (called in "The Life" *The New York Critique*). Also one of the finest appraisals comes, as readers will remember, from the Hon. Mr. Merwin-Marie Snell, the President of the Scientific Section. Swamiji's devotees are familiar with these, but in the belief that they never tire of hearing of him from eye-witnesses, I think it will perhaps not be amiss, before continuing with the story of the Parliament, to give here a few word pictures of him that have not previously been known. Perhaps the most interesting of these comes from the pen of the well-known poetess, the late Harriet Monroe, who was for many years editor of *Poetry, A Magazine of Verse,* through whose pages she introduced many of America's now famous poets. Miss Monroe attended the World's Fair in 1893, and years later in her autobiography, "A Poet's Life," recorded her impressions of the Parliament of Religions and of Swamiji:

> The Congress of Religions was a triumph for all concerned, especially for its generalissimo, the Reverend John H. Barrows, of Chicago's First Presbyterian Church, who had been preparing it for two years. When he brought down his gavel upon the 'world's first parliament of religions' a wave of breathless silence swept over the audience—it seemed a great moment in human history, prophetic of the promised new era of tolerance and peace. On the stage with him, at his left, was a black-coated array of bishops and ministers representing the various familiar Protestant sects and the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches; at his right a brilliant group of strangely costumed dignitaries from afar—a Confucian from China, a Jain from India, a theosophist from Allahabad, a white-robed Shinto priest and four Buddhists from Japan, and a monk of the orange robe from Bombay.
>
> It was the last of these, Swami Vivekananda, the magnificent, who stole the whole show and captured the town. Others of the foreign groups spoke well—the Greek, the Russian, the Armenian, Mazoomdar of Calcutta, Dharmapala of Ceylon—leaning, some of these, upon interpreters. Shibata, the Shinto, bowed his wired white headdress to the ground, spread his delicate hands in suave gestures, and uttered gravely with serene politeness his incomprehensible words. But the handsome monk in the orange robe gave us in perfect English a masterpiece. His personality, dominant, magnetic; his voice, rich as a bronze bell; the controlled fervor of his feeling; the beauty of his message to the Western world he was facing for the first time—these combined to give us a rare and perfect moment of supreme emotion. It was human eloquence at its highest pitch.

While it is gratifying to read descriptions from the pen of a poet, poets themselves are often beset with what is known as poetic melancholy at the evanescence of perfection. In this case it was a melancholy not justified, but Miss Monroe did not pause to find it out. She goes on to add:

> One cannot repeat a perfect moment—the futility of trying to has been almost a superstition with me. Thus I made no effort to hear Vivekananda speak again, during that autumn and winter when he was making converts by the score to his hope of uniting East and West in a world religion above the tumult of controversy. . . .

Another picture of Swamiji comes from the Chicago *Advocate* of September 28, 1893. The fact that the *Advocate* was not entirely favorable to Swamiji, as will be seen later, perhaps makes this description all the more valuable. Although this report refers to the second week of the Parliament, the description is no doubt also applicable to the opening day:

> In certain respects the most fascinating personality was the Brahmin monk, Suami Vivakananda (sic) with his flowing orange robe, saffron turban, smooth-shaven, shapely, handsome face, large, dark subtle penetrating eye, and with the air of one being inly-pleased with the consciousness of being easily master of his situation. His knowledge of English is as though it were his mother tongue. . . .

The correspondent of the *Boston Evening Transcript* found a way to meet the delegates of the Parliament behind the scenes, and it is to him that we owe a more intimate description of Swamiji. A sentence or two from the following article has been quoted in "The Life," but I will nonetheless include the whole here:

BOSTON EVENING TRANSCRIPT
Saturday, September 30, 1893

THE HINDUS AT THE FAIR

SOME INTERESTING PERSONALITIES AT THE PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS - - - , PLAIN TALK OF LEADING HEATHENS.

(Special Correspondence of the Transcript.)

Chicago, Sept. 23.

There is a room at the left of the entrance to the Art Palace marked "No. 1—keep out." To this the speakers at the Congress of Religions all repair sooner or later, either to talk with one another or with President Bonney, whose private office is in one corner of the apartment. The folding doors are jealously guarded from the general public, usually standing far enough apart to allow peeping in. Only delegates are supposed to penetrate the sacred precincts, but it is not impossible to obtain an "open sesame," and thus to enjoy a brief opportunity of closer relations with the distinguished guests than the platform in the Hall of Columbus affords.

The most striking figure one meets in this ante-room is Swami Vivekananda, the Brahmin monk. He is a large, well-built man, with the superb carriage of the Hindustanis', his face clean shaven, squarely moulded regular features, white teeth, and with well-chiselled lips that are usually parted in a benevolent smile while he is conversing. His finely poised head is crowned with either a lemon colored or a red turban, and his cassock (not the technical name for this garment), belted in at the waist and falling below the knees, alternates in a bright orange and rich crimson. He speaks excellent English and replies readily to any questions asked in sincerity.

Along with his simplicity of manner there is a touch of personal reserve when speaking to ladies, which suggests his chosen vocation. When questioned

about the laws of his order, he has said, "I can do as I please, I am independent. Sometimes I live in the Himalaya Mountains, and sometimes in the streets of cities. I never know where I will get my next meal, I never keep money with me. I come here by subscription." Then looking round at one or two of his fellow-countrymen who chanced to be standing near he added, "They will take care of me," giving the inference that his board bill in Chicago is attended to by others. When asked if he was wearing his usual monk's costume, he said, "This is a good dress; when I am home I am in rags, and I go barefooted. Do I believe in caste? Caste is a social custom; religion has nothing to do with it; all castes will associate with me."

It is quite apparent, however, from the deportment, the general appearance, of Mr. Vivekananda that he was born among high castes—years of voluntary poverty and homeless wanderings have not robbed him of his birthright of gentleman; even his family name is unknown; he took that of Vivekananda in embracing a religious career, and "Swami" is merely the title of reverend accorded to him. He cannot be far along in the thirties, and looks as if made for this life and its fruition, as well as for meditation on the life beyond. One cannot help wondering what could have been the turning point with him.

"Why should I marry," was his abrupt response to a comment on all he had renounced in becoming a monk, "when I see in every woman only the divine Mother? Why do I make all these sacrifices? To emancipate myself from earthly ties and attachments so that there will be no re-birth for me. When I die I want to become at once absorbed in the divine, one with God. I would be a Buddha."

Vivekananda does not mean by this that he is a Buddhist. No name or sect can label him. He is an outcome of the higher Brahminism, a product of the Hindu spirit, which is vast, dreamy, self-extinguishing, a Sanyasi or holy man.

He has some pamphlets that he distributes, relating to his master, Paramhansa Ramakrishna, a Hindu devotee, who so impressed his hearers and pupils that many of them became ascetics after his death. Mozoomdar also looked upon this saint as his master, but Mozoomdar works for holiness in the world, in it but not of it, as Jesus taught.

Vivekananda's address before the parliament was broad as the heavens above us, embracing the best in all religions, as the ultimate universal religion—charity to all mankind, good works for the love of God, not for fear of punishment or hope of reward. He is a great favorite 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. It must be a strange experience too for this humble young Brahmin monk, this sudden transition from poverty and self-effacement to affluence and aggrandizement. When asked if he knew anything of those brothers in the Himalayas so firmly believed in by the Theosophists, he answered with the simple statement, "I have never met one of them," as much as to imply, "There may be such persons, but though I am at home in the Himalayas, I have yet to come across them."

Aside from being able to give new word pictures of Swamiji, we are fortunate enough to have recently discovered one of the first pictures of him taken in America. It is an unposed snapshot, taken, it can be reasonably assumed, in this room marked, "No. 1—keep out." Perhaps it is not as clear as one would like all of Swamiji's pictures to be, but it nonetheless belongs in Swamiji's history, and I am enclosing it in the hope that the editor of *Prabuddha Bharata* may be able to publish it in the same issue as this article. Swamiji sits at a table, writing, while over his shoulder a young Hindu delegate intently watches.

Readers of the "Letters of Swami Vivekananda" will remember that in a letter, dated November 2, 1893, Swamiji asked his disciple, Alasinga, for information regarding a Hindu boy. This request as it is given in the fourth English edition of the "Letters" reads: "A boy called———Acharya has cropped up in our midst. He has been loafing about the city for the last three years. Loafing or no loafing, I like him, but please write to me all about him, if you know anything. He knows you. He came in the year of the Paris Exhibition to Europe."

This "boy called———Acharya" is without question the same Narasimhacharya who peers over Swamiji's shoulder. He was a "loafer" but a loafer of undoubted charm and a good deal of intelligence and spirit. In answer to Swamiji's request for information regarding him, Alasinga wrote a long biographical letter which told that Narasimhacharya was a prodigal son on whose account his mother had shed many tears. The letter followed Swamiji about from place to place in his later lecture tour and did not catch up with him until long after Narasimhacharya had been lost sight of. In the meantime Swamiji on July 11, 1894, wrote again: "Why have you not written anything about Narasimha? He is practically starving here. I helped him a little, then he disappeared, I don't know where, and he has not written to me anything." But then it can come as no surprise to those who know of Swamiji that, during the rushed days of the Parliament and afterward, he tried to take care of a charming wastrel who, somehow, one cannot imagine how, had become a delegate to the dignified Parliament of Religions, and who, moreover, as will be seen later, made his presence felt.

Another new description of Swamiji comes from the pen of a Rev. W. H. Thomas. The Reverend Thomas did not speak at the Parliament, but was no doubt a member of the audience. In a letter published in the *Wisconsin State Journal,* November 18, 1893, he writes of Swamiji:

> Of the many learned men in the East who took part in the great World's Parliament of Religions, Vivekananda was the most popular favorite, and when it was known that he was to speak thousands were turned away for want of room. Nor was it curiosity alone that drew the masses; for those who heard him once were so impressed by the magnetism of his fine presence, the charm and power of his eloquence, his perfect command of the English language and the deep interest in what he had to say, that they desired all the more to hear him again. It will be the opportunity of a life time for the cities of our land to see and hear this noble, earnest, loving Brahman; dressed in the costume of his order, and telling the true story of the religion and customs of his far-off country."

It can be noted here in passing that Swamiji came to be generally known, among other things, as a "Brahmin monk." This was no doubt due to expediency on the part of the newspaper reporters to whom, as to most Americans in that age, "Brahmin" was synonymous with "a high caste Hindu who was a religious teacher." It was a careless but forgivable error and one which Swamiji could not have corrected. The term "Kshatriya" would not only have conveyed nothing to the public, but would have been a *bete noire* to the press. "Brahmin" was bad enough. As a matter of fact, Swamiji acquired a sizable assortment of epithets during his stay in America, being known variously as the "Indian Rajah," "The High Priest of Brahma,' "The Buddhist Priest," and so on. Anything that conveyed the idea to the public that he was noble, religious and Indian sufficed for a headline. Later, however, Swamiji's enemies made capital out of these

casual and typically American errors, imputing them to a deliberate misrepresentation of his status on Swamiji's part.

A picture of Swamiji at the Parliament would not be complete without telling something of his activities outside the plenary sessions, which by no means occupied his entire time. These days were strenuous ones for the delegates. Papers were delivered not only at the Parliament proper, but at side sessions. It is known, for instance, that Swamiji spoke at least four times, and perhaps eight, at the Scientific Section. Such talks were not simply given and over with: open discussions followed, the speakers being questioned at length. In this connection it is interesting to remember a footnote on page 199 of Volume VIII of "The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda," which, although no doubt familiar to Swamiji's devotees, is worth quoting here. The material is from *The Chicago Daily Inter-Ocean* of September 23, 1893:

"In the Scientific Section yesterday morning Swami Vivekananda spoke on 'Orthodox Hinduism.' Hall III was crowded to overflowing and hundreds of questions were asked by auditors and answered by the great Sannyasi with wonderful skill and lucidity. At the close of the session he was thronged with eager questioners who begged him to give a semi-public lecture somewhere on the subject of his religion. He said that he already had the project under consideration."

On page 200 of the same volume, is a report of a lecture given on Sunday, September 25, 1893, at the Third Unitarian Church, which may have been the semi-public lecture that Swamiji was requested to give.

The long hours of listening, of discussing, of lecturing were almost continuous. Moreover, the hospitality which the leading citizens of Chicago showed to the delegates allowed them little rest. Enormous receptions were held after the close of many of the evening sessions, and smaller parties were given throughout the two weeks.

Along with the other foreign delegates, Swamiji was officially introduced to American society on the evening of the opening day of the Parliament at a huge reception given by the Reverend Barrows at the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Bartlett—a great stone mansion, the rooms of which had been decorated with many hundreds of flags. On the second evening an even larger reception was given by President Bonney for all the delegates in the halls of the Art Institute. Thousands attended. On the following Thursday, the fourth evening, Mrs. Potter Palmer, the President of the Lady Managers of the Fair and one of the most wealthy and influential social leaders of the era, to whom Swamiji later referred as having been very kind to him in America, entertained the members of the Parliament at the Woman's Building in the Exposition grounds. Here electric launches were provided (an innovation in those days) to carry the foreign delegates—probably Swamiji among them—through the Fair's lagoons that they might witness "the beautiful illumination in the Court of Honor." Edison's newly perfected light bulbs, glowing magically and reflected in the dark waters, were no doubt a sight to behold.

It was also at Mrs. Potter Palmer's reception that Swamiji gave a short talk on the condition of women in India. "It was Mrs. Palmer's earnest wish," writes Barrows, "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." Whether this talk was that which is quoted on page 198 in Volume VIII of "The Complete Works" is a puzzle which cannot be solved here, but it is not likely that a lecture given

on September 14 would be reported in a September 23 paper, as was this published one. More likely, Swamiji spoke again on the subject on Friday, September 22.

More receptions were held throughout the weeks for the delegates by the leading citizens and leading ministers, and it is little wonder that Swamiji writes, "Many of the handsomest houses in this city are open to me," for there could have been few of the Chicago gentry whom he had not met and charmed. Years later Prince Wolkonsky, a free-lance delegate from Russia, commented on Swamiji's popularity to Albert Spalding, the famous violinist. In the latter's autobiography, "Rise to Follow," this excerpt can be found:

> Wolkonsky was a delightful conversationalist. I found that he knew my country, having represented Russia in the Congress of Religions at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893. I asked him whether by any chance he had met Swami Vivekananda there. Oh, yes, he had, and for some time afterward the two had maintained an active correspondence. But how was it that I came to speak of him? I was, after all, much too young to have remembered. . . . I explained that my family had been acquainted with the Swami and had often talked about him.
>
> "He made a—what do you call it?—sensational 'hit' in your country," said Wolkonsky, "especially with the Chicago ladies. Ah, those Chicago ladies! They seemed to take life and—incidentally themselves—very seriously."

The Chicago ladies were, as were the women throughout America, asserting themselves in a new-found independence. It is precisely because they took life and themselves so seriously that they took Swamiji seriously, perhaps instinctively finding in him a symbol of the freedom and dignity which they knew to be their birthright and which they were indisputably winning for themselves. Missionary criticism in desperation later attributed Swamiji's tremendous popularity among the American women to the brilliant color of his robe and turban. One can say that this is not a likely supposition.

Although the women, as a whole, may have given more expression than the men to their attraction to Swamiji—for the women were intent upon expressing themselves—men and women both were drawn to him as to a magnet. The descriptions we have of Swamiji at the Parliament of Religions show him as colorful and dynamic, dominating the scene with the force of his personality and the utter purity of his message. He was in the full vigor of his youth, ready to face the entire world and to sacrifice his life for "the poor, the ignorant, the oppressed" of his motherland. But there was yet another reason for his phenomenal popularity. Never before had the people of America seen one in whom spiritual truths had been fully realized, and though the fact that Swamiji was such a one was not consciously known by the thousands who flocked to hear him speak, who waited interminable hours for even a few words and who applauded when he simply crossed the platform, the people through some inner intuition unerringly recognized him for what he was and, from start to finish, instinctively sensed that his very presence conferred a blessing. "Darshan" was unheard of in America, but here at the Parliament was a spontaneous and unconscious manifestation of the attraction of the human soul to the spiritually great.

This, then—the reader supplying facts that have previously been known—is something of how Swamiji appeared to the Parliament. In the following article we hope to tell how the Parliament appeared to him as it progressed through its seventeen days.

THE ART OF LIFE IN THE BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ

By Prof. J. T. Parikh

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* effects a synthesis of some of the cardinal principles of Hindu *Dharma*. Diverse sects, creeds, and faiths have accepted its authority. For these reasons the *Bhagavad-Gītā* is regarded as one of the principal scriptures of Hinduism. Truly speaking, however, the *Gītā* is a scripture not of the Hindus alone. Its teachings appeal and apply to the whole of humanity; and hence it is a book, not of any one sect or system, but of entire humanity, of universal religious faith, of piety.

The teachings of the *Gītā,* though ancient are yet modern. They are as true and as applicable today as they were when they were first propounded. And they will be so for all times to come, for the *Gītā* offers an exalted and yet a simple and straightforward solution for the eternal problems of human life. It is precisely for this reason that the *Gītā* is accepted as the scripture *par excellence* for all times and climes.

Dhāraṇād-dharmah—Dharma is that which upholds (society). This is the most original and true meaning of *Dharma*. That code of laws and that system of human conduct and thought, which will maintain humanity, and enable it to march from one progress to another, is what the *Gītā* implies by *Dharma*. It is therefore the Law of Life, life here and now. The world hereafter—heaven, Vaikuṇṭha, paradise—is but an extension of the life lived here according to the Law. *Dharma* has therefore only an indirect connection with heaven. The *Gītā,* thus, is a book of true universal religion, of *Dharma,* which is concerned not with this or that kind of life but with Life itself.

Human life is not unoften full of many incongruities and inequalities, from which are born series of conflicts, strifes, and miseries, resulting in total absence of peace in life. The human mind seeks to emancipate itself from these various bondages and endeavours to reconstruct a heaven of equality, harmony, love, happiness, and peace.

If the word *mokṣa* (emancipation) in the *Gītā* means anything it is this: *Iha eva tairjitah sargo yeṣām sāmye sthitam-manah*—Here, in this very life, i.e. in this very mortal world, those whose mind has attained equanimity, have conquered the cycle of birth and death, have gained emancipation. To gain salvation one need not wait till the mortal frame falls—death is not an inevitable passage to Freedom. Neither birth nor death has anything to do with Freedom. Like all objective contacts, birth and death are evanescent; they come and go; and being aspects or workings of Nature, are inevitable; but freedom is of the Self, its awareness of itself as itself and not as involved in objects of desire.

Mana eva manuṣyāṇām kāraṇam bandhamokṣayoh: Bondage and release are rooted in the mind. If the mind attains steadiness, if it is not attracted by the objects of the senses, is not perturbed, and is devoid of all attachments, then there is no bondage. Just as the water and the mud do not taint a lily even though it grows in their midst, even so an unattached mind is not perturbed by any painful or pleasurable experiences of life. A stable mind, a mind that has acquired the state of poise and complete composure, enjoys serene peace even in the midst of ceaseless activities of life. And this blissful perfect peace is itself *mokṣa*. But if the mind is unsteady, if it is craving for the gratification of the senses, if it is running after this desire and that, then it cannot escape the pleasant and unpleasant experiences. It gets perturbed, feels peacelessness.

Yajñārthāt karmaṇonyatra loko'yam karma-

bandhanah—Man is led to bondage through work not done in the spirit of sacrifice. Just as every action has a reaction, even so every act of ours has a result, good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant. Those who act for themselves, for gaining happiness or for removing unhappiness, or for satisfying their desires, are affected by the results of their actions. But those who act in the spirit of 'sacrifice' are not so affected. And what is this spirit? It is the recognition of the facts that any action started anywhere in Nature completes its course by coming back to the source and that the starter is not inert matter but the conscious entity behind, which is God. Works start from Him and the results come back to Him.

Yogah karmasu kaushalam: Yoga is the skill in doing action, skill in living the life. Is there any means by employing which a man, even though he acts, can escape the good or evil results of his own actions? Yes, whatever actions he performs, whatever life he lives, if he acts and lives with a view to doing *sacrifice*; or, in other words, if he acts with the understanding that his body and mind are inseparable parts of the vast Nature through which the Reality acts, then he need have no concern whatsoever with the results of his actions, with either happiness or unhappiness. He feels that the ultimate Reality or God uses his body and mind or his personality as His instrument or agent to work out His scheme of the world. An agent goes to the market and transacts business in the name of and according to the wishes of his master. If there be loss or gain in the undertaking, what concern has the agent with that? Even if there be profit, he is not rejoiced. Nor is he sorry if there be loss. His duty is only to carry out the orders of his master, honestly, sincerely, and with all his heart.

The concept of 'sacrifice' in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* is rooted in this very idea. This ceaseless activity of Nature or this great drama of life enacted by God, of which we are but an infinitesimal part, is a mighty 'sacrifice'. In this 'sacrifice' every being, especially the human being to whom intelligence and rational attitude are available, has to act his own part in keeping with his own nature. 'I am not the doer of whatever I do; it is Nature or God that acts through me. Whatever I do is performed not for myself but for the sake of God.' If a man engages himself in every action with this correct mental attitude, then he has nothing to fear from the results of his actions. Neither pain nor pleasure affects him; his mind is not perturbed. Even though he lives his life of ceaseless activities, his mind enjoys endless peace.

But this skilfulness in living the life, this sacrificial attitude towards life, is not possible without true understanding, *jñāna*. In other words, *Karma-Yoga* is not possible without *Jñāna-Yoga*. The *Gītā* view of life is astonishingly all-embracing, universal. Whatever beings are there in this universe, whatever objects and whatever things—God dwells in every one of them. God is the master of all these. He is their author, their destroyer, and their regulator. Whether in water or in land, in the sun or the moon, in stars or planets, in the atom or the mountain, in sentient life or non-sentient objects, it is this very principle of Reality that manifests itself in different forms. Creation and dissolution, birth and death, are only aspects of its activity which has no beginning and no end. The human being is also a part of this great activity, an integral part of this great drama. Hence whatever action a man engages himself in, he performs it as God's work. Precisely for this very reason there cannot be any narrow-mindedness, any distinction of *mine* and *thine*, any selfishness in any activity that he undertakes.

To experience a feeling of identity with the world of living beings, nay, with the entire universe, is not a matter of mere intellectual understanding or ratiocination. It is a matter of direct experience. When a man perceives the highest Reality in every being, in every object round about him in this universe, his life and activities cannot but be an unbroken sacrifice; then has he obtained true knowledge, *jñāna*.

For a man who feels every moment of his life that God dwells in everything, that every act is only a part of the divine sacrifice and that he is playing his part in this great sacrifice in accordance with the laws of Being that are universal—for such a man how can there arise an idea of a narrow limited self? And where all activity is selfless and all life a sacrifice, no question of pain or pleasure or peacelessness arises at all.

To give birth to children, to nourish them properly, to rear them up in the right manner, and to make them happy in all respects, is the work entrusted to the mother by Nature. Even though the mother may act rightly and with true understanding of her God-given duty, yet it may not produce the proper result if there be no love, no self-effacement, no devotion on the part of the mother. Even so our acts, our entire worldly life may be enlightened with true understanding; but if there be no faith, no love, no sincerity and devotion and sense of self-effacement, *bhakti,* then it would not produce the desired effect. In other words, if our actions are performed with true understanding and also with love and devotion, then it would be like adding perfume to an ointment.

Sarva-dharmān parityajya mām-ekam sharaṇam vraja—'Give up all things and come to me, devote yourself to me, to my divine work, and you will he freed from all sins.' God gives this assurance to even the lowliest of beings and explains the true meaning of our life. *Mām-anusmara yudhya ca*: 'Remember me and fight.'

God is the centre of all the activities of this universe. And so feeling himself to be one with all around, if a man acts in accordance with his true nature, surrendering himself to God and His divine activity, then he is a true *bhakta,* a true *jñānin,* a true *karma-yogin.* In the light of that true understanding, in the feeling of that self-surrender, in that ceaseless activity for the sake of the great universal sacrifice, he experiences the joy of true peace. Here, in this very life, and in this very world, he gets *mokṣa,* is emancipated, is freed.

This is the art of life taught by the *Bhagavad-Gītā,* a unique means of freeing ourselves from the bondage of conflicts and strifes, of misery and peacelessness.

To understand this 'philosophy of life' taught by the *Gītā* it is not necessary that one should be highly learned. Nor is there any necessity of flashes of intellect and wealth of information. What is needed is a simple and straightforward faith in and feeling of this one universal Life and Consciousness that is God.

INDIAN UNIVERSITIES AND UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

By Dr. P. T. Raju

The aim of the section for suggesting immediate changes, we can bring about in our universities, so that they can at least grow towards our ideal of a characteristically Indian university, is bound up with the aims of the other sections of this Conference. For the changes we suggest have necessarily to be based on the values fulfilled by the university as part of the national system of education, which is the subject of the first section. Again, one of the important values to be fulfilled by the university is its responsibility to truth, research, and creative thought, which form the topic of the second section. The university, again, has its responsibility to society, which forms the topic of the third

section. Any change we suggest must be directed towards the fulfilment of these aims.

One may be both happy and unhappy over the use of the term 'characteristically Indian university'. We can use the word with greater appropriateness with reference to ancient Indian universities; but our modern universities have much in common with the universities of the West. And no one, I imagine, would like to pattern our modern universities completely after our ancient ones. Both in India and Europe, universities started with groups of monks and religious teachers and later developed into institutions meant for society. They served society through religion and theology, spread knowledge of man and nature through knowledge of God. But our present Indian universities started the other way. The emphasis is upon the study of man and nature; and secondarily, if at all, upon the study of God. This is how, I think, we can put the difference between our ancient and modern universities in a nutshell. This difference is also the reason why most of the critics of the modern university system say that university education is unconnected with the life of the country and the common man. Whatever be the reasons and motives, the British introduced the modern system of education, and we do not regret our taking to it. What we want is the addition of the spiritual atmosphere, that our ancient universities had and the modern do not, and the restoration of the leadership and respect our ancient teachers had to our modern teachers.

In this respect, there is one difference between the socio-cultural *milieu* of the past and the present. Whenever the teacher wants a little more pay in view of the rising cost of living, he is referred back to the great Vālmīki and Vasiṣṭha, who drew no salaries. It is not necessary to explain the difference between the ancient and modern social forms and social status of teachers. But it may be necessary to remind that one-sixth of the state's income used to go to the universities and hermitages, besides private grants. And now, will the President of the Republic and his secretary or even his secretary's secretary receive a teacher with the same respect with which Dasharatha used to receive Vasiṣṭha? One feels that this appeal to the past is unrealistic, and not even truly idealistic, and totally ignores the change in the social situation. Ancient teachers were religious leaders as well; and they were received and treated not merely with respect but with awe: they were custodians of Truth with the capital T, which was identical with God or the spiritual essence of the world. Modern teachers are only members of society, useful for training the young generation into good citizens. So they have a right to get from society as much as any other of its equally useful members.

But are they also not custodians of Truth? Truth is a vague word, and has different appeal when used with the capital T and the small t. The teachers of a university are discoverers, custodians, and preachers of truth or truths in the plural, written with the small t. They are not discoverers of the Godhead and so are not religious leaders like Vālmīki or Vasiṣṭha. Few of them lay such a claim. The truths they discover are truths about man, society, and nature. This difference is due to a change in the functioning of the university. In Western countries, there are universities with two different kinds of ideals; old universities like Oxford in England and Harvard in U.S.A. with their stress on the teaching of eternal values and modern universities like Manchester in England and most of the state universities in U.S.A. catering to the immediate social needs of the area. Accordingly, the subjects receive unequal emphasis and importance. In India, we do not have so much distinction, though it is now becoming more and more tangible after the starting of some of the youngest universities. Even this difference does not correspond to the difference between the ancient and modern universities. On the whole, we may say that contemporary emphasis is on education for citizenship and not on education for salvation. In other words, the change is from training to be a citizen of the kingdom of God to train-

ing to become a citizen of one's country and the world. We have to be clear about this change of context and then speak of the role and status of university teachers and of universities. Our ancient universities taught about mundane values through eternal values; and we have to teach about eternal values through the mundane; and some of the universities may not even bother about eternal values at all.

In this connection, we have to note another important aspect of our universities. The University Education Commission admitted, almost at the very beginning, that 'the universities of modern India owe very little to our ancient and medieval centres of learning'. Our present universities are not even spontaneous growths out of social needs but were introduced *ab novo* and *ab extra* by the rulers from the top. For instance, the University of California developed out of its Agricultural College, which was first started to cater to the needs of the agriculturists of that state; and the University of Southern Illinois is developing around its School of Education. Similarly, our ancient universities developed around a group of monks or religious leaders. It is not meant that our modern universities were started by our rulers without any reference to the social needs. On the whole, their policy was certainly far-sighted; but society itself did not foresee the need; because part of it was self-centred and self-satisfied, and the rest of it was mute and illiterate, and the whole was without any vision of the outside world. Even now about seventy-five per cent. of India's population is illiterate. The universities therefore have to justify their existence in the eyes of the people by showing that the university education serves an immediate social and national purpose.

This situation again seems to be the reason for the defective working of democratic forms in university life, about which we hear complaints. For the members of senates and syndicates of universities can now be any, whether they know something about education or not. Such people are either misled by an interested group, on which they have to depend for advice and guidance and even ideas or they have impracticable ideas which are detrimental to education itself. We hear of this complaint also. This situation makes possible *coupes d'état* in university education and administration and is unable to prevent malpractices. For university administrators also are human beings and so imperfect, and not perfect sages like Vālmīki and Vasiṣṭha.

With the above is connected the question of governmental interference. It is a very broad question with many implications. Should the Government have the right and is it its duty to interfere with the administration of a university? The university has a duty to truth, and truth may or may not coincide with the views or policies of the Government. The university is meant for the discovery of truth and its dissemination, but the Government is not meant for determining what truth is. This, anyone would say, should be accepted as a general principle. Nor should the Government dictate about academical standards. It might be said on behalf of governmental interference that, where the taxpayer is illiterate and mute and when the universities are maintained at the expense of the taxpayer, it is the Government's duty to find ont that his money is properly spent and that the university is not abusing or misusing its autonomy. To this point of view also, I imagine, none would object. The question then becomes one of working out a way for mutually adjusting these points of view. And any abuse of autonomy and democracy can be prevented by working out a method for raising the morale, lessening elections, and encouraging a religious zeal for academical purity.

With so much as background, we may now think of practical steps for improving our universities, so that they can grow towards the ideal of a characteristically Indian university. It is difficult to make detailed suggestions for the different kinds of universities we have in India. Nor do we want that all of them—

rural universities, agricultural universities, engineering universities, etc.—should ultimately be replicas of each other by approaching the same ideal. We shall make some general considerations and suggestions so that in all an ideal and academically pure and useful atmosphere can obtain.

The aims of the university education as accepted by the University Commission are:

1. Transmission of the ethical and intellectual heritage of humanity to the young;
2. Enrichment of the heritage and extension of the boundaries of knowledge;
3. Development of personality;

or as more simply put, in Volume II, teaching, research, and personality-building. The *questionnaire* and the answers are really illuminating. The answers are almost unanimous in saying that the universities have been mostly doing the first, though some assert that even there the universities are defective; there are only feeble attempts to do the second and no adequate attention has been paid to it; and the third has been practically ignored. To the question whether the Indian universities have been exercising adequate influence on our national life and thought, the answers are negative, except for one or two, which say that the influence is too much. To the question with which university teachers are directly concerned: 'Do you think that university professors and teachers have at present adequate power and responsibility in the conduct of university affairs?', the answers are eighteen negative, eleven affirmative, and the rest are silent. These answers are ambiguous; for there is confusion between administrative and academic affairs and the question itself is not definite. One answer is worth quoting: 'They have none. I think they are the most harmless and charmless creatures in the present set-up.' (S. L. Katre, Vol. II, p. 276.) This remark holds true of all the Indian universities, except perhaps a few like Banaras, Allahabad, and Lucknow. One answer makes the reason clear: The university teachers are the employees of the university, and if they are members of the Syndicate or the Executive Committee, they become employers, and they should not be allowed to play the double role. They have enough of power for prescribing textbooks and framing courses. They should not be allowed to influence the policies and the budget of the university.

There is another question in the *questionnaire*: 'Is the existing position in respect of research and advanced study in various branches of knowledge satisfactory? Please analyse your observation under the following heads:—

(a) The Humanities;
(b) Pure Sciences;
(c) Applied Sciences and Technology; and
(d) Learned Professions.

Only the University of Calcutta could say that the position of research and advanced study was fairly satisfactory. The rest were unanimous in saying that they were unsatisfactory and some of them even said that they had no research. Again, the majority of the answers refer to the needs of scientific and industrial research and do not speak of the humanities, as if they do not need research or have had too much of it. The institutions started by the Government for higher studies and research in economics and statistics partly fulfil the need. The reasons for the neglect of research are want of funds, incentives, proper teachers and guides, libraries, and laboratory equipment. Further, the University Education Report says: 'That research is as important a function of a university as teaching has not been adequately realised by teachers and university administration in our country. Some of the university teachers who do not care to look after their intellectual health try to justify their laziness by subscribing to the dictum that research is not an integral part of the university's work—it is a mere luxury. One of the teacher-witnesses frankly confessed to us that the reason for inadequate amount of research by teachers in our universities was that we were a lethargic people, and one of the vice-chancellors also testified that the

reason for stagnation amongst teachers was not so much lack of opportunities in the way of library and laboratory facilities as sheer unwillingness to put in hard work and learn more.' (pp. 151-2, Vol. I.) I wonder why no mention is made in the Report of the discouragement of research for the reason that devotion to research is detrimental to teaching. Sometimes, teachers are not sent to the congresses and conferences in their subjects on the plea that teaching suffers in their absence. Cases are not wanting in which teachers are not permitted to attend meetings of academic bodies even at their own expense and on casual leave. Thus, whatever be the reason, the second aim of university education, namely, research, is lagging far behind the first and far behind what it could have been.

It is often said that a university professor who has not himself done sufficient research cannot be a good teacher; much less can he be a good research guide. But can he be a good influence for personality building? The question of the teacher's influence on personality building is far less tangible and concrete than the other two. What sort of influence, for instance, did Newton wield on the personality of the Cambridge graduates? and Einstein at the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton? Through his admiration of a professor the student derives a part of his character. Professor Broad of Cambridge, for instance, is full of Newton, as he lives in the same rooms as were allotted to Newton. (Professor Broad has now retired from Cambridge.) His devotion to his subject is similar to Newton's to his. A university professor, if he is true to his name, can have little time to think of the other problems of his students than their studies and research. And some of the professors are famous for their unconcern for matters other than their studies. The personality of the student is not completely patterned by the professor. Our ancients recognized that even knowledge is obtained only one-fourth from the teacher; the rest is obtained through one's own intellect and effort, from fellow students, and from experience. We may say the same about the building up of personality. When we accept that the university is not meant merely for teaching or for imparting of knowledge, we recognize the importance of training in intellectual discipline and corporate life. We assume and want that the university should provide the ideal conditions for the development of personality in its three aspects, volitional, emotional, and intellectual. The university teacher who is mainly concerned with teaching and research can contribute only partly to this development. But the university is not made up of university teachers alone, though the name of the university is to a large extent dependent upon them. They have to plan and co-ordinate the other parts.

(To be concluded)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

TO OUR READERS

For 'Concentration' by Swami Vivekananda we are indebted to Ida Ansell whose obituary we add at the end of this issue with the greatest regret. The lecture was stenographed by her under circumstances narrated in 'On Recording Vivekananda's Lectures', which as well as 'Concentration' are reproductions from *Vedanta and the West,* III. This lecture by the Swami was given on 16 March, 1900, at the Washington Hall, 320 Post Street, San Francisco, U.S.A. . . .

Prof. J. T. Parikh, M.A., shows in his short but illuminating article 'The Art of Life in the Bhagavad-Gītā' how man can enjoy peace and blessedness in an ordinary workaday

life, if he can put into practice the lessons of the *Gītā*, which does not call for any exceptional quality from him. Any common man in any station of life, says the learned writer, can practise it to his utmost benefit, provided he understands himself and has faith in that understanding. He is the soul or consciousness that works not only through his body, but through everything in the universe—this universal consciousness is the agent of all activities and the enjoyer of fruits thereof. When a person understands this and has true faith in it, his egotism and with it all restlessness will have vanished: a sense of detachment will have set in; and a spirit of reverence for all beings and activities will have pervaded his personality—he has become 'a true *bhakta*, a true *jñānin*, a true *karma-yogin*' . . . .

'Indian Universities and University Teachers' is a paper submitted to the University Teachers' Conference at Nagpur, by the author Dr. P. T. Raju, M.A., Ph.D., Shastri. The suggestions and criticisms incorporated in the paper are immensely practical and, if introduced into our universities, are sure to raise the standard of teaching and research in our country in a decade. Some of our universities may well take pride in the erudition of many of their professors; but persons who combine such practicality with scholarship are indeed rare. The paper is the result of deep and long thinking over the important educational problems of India.

HAS SANITY APPEARED?

The political history of the S. E. Asia seems to have turned a new page. The three meetings between Chou and Nu, between Dulles and Eden, and between Eden and Nehru are the outstanding events that have prepared the ground for a solid peace proposal not only in the S. E. Asia but in the world, if it is logically and psychologically pursued. The talks were private; but the little that was told in press conferences and in the British Parliament raises justifiable hopes in the hearts of all peace-loving people of the world.

Sir Anthony must be feeling happy. We congratulate him on what he has achieved. But he must himself be feeling that sanity is returning in the political field; otherwise we could not have expected that Chou and Dulles could have found so much in common between them as to justify the cautious optimism prevailing in the political world.

Much ground is yet to be covered before the fateful meeting would take place. The formula that Sir Anthony has evolved as a pre-condition to further progress is as just as it is practical, if we take all the circumstances into consideration. He speaks in the Parliament:

> 'The Chinese People's Government . . . have refrained from attacking Quemoy and the Matsus. The British Government trust that they will continue to exercise the restraint and that they will make it apparent that while maintaining intact in all respects their position in regard to Formosa and the Pescadores, they will not prosecute their claims by forceful means. . . . It is equally desirable that the Chinese Nationalists for their part should also do two things. First we would like to see them withdraw their armed forces from the coastal islands. Second that they should let it be known that they too, while maintaining their claims, will not prosecute them by forceful means and will abstain from all offensive military action. If these objectives would be realised, consideration could then be given internationally at an appropriate stage to the problem of Chinese representation in the United Nations and to the future status of Formosa.'

A fairer solution of the present tangle satisfying the aspiration of the People's Government of China and the prestige of the U.S.A. and the Nationalists could not be imagined. Any party that will fail to respond to this just call will run the risk of being discredited at the world bar. Sir Anthony could not have formulated the conditions so clearly and forcefully if he had not got an inkling of the trends of thinking of the governments concerned and if he had not got Nehru's support to the proposal. Chou's acquiescence to friendly advice, Nehru's strong stand, Dulles's adaptability, and Eden's persuasiveness—all together have set the stage for the enactment of the most important drama. In spite of hard bargaining and diplomatic denials and use of harsh expressions that we may reasonably expect in modern politics, a happy solution seems to be

in the offing. But permanent peace is yet an unthinkable proposition.

KULAPATI'S LETTER No. 70

Whatever comes out of Shri K. M. Munshi's pen deserves careful study, he is so original and thought-provoking and his grasp of the true Indian culture is so thorough. His letter No. 70 to Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, his spiritual child, should be read and re-read and deeply thought over. If we had had the space we would have quoted it extensively. The country would immensely profit by going through it.

He happens to be the Governor of the Uttar Pradesh. The writer of this note had the good fortune to enjoy recently the hospitality of the city of Lucknow, the capital of the State. It is painful to abuse hospitality by criticism. But when the future of one's beloved country is concerned, truth must be told, and that bluntly, so that it may be driven home.

Bombay is the capital of the Kulapati's own Pradesh and the present writer does not know what is happening in that city, the most westernized in India. But it is in the worthy hands of Shri Morarji Desai, and we may be assured that he would surely nip in the bud any attempt by any individual or group of people that may have the effect of debasing morals of the citizens, however indirectly. It is impossible for any department of his ministry to advertise unabashedly 'planning aids', to use the Kulapati's words, 'with the same gusto' as of the 'Coca-Cola or Kolynos' agents. But one cannot be too sure in this age of breakneck progress.

This is, however, what was actually happening in Lucknow when the veteran Congress leader, Shri Pant, was at the helm of affairs there. These 'planning aids' advertisements, greeted the eyes of its citizens at every turn. One does not know what answers the enquiring kiddies got from their progressive parents.

This criticism of ours is not to be taken as an aspersion on the character of our leaders, most of whom are rare gems indeed. What we want to point out is that most of them are one-idea'd personalities. When an idea gets into their heads it pushes all other ideas, all other considerations, out, so that they cannot think of the implications and consequences of the steps they are going to take. Impatience is not the whole explanation. To consider a case from all possible angles of vision is what is really wanting. Otherwise we cannot expect such decisions from those who swear by the revered Mahatma.

We quote below Shri Munshi's pertinent poser with just a few introductory remarks of his and conclude our note:

'Even if the neo-Malthusians carry on hysterical propaganda it is not likely to make any appreciable difference to the growth of population in Japan and India.

'On the other hand, if planning aids are advertised with the same gusto as are Coca-Cola or Kolynos, moral disaster will follow. The sanctity of marriage will tend to disappear. Domestic life will disintegrate. Promiscuity will have no dangers. Farm-yard moral will acquire the odour of respectability, and self-restraint, the basis of the happy home, will be in jeopardy. . . .

'Let me therefore pose the problem of the age.

'Peace is the first essential of mankind.

'Peace will not be maintained if population and the standard of living both continue to grow.

'Peace will not be maintained if the State becomes so omnipotent as to invade by legislation or propaganda the sanctum of domestic life and destroy the spiritual super-structure of individual life, from which alone love and peace and human virtues spring.

'Peace will not be maintained if the State anchors its faith on ever-increasing standards of life and assumes powers of universal control, and at the same time arouses an irrepressible desire for more and more comforts.

'Peace will not be maintained unless the State teaches population control and austere but ample standards of living by self-imposed restraint, drawn from spiritual strength.

'Peace, therefore, will not be maintained unless the spiritual stature of man is raised by purging his heart of narrow creeds, dividing cults and debasing hunger for material comforts, which can only be done by restoring it to God.'

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF WORLD PEACE. By A. Hamer Hall. *Published by Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York 16, N.Y., U.S.A. Pages 120. Price $ 3.00.*

'Ancient history records the Fall of Man. Must modern history record the fact that man keeps on falling?' (p. 16.) asks the author and the work under review is his analysis of the causes that have led to the contemporary world situation characterized by tensions and strained relations between groups of men and nations. The central note of the book is that 'Men have set up an iron curtain in the form of a belief that the spiritual and eternal and fundamental have no relation to, or effect upon, human affairs. It is this belief which has caused human affairs to reach the disastrous state they are in now.' (p. 17.) The Machiavellian view that 'A political situation . . . must be dealt with in accordance with the stubborn facts of power' is the ancestor of the modern political theory based on military and economic sanctions. However, this Machiavellian view is not the final word in international relations. To counteract the rising tide of violence, the author has outlined his 'Eight Foundation stones of Freedom'—a set of eight principles embodying the fundamentals upon which Human Rights are built and which recurred in the efforts of man for peace and amity between nations in the course of two millennia of human civilization. He further points out how departure from this code has invariably led to failure and disaster, as illustrated by events at Versailles, Yalta, and Potsdam.

The war psychosis has become so deep-rooted and the palliatives so out of proportion to the magnitude of the task that many statesmen have begun to think in terms of postponing the shooting war or localizing it, as in Korea in recent years. The creation of a mental climate conducive to the working out of the concrete details of international co-operation is still to be achieved. In this context Hamer Hall's call for combining moral code with sound political wisdom should have an important bearing. His thesis may not be an original programme for peace; yet it may serve as a broad perspective from which an attempt can be made for uniting the mutually contradictory political forces of today. The author is more concerned with outlining the broad principles of world reconstruction than with offering concrete methods for achieving the objective. To this extent the book may read more like an exhortation than like a practical guide.

The prevailing world situation is not so much due to the non-recognition by nations of the codes discussed as the differences in interpretation and the ways and means of implementing these principles effectively in the conduct of inter-state relations. The high idealism of the UNO, for instance, cannot be doubted, though we actually see how apparently insurmountable are the factors that divide nation from nation. Finally, it may be pointed out that any step for effective abolition of war should also embrace the 'atheistic' countries whom the author sharply differentiates. Otherwise the very aim of 'unity' and 'conciliation' would be frustrated by dividing the world into religious and non-religious camps, which may turn out to be another apple of discord between nations.

The author's fervent plea is quite timely. Its effectiveness, however, would have increased if he had been more objective in outlook.

SRI KRISHNA, THE DARLING OF HUMANITY. By Sri A. S. P. Ayyar, I.C.S., Bar-at-Law, Judge of the High Court of Judicature, Madras. *Published by the Madras Law Journal Office, Mylapore, Madras 4. Pp. 479. Price Rs. 4/-.*

Verily, Shri Kṛiṣṇa with his glamorous childhood, enspelling youth, heroic manhood, and austere age is the darling of humanity; for otherwise, Bhīṣma, the great Nestor of the *Mahābhārata*, would not have sued for his grace before shedding his mortal remains. We do not therefore need any apology from the learned author for the addition of this volume to the already preponderant mass of literature on the Darling. The book seems as if the author is invoking the grace of the Lord to incarnate Himself once again as per His promise in the *Gītā*.

The book is divided into three parts: the first deals with the 'Life of the Lord', the second with the 'Teachings of the Lord', and the third with the 'Stories of the Lord'. The matter for these seems to have been taken mostly from the *Bhāgavata* and the *Mahābhārata*. Parts I and III are mostly meant for the youth and Part II for the adult, who having gleaned some experience of the world and its manifold contradictions is but sincerely to understand himself and establish his own indelible relationship with the Lord inside and Nature outside of him for the attainment of his own liberation or harmony-cum-bliss. The Part II is especially precious in that the learned author has spared no pains in illuminating the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, which he himself has rendered into simple English prose, with parallel thoughts from Plato, Jayadeva, Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sankara, Tiruvalluvar, Tāyumānavar, Christ, Muhammad, Zoroaster, Jalāluddīn, Rūmī, Omar Khayyam, and Christian poets and mystics like Wordsworth, Shelley, Browning, Francis Thompson, and George Matheson. The life-

stories of the Lord in His incarnations of Sri Rāmachandra and Sri Gautama Buddha are lusciously told and the essence of their message clearly indicated.

But the publishers cannot be congratulated on either its format or the different shades and quality of the paper used, or for proof-correction. All these need improvement for its second edition.

P. SAMA RAO

THE RAMAKRISHNA MOVEMENT: ITS IDEAL AND ACTIVITIES. By SWAMI TEJASANANDA. *Published by the Ramakrishna Mission Saradapitha, P.O. Belur Math, Dt. Howrah, West Bengal. Pages 40. Price Rs. 2.*

The perennial culture of Hinduism, with its rich variety of doctrines and disciplines, expressed itself in varied spiritual movements in different epochs of Indian history. The impact of the modern Western civilization on the hoary culture of India served appropriately to stimulate her dormant spiritual power and achieve a fresh synthesis of the modern culture and her ancient wisdom. The life and realizations of Shri Ramakrishna were the fountain-head of inspiration for the new renaissance of Hinduism, initiated by the Ramakrishna Movement. The mighty spiritual power released by the advent of the Master was canalized and adapted to the needs of the practical upliftment of man and society in the modern context by Swami Vivekananda and the other direct disciples of the Master. The Ramakrishna Movement thus represents not only a continuation of the Vedantic ideal of monasticism, but also a strikingly original approach to the spiritual problems of modern society. Its ideal of service of man as embodied divinity is a new contribution to India's storehouse of spiritual culture. In the course of its strivings of more than half a century the movement has not only awakened the spiritual consciousness of Indian society but has also done pioneering work in the field of education, medical relief, and the rehabilitation of the distressed.

The many-sided activities of the movement, the ideal that inspires it, and its historical background, have been compressed in this booklet, which is authoritative both for the wealth of information and for the deep, intimate, and faithful knowledge of the spirit and ideal of the movement it embodies. As Swami Madhavananda observes in the 'Foreword' to the publication, 'It will, in short, serve as a valuable guide-book for all who desire a general acquaintance with the activities of the Ramakrishna Brotherhood, a potent religious Order of the modern times.'

The booklet contains fourteen sections—ten on the topic covered by the publication, and four appendices giving 'Extracts from the Memorandum of Association of the Ramakrishna Mission', 'Extracts from the Rules and Regulations of the Ramakrishna Mission', 'Activities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in India and Abroad as in 1953', and a comprehensive list of the Centres of the organization in India and abroad. After giving a synoptic account of the extraordinary life and realizations of Shri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, and Swami Vivekananda (sections 1 to 3), the author discusses the spiritual background of the origin of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission (section 4), and gives an account of the successive stages in the establishment of the Belur Math, the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission (section 5), about which Swami Vivekananda predicted, 'The power that will have its rise from here will flood the whole world, and turn the course of men's lives into different channels; from this place will spring forth ideals which will be harmony of knowledge, devotion, Yoga and work.' (p. 20.) The gradual growth of the movement into a world-wide organization is dealt with in section 6 on 'Expansion of work in India and abroad.' Section 7 on 'Worshipful Service' outlines the belief and outlook that are the motive force behind the various cultural and philanthropic activities of the Ramakrishna Mission. 'Orientation of Monastic Ideal', the next section, brings out in bold relief the fact that the Order represents a 'synthetic ideal of renunciation and service', and emphasizes how the ideal set before the movement by Swami Vivekananda differs from the cloistered seclusion of the traditional monastic ideal. Section 9, 'Vivekananda's Vision of a Cultural Synthesis' is devoted to an exposition of Swami Vivekananda's prophetic vision which envisaged a world society based on the unity of existence, the divinity of man, and the synthesis of science and Vedanta. The theme of section 10, 'India to Conquer the world' is Swami Vivekananda's famous declaration, 'Up India and conquer the world with your spirituality. The only condition of national life, of awakened and vigorous national life, is the conquest of the world by Indian thought.' (p. 27).

The booklet is adorned with fine selections of plates of important personalities and institutions of the Ramakrishna Mission. The beautiful get-up leaves nothing to be desired.

DNYANESHWARI (ENGLISH TRANSLATION) (Vol. I). TRANSLATED BY SHRI R. K. BHAGWAT. *Published by Dnyaneshwari English Rendering Publishing Association, 555/2, Shivajinagar, Poona 5, Bombay State. Pages 301+xxvi. Price Rs. 10.*

The great scriptural classic, the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the 'Song Celestial', has always exercised a tremendous fascination on the Hindu mind. Beginning with the great commentator Shankarācārya, a succession of saints and sages have commented on the

classic and have discovered in it a complete philosophy of life, transcending all sectarian and doctrinal limitations. The influence of the *Gītā* on the evolution of Hindu thought has thus been overwhelming. While the commentaries on it by the great Ācāryas were in Sanskrit and hence accessible only to those with an adequate command of the Sanskrit language, a few saints of medieval India, who sought to throw open the door to spiritual perfection to all, irrespective of caste divisions, wrote their commentaries in the language of the masses, and thus enabled them to drink deep of the spiritual message of the *Gītā*. Saint Jñāneshwara (born A.D. 1275; died A.D. 1296), the remarkable spiritual genius of Maharashtra, composed 9,000 stanzas in Marathi, expounding the central message of the *Gītā*. Jñāneshwara interpreted the scripture, not as exclusively preaching the Way of Knowledge (*Jñāna-mārga*), but as revealing a synthesis of Knowledge and Devotion (*Jñāna* and *Bhakti*). The commentary has attained wide popularity due to the fact that it cuts across learned and academic discussions of intricate philosophical problems and lays bare the spiritual message of the *Gītā*, in an unconventional and popular style, and packed with homely similes and parables. Jñāneshwara, moreover, was a saint of a very high order, and his commentary therefore exhibits a happy combination of deep intuition and intense intellectual effort.

The present translation, the first of its kind, is a verse by verse rendering of the original *Jñāneshwari*. The publication, being the first volume of the proposed two-volume series, covers Chapters I-XII of the *Gītā*. Each verse of the *Gītā* (from the English translation of Dr. S. K. Belvalkar) is followed by the English rendering of the *Jñāneshwari*. The translation is mainly intended for the benefit of students of philosophy in India and abroad, who do not know Marathi and were hitherto handicapped for want of such an English translation. The original in Marathi, as the publishers affirm, is a 'priceless literary treasure'. Unfortunately the rich literary content of the original can hardly be gauged by any translation, however faithful. Perhaps a little less literal translation of the work as that of Manu Subedar's *Gita Explained* (though from an abridged version of the original *Jñāneshwari*, as the translator points out in 'Nivedana' in page x) might have added to the lucidity of the English rendering, thus facilitating the easy grasp of the thought content of the commentary. Only masters of language like Sir Edwin Arnold can afford to be literal in translation without sacrificing literary grace.

However, the publication which has been undertaken with religious dedication, both on the part of the translator and the publishers, is an important contribution to the growing literature on the *Gītā*, and will be of great help in spreading the message of *Jñāneshwari* in particular and Indian thought in general.

HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY WOMEN DEVOTEES' CONVENTION SOUVENIR. *Published by Convener, Convention Sub-Committee, Holy Mother Birth Centenary Executive Committee (4, Gurusaday Dutt Road, Calcutta). Pages 128. Price Rs. 2.*

To commemorate the Centenary of Shri Sarada Devi, celebrated throughout India and abroad last year, a Convention of women devotees of Shri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother was held in Calcutta for five days from 2 to 6 April 1954. In December of the same year the Souvenir under review was issued, giving complete proceedings and the report of the speeches that were delivered during the Convention. The Souvenir fittingly opens with the report of the inspiring presidential address by revered Swami Sankarananda, President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, and the concluding address by revered Swami Madhavananda, General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission. The speeches by more than thirty delegates, from different parts of India, and Burma, are a moving and heartfelt tribute of adoration to the silent spiritual personality of the Holy Mother, the fragrance of whose immaculate life has spread to the far corners of the earth. The welcome address by Dr. Roma Chaudhuri, Chairman, Reception Committee, and the addresses, among many others, by Srimati Subhadra Haksar, Convener, on 'Teachings of Shri Ramakrishna and Sri Sarada Devi', by Sister Subbalakshmi on 'Teachings of the Holy Mother', and by Srimati C. K. Handoo on 'Sri Sarada Devi the Holy Mother', are some of the important contributions to the Souvenir, which unmistakably point out how the life and realizations of the Holy Mother have become a potent transforming influence in the lives of the daughters of modern India. In this Souvenir are also reproduced speeches delivered at the Convention on special topics vitally affecting women's life and status in modern society. The intellectual interest of the discussions far transcends the Indian context and provides matters for serious thought to women the world over, who are hankering for a life based on motherly love and compassion—the highest womanly virtues—which were the distinguishing traits of Shri Sarada Devi.

GANDHIJI'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY. ABRIDGED BY BHARATAN KUMARAPPA. *Published by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad 9. Pages 308. Price Rs. 2.*

Gandhiji's *Autobiography* in English, as originally published, and his *History of Satyagraha in South Africa* together run to almost a thousand printed pages. An attempt has been made in the

book under review, for the first time, to abridge the matter of these two works in a single short volume. Bharatan Kumarappa has achieved signal success in the execution of the task. The book includes all the important events in Gandhiji's life, which is a fine example, in recent times, of the spiritual unfoldment of a true Karma-Yogin. Gandhiji himself observed in his introduction to the original book as to the ideals of his life as follows: 'What I want to achieve—what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years,—is self-realization, to see God face to face, to attain Moksha. I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal. All that I do by way of speaking and writing and all my ventures in the political field, are directed to this same end. But as I have all along believed that what is possible for one is possible for all, my experiments have not been conducted in the closet, but in the open and I do not think that this fact detracts from their spiritual value. . . .'

The experiences narrated in the book should be regarded, in Gandhiji's own words, 'as illustrations, in the light of which everyone may carry on his own experiments according to his own inclinations and capacity.' As such the book will be especially useful to young students as an inspiring testimony by one whose intense active life was a combination of high idealism and keen practicality. It will also stimulate in the young readers a reverence for higher values and inspire them to a life of noble dedication and selfless endeavour.

A glossary of non-English words and an exhaustive index add to the usefulness of the volume.

BENGALI

DHARMA-O-SAMAJ. By Basanta Kumar Chattopadhyaya. *Published by Kamakshiprasad Chattopadhyaya, 3, Shambhunath Pandit Street, Calcutta 20. Pages 262. Price Rs. 2-4.*

The author has treated, in this book, various social and religious problems from the orthodox angle of vision. On the whole we agree with his angle of vision because it is national and based on truly Indian line of thinking. Most of the statements are based on sound arguments, information, and authority. But it is as difficult for us to agree with the so-called moderner's interpretation of the Shāstras according to his sweet will as with the whole-hogger Sanātanist with whom every syllable is sacrosanct and any criticism is blasphemous. Our Shāstras are many, old and new, from the Vedas to the Nibandhas of Raghunandana and others. Are all of them to be taken as equally authoritative? There are Purāṇas, for example, like the one vilifying Shaṁkarācārya and another vilifying Madhvācārya. Should they also be believed in as Sanātana Shāstras? The *Mahābhārata*, which is regarded as the fifth Veda, originally contained 8,800 verses only according to its own version. But it contains a lakh of verses now, with many different readings. It is difficult to say if this was not the case with all other Shāstras. Of course, in the case of the Vedas (Mantras) much care was taken in its oral transmission to rule out the possibility of interpolations. In spite of that, changes have occurred in different *shākhās*. There is no person or institution at present having adequate authority over society to make changes in the Shāstras and social rules.

There are some problems nowadays which the ancient Munis could not have dreamt of. Therefore there must be changes in the *ācāra-dharma* (social rules), though there cannot be any change in *Sanātana-dharma*, eternal religion or universal religion, which does not change with change of time or place. Things that have changed in the past must also change in the future. It is an irrefutable law of nature. The problem that now remains to be solved is: Who is to make the changes? As the Brahmins who were the social leaders, have lost their hold over society due to many causes, chief of which being their conservative policy, and other influential persons have lost their Sanskritic learning and hence knowledge of the Shāstras, it is left to the time-spirit, the most potent aspect of God, to make all necessary changes in social laws, our support or resistance notwithstanding.

Varṇāshrama was, no doubt, a grand beneficial discovery of the *Ṛiṣis*, but it has its defects also, as indeed everything in this world of *Māyā* has. Again, though it was good in its principles, it suffered abuse and degeneration in practice in the hands of selfish men. It is for this reason that a good order or law also degenerates and becomes bad after a long time. If everything were right and good in Varṇāshrama, how could degeneration and political subjection take place? Did it have the inner strength to withstand the attacks from foreign military powers or the onslaught of alien civilizations? These historical facts prove that Varṇāshrama could not stay the rot that set in in its fold. It played its part well but it has also suffered great abuse and degeneration in practice—let both these be admitted.

There are some other similar minor controversial points in the book with which we cannot agree. But on the whole we are glad to perceive his strong conviction in the goodness of our great civilization and culture and his clear appreciation of the wisdom of the ancient *Ṛiṣis*. The author has got the courage of conviction to give expression to the thoughts and feelings of true Hindus and Indians whose sentiments and faiths have always been tortured by thoughtless and uninformed criticisms and attacks from the rationalists of this age. We recommend the book to the thinking public.

Dinesh Chandra Shastri

NEWS AND REPORTS

IDA ANSELL

On the last day of January, 1955, in the Vivekananda Home of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Ida Ansell died at the age of seventy-eight. She had lived a quiet and humble life. Having spent her childhood days in Boston, she moved to the Pacific West Coast where she worked as a stenographer for many years, first in San Francisco, later in Los Angeles. From 1948 on she lived at the Hollywood branch of the Ramakrishna Mission, helping with the office routine and writing.

Although at surface glance her long life seems uneventful, in a sense it really was extraordinary: She had received the blessings of four direct disciples of Shri Ramakrishna—Swami Vivekananda, whose lectures and classes she attended on his second trip to the West in 1900; Swami Turiyananda, who initiated her and gave her the name Ujjvala, 'the shining one'; Swami Abhedananda; and Swami Trigunatita.

'Ujjie,' as her friends called her, had always had the secret ambition to be an author. She took correspondence courses in composition, and bought and studied many handbooks on writing technique. But she never actually wrote anything until after she was seventy years old. Then her lifelong desire was fulfilled. Her recently published memories of Swamis Turiyananda and Vivekananda have been translated into a number of European and Indian languages. These reminiscences have great value as first-hand reports of the pioneering days of Vedanta in America. They are written in a candid, lively, and childlike style, reflecting Ujjie's personality. Two months ago she finished her literary lifework: the transcription of the shorthand notes she took more than fifty years ago of thirteen previously unpublished lectures by Swami Vivekananda. She gave the publication of these lectures to *Vedanta and the West* and any other periodicals of the Ramakrishna Order that might want to print them. Volume VIII of Swami Vivekananda's *Complete Works* contains four additional lectures recorded by her, which were published some years ago.

Thus Ujjie is an integral part of the Vedanta work in the West. But she was more than that to those who knew her—she was an extremely lovable, generous, and loyal friend. She was completely unsophisticated. She had a tremendous zest for life and somehow seemed to have more vitality than most people half her age, in spite of her frailty and lameness. There was no indication of Ujjie's approaching death until she had a stroke on the morning of January 31. She died several hours later. Her last word before she became unconscious was 'Mother.' Swami Turiyananda once had told her: 'What you want, you will get. If you want entertainment, you will get entertainment. If you want Mother, you will get Mother.'

THE HOLY MOTHER BIRTH CENTENARY

A Short Report

The life of the Holy Mother, which was at once simple and sublime, is destined to bring about a spiritual revival in the world and lead humanity to a progressive unfoldment of its inner being. Realizing the need of placing this unique life before our rising generation, which is in imminent danger of losing all that is worth having in human life, the authorities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission decided to celebrate the Birth Centenary of the Holy Mother for a whole year beginning from the 27th December, 1953. For this purpose, first a provisional Committee was formed, at the Belur Math, which was replaced by an Executive Committee, working under a General Committee both elected on the 1st March, 1953. Later, the Executive Committee, to help it in its work, appointed the following eight Sub-committees.

The Finance Sub-committee.
The Foreign Celebrations Sub-committee.
The Pilgrimage Sub-committee.
The Publicity and Inland Celebrations Sub-committee.
Sub-committee for the Religious Convention of the Women Devotees of Shri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother.
The Exhibition Sub-committee.
Women's Cultural Conference Sub-committee.
All-India Women's Music Conference Sub-committee.

In collaboration with these, an elaborate programme of celebrations was prepared and circulated in India and abroad, which met with a ready response everywhere. It is heartening to note that the Centenary Celebrations have taken place not only in big cities but also in many small towns and remote villages in the country. We give below a summary of the main items.

Inauguration

The Centenary was inaugurated at the Belur Math on the 27th December, 1953, by Shrimat Swami Sankarananda, President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, whose message of goodwill was broadcast from the Calcutta Station of the All India Radio in the evening. The week-long inaugural programme included a public meeting at the Belur Math and another in Calcutta, in which many distinguished speakers dealt with the life and teachings of the Holy Mother, and ended with an

imposing pilgrims' procession from the Belur Math to the Dakshineswar temple.

Women Devotees' Convention

The next important function was a Convention of the women devotees of Shri Ramakrishna and Shri Sarada Devi in Calcutta, from the 2nd to the 6th April, 1954 attended by fifty delegates from different parts of India and Burma. Inaugurated by Shrimat Swami Sankarananda, it had four sessions in which thirty-three speakers delineated the life and teachings of the Holy Mother. Just after the convention, most of the delegates went on a pilgrimage to Jayrambati and Kamarpukur.

Installation of the Statue of the Holy Mother

In the Holy Mother's Temple at Jayrambati, a beautiful marble statue of the Mother was installed on the 8th April, 1954, with great eclat. The programme included Puja, Homa, Bhajan, Jatra performances, and religious discourses, which were attended by a large number of Sadhus, devotees, and thousands of village people. Temporary accommodation with electricity was provided for about 3,000 pilgrims of both sexes.

On the next day, a large number of these pilgrims visited Kamarpukur and joined the day-long celebrations there.

An Outstanding Event

An outstanding event of the Centenary year was the opening, on the 2nd December, of SRI SARADA MATH on the Ganges, a little to the north of the Dakshineswar temple. It was a fulfilment of Swami Vivekananda's cherished desire to have a Math for women, with the Holy Mother as the guiding spirit.

Exhibition

An All-India Exhibition of Arts, Crafts, and Culture was held at 163, Lower Circular Road, Calcutta from the 5th December to the 2nd January. It brought into bold relief the glorious achievements of Indian women in diverse spheres of life, the ideals which moved them through the ages, and the values that they sought to realize. The Exhibition mainly comprised three sections, namely, Sarada Bhavan, Sanskriti Bhavan, and Shilpa Bhavan, through which it sought to give expression to the above ideas.

Music Conference

An All-India Women's Music Conference was held in the University Institute, Calcutta, from the 17th to the 19th of the month, in which many talented women artistes from different parts of India participated. The functions were well attended. The Conference was organized entirely by women.

Cultural Conference

A Women's Cultural Conference was held from the 20th to the 25th December, also at the Calcutta University Institute. It was inaugurated by the Governor of West Bengal and had as many as eight sittings. Nearly 200 delegates from all parts of India joined the Conference. It was addressed by many distinguished speakers, including Acharya Jadu Nath Sarkar, Prof. Kshiti Mohan Sen, and Swami Nikhilananda. The whole function was a great success.

Procession

On the 26th December a pilgrims' procession was organized. Thousands of people assembled at the Cossipore Garden House, wherefrom the main procession started at 8 a.m. Nearly ten thousand people participated in the procession, which reached Belur Math by noon. Tastefully decorated pictures and multi-coloured flags and festoons printed with the sayings of the Holy Mother as well as the performances of many Kirtan and band parties added to the beauty, grandeur, and solemnity of the occasion. Nearly ten thousand of the pilgrims partook of prasad.

Publications

The Centenary Committee has brought out the following publications:

Great Women of India

A comprehensive life of the Holy Mother in Bengali entitled *Sri Ma Sarada Devi*.

A brochure containing 108 precepts of the Holy Mother in Bengali, English, and Hindi.

A short life of the Holy Mother in Bengali and Hindi.

Women Devotees' Convention Souvenir.

Hindi and English editions of the Holy Mother's above comprehensive Life are in preparation.

The Centenary Stamps were also issued on the occasion.

Conclusion

The year-long celebration of the Holy Mother Birth Centenary practically came to a close with a meeting at the Belur Math addressed by distinguished speakers on the life and teachings of the Holy Mother held on the 26th December, 1954, the Exhibition continuing till the 2nd January.

The Committee gratefully acknowledges the munificent donation of Rs. 50,000/- from the Dowager Maharani of Mysore to the Publication Fund.

The Committee is also much beholden to the devoted public for the generous help so spontaneously given, which ensured the successful termination of celebrations. May the Holy Mother bless us all and guide us forever, is our earnest prayer at Her blessed feet.