

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

Awakened India



उत्तिष्ठत जगत्त प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.

Vol. XXVI, No. 304, NOVEMBER 1921.

CONTENTS:

Questions and Answers., by <i>Swami Vivekananda</i>	...	...	...	241
Occasional Notes	...	...	...	242
Love—Its Secret., by <i>Brahmachari Bhavachaitanya</i>	...	...	...	245
Place of Miracles in Religious Life—I., by <i>Ananda</i>	...	...	...	249
The Story of Manki., by <i>Brahmachari Ananda Chaitanya</i>	...	...	...	253
Life at Shanti Ashrama., by <i>Durga Devi</i>	...	...	...	254
A Bhakta's Song, (a poem), by <i>G. F. Hudson</i>	...	...	...	254
Sri Krishna and Uddhava	...	...	...	255
Reports and Appeals	...	...	...	256
Reviews and Notices	...	...	...	258
News and Notes	...	...	...	261

P. O. Mayavati: Almora Dist. (Himalayas).

London: E. HAMMOND, 30 PARK ROAD, WIMBLEDON, S. W.

New York: S. E. WALDO, 249 MONROE STREET, BROOKLYN.

Indian annually

Rs. 2-0-0

Single copy As. 4.

1921

Foreign annually:

Rs. 4.

Single copy 6 as.

Entered at the Office at Brooklyn, N. Y., as second-class matter.

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii.

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XXVI]

NOVEMBER 1921

[No. 304

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

Q. Where should one meditate—inside the body or outside it? Should the mind be withdrawn inside or held outside?

A. We should try to meditate inside. As for the mind being here or there, it will take a long time before we reach the mental plane. Now our struggle is with the body. When one acquires a perfect steadiness in posture, then and then alone one begins to struggle with the mind. Asana (posture) being conquered, one's limbs remain motionless, and one can sit as long as one pleases.

Q. Sometimes one gets tired with Japa (repetition of the Mantra); should one continue it or read some good book instead?

A. One gets tired with Japa for two reasons. Sometimes one's brain is fatigued, sometimes it is the result of idleness. If the former, then one should give up Japa for the time being, for persistence in Japa

at that time results in seeing hallucinations, or in lunacy etc. But if the latter, the mind should be forced to continue Japa.

Q. Sometimes sitting at Japa one gets joy at first, but then one seems to be disinclined to continue the Japa owing to that joy. Should Japa be continued then?

A. Yes; that joy is a hindrance to spiritual practice, its name being Rasâ-swâdana ('tasting of sweetness'). One must rise above that.

Q. Is it good to practise Japa for a long time, though the mind may be wandering?

A. Yes. As some people break in a wild horse by always keeping his seat on his back.

Q. You have written in your Bhakti-Yoga that if a weak-bodied man tries to practise Yoga, a tremendous reaction comes. Then what to do?

A. What fear if you die in the attempt to realise the Self! Man is not afraid to die for the sake of learning and many other things, and why should you fear to die for religion?

Q. Can Jiva-seva (service to beings) alone give Mukti?

A. Jiva-seva can give Mukti not directly but indirectly through the purification of the mind. But if you wish to do a thing properly, you must, for the time being, think that this is all-sufficient. The danger of any sect is want of zeal. There must be constancy (Nishthâ), or there will be no growth. At present it has become necessary to lay stress on Karma.

Q. What should be our motive in work—compassion, or any other motive?

A. Doing good to others out of compassion is good, but the Seva (service)

of all beings in the spirit of the Lord is better.

Q. What is the efficacy of prayers?

A. By prayers one's subtle powers are easily roused, and if consciously done, all desires may be fulfilled; but done unconsciously, one perhaps in ten is fulfilled. Such prayers, however, are selfish and should therefore be discarded.

Q. How to recognise God when He has assumed a human form?

A. One who can alter the doom of people is the Lord. No Sadhu, however advanced, can claim this unique position. I do not see anyone who realises Ramakrishna as God. We sometimes feel it hazily, that is all. To realise him as God and yet to be attached to the world is inconsistent.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

ADAPTABILITY is the law of life and the infinite capacity for adjustment to the inevitable changes of circumstances is the secret of the eternal life and the unflinching vitality of Hinduism, the popular name by which the Sanatana Dharma of the Indo-Aryans has come to be known in modern times. Even the immortal Vedas, the oldest of the world's Scriptures which record the early history of the religion of the Hindus, speak of a time when the fundamental principles and essential features of the great religion were highly developed; and though no doubt the form—the rituals and ceremonials, social laws and systems, and manners and customs of the Hindus underwent great changes with the flow of time, the spirit remains

the same up to the present-day.

Hinduism presents a veritable ethnological museum. Whether we believe or not in the not infrequently contradictory theories of the ethnologists and their race criteria—the head form, the pigmentation of the skin and the structure of the body etc., or in their division of mankind into different races—the Negroid, the Mongolian, the Caucasian, and so on, we cannot but acknowledge after a little critical study that there exist within the fold of Hinduism various races and tribes, having social rules and customs, traditions and languages sometimes differing as widely from one another as those of

peoples inhabiting entirely different parts of the globe.

The so-called ancient Kolarian, Dravidian and Aryan races, and the hordes of invaders and immigrants—the Bactrians, the Sakas, the Huns and hosts of others who settled down in India before the advent of the Mohammedans, the tall and short types, the fair, the dark and the yellow-skinned, the long-nosed and the snub-nosed—all these are united by the bonds of a common religion, institution and literature. It is practically an impossible task to trace the ancestry and the history of the absorption of all these various groups of people into Hinduism. But how they all came within the pale of a common religion, often through the medium of Buddhism, although the Hindu religion is not aggressively proselytising, we learn from the fact that 'Brahmanism so far from being a non-missionary religion, in the sense of a religion that admitted of no *proselytes* was one which every year made more converts than were made by all the other religions of India put together,'—such is the testimony of Sir Alfred Lyall who wrote about the subject from direct knowledge and personal investigation. Again after a careful study of this problem, Sir George Cambell wrote to the same effect in the administrative report of Bengal for 1871—1872—that 'it was a great mistake to suppose that the Hindn religion admitted of no proselytes, for the system of caste found room for any number of outsiders.'

Hinduism in the past ungrudgingly opened its hospitable doors to all who were willing to become part and parcel of it, accepting its principles, ideas and institutions. And this process was going

on freely until the Mohammedan period, when Hinduism to protect itself from the militant religion of the followers of Mohammed, inculcated rigid social rules and regulations, though this changed attitude no doubt commenced even during the ascendancy of Buddhism in India. But in spite of this change of policy, even at the present times the peaceful penetration of Hinduism is going on in India and Ceylon notwithstanding the utter apathy of its followers. Besides the conversion of the Buddhists, the Jains and even the Mohammedans by the Hindu reformers, especially by those of the Vaishnavite sects are indisputable facts in the renaissance of the religion of the Hindus. And yet there are people who implicitly believe that Hinduism is not at all a proselytising religion! If the term implies any violent method, as was often followed by the Mohammedans, and the Portuguese in India who boasted of making by the power of the sword more converts to Christianity within twelve months than all the missionaries could do in ten years, Hinduism does not certainly belong to this type, for it is and has ever been a *non-violent* missionary religion that has been peacefully spreading the potent influence of its culture, instilling into men its noble principles and bringing about their spiritual regeneration.

The leaders of the Hindn society never lost sight of the fact that true conversion is primarily a mental process, and a spiritual transformation. It is the shifting of the centre of one's faith and a remodeling of one's life after new ideals with the help of the light that is illuminated in the heart of the converted. Therefore conversion, brought about with the help of brute force or for the sake of

worldly advantages and considerations, in which the inner man undergoes no spiritual metamorphosis but remains at heart practically unchanged and sticks to the former faith and ideal of his life, is nothing but a mockery and is devoid of any meaning whatsoever on the very face of it. The mere performance of some rituals and ceremonials connected with any particular religion, without entering into its spirit, even when done quite willingly and without any compulsion by an external agent is undoubtedly meaningless from the true spiritual stand-point; but when it is forced upon any person by fanatics and he is made to undergo the physical process for fear of death or some other forms of detestable violence it becomes unquestionably utterly meaningless and as such it is against the true spirit and principle of any rational religion. Unless conformity to some prescribed or customary forms is followed by a change of heart which vitally influences the subject it is a mere physical affair and as it does not touch the soul of the man it has absolutely nothing to do with real conversion. But the pity of it is that people are led to believe that the mere muttering of certain words, the sprinkling of water or any other external process can accomplish true conversion! Such is the thoughtlessness of man! And even men of education speak of forcible conversion as being equivalent to giving up one's own religion and faith!

We now come to the momentous question that is at present disturbing the minds of all thoughtful Hindus—the re-admission of those Hindus who were forced to go through the ceremonies of the so-called conversions by some fanatical and deluded Mohammedans of Malabar. These despicable acts of violence have been un-

equivocally condemned by many of the Mohammedan leaders, divines as well as laymen, who hold that forcible conversions are against the injunction of the Koran which says, "Let there be no compulsion in religion," and the so-called converts who continue to be faithful to Hinduism are not Mussalmans from the stand-point of the Shariat. The poor victims of cruel fanaticism are in reality what they were before they had to go through some forced forms and ceremonies and the leaders of the Hindu society should devise means to take back all of them after the performance of purificatory ceremonies. Such a process would be quite in keeping with the past history and certainly in full conformity with the essential principles of the Hindu religion. Thus from the stand-point of reason and the spirit of the Hindu Scriptures the so-called converts who have not given up their religion are fully eligible to be restored to and remain within the fold of the religion of their birth.

In this connection naturally arises the question of admitting fresh adherents and taking back those who were perverted from the Hindu religion, as also their descendants, who are sincerely willing to come under the protection of the Hindu faith. Gathering converts under its banner is no new thing in the religious history of Hinduism as we have already seen. The time has come when the Hindus should be more loyal to the spirit of their religion than to the forms, for these are ever changing with the change of time and circumstances, as Hinduism never failed to rise equal to the occasion at all critical periods of its history. In the year 1899 Swami Vivekananda was asked in

an interview by a representative of the Prabuddha Bharata about the advisability of taking back into Hinduism those who have been perverted from it. "Certainly," said the Swami, "they can and ought to be taken.....The vast majority of Hindu perverts to Islam and Christianity are perverts by the sword or the descendants of these. It would be obviously unfair to subject these to disabilities of any kind. As to the case of born aliens, did you say? Why, born aliens have been converted in the past by crowds, and the process is still going on. * * *

"Ceremonies of expiation are no doubt suitable in the case of willing perverts, returning to the Mother Church, as it were, but on those who were alienated by conquest—as in Kashmir and Nepal,—or

on strangers wishing to join us, no penance should be imposed.

"Returning converts will gain their own castes, of course. And new people will make theirs. You will remember, that this has already been done in the case of Vaishnavism. Converts from different castes and aliens were all able to combine under one flag, and form a caste by themselves,—and a very respectable one too. From Ramanuja down to Chaitanya of Bengal, all great Vaishnavite Teachers have done the same."

We commend Swamiji's views to our Hindu brethren who are anxious to have the doors of Hinduism freely opened to all persons willing to come under the shelter and direct influence of the great Mother of religions.

LOVE—ITS SECRET.

AFTER the day's hard toil the weary labourer, ill-paid, ill-clad and ill-fed, wends his way home with a settled melancholy and despair on his face. But in the cool recess of his thatched cottage as his wife waits upon him with loving care and his children divert him with their gentle smiles and sweet prattles, he forgets toil, poverty, cares and anxieties. And for the time being a glow returns to his colourless cheeks. Day after day, night after night the anxious mother forgets her own identity and nurses her sick child, not knowing what is regular food and drink, sleep and rest. The patriot who sincerely loves his country considers it a rare privilege to serve her even at the sacrifice of all he values most. To defend his hearth and home he would,

if necessary, enter the thick of battle, fight and meet death with a smiling countenance. The philosopher, a devotee at the shrine of truth, happening to differ from his countrymen, falls a victim to their ignorant fanaticism. The inhuman tortures and persecutions, he is put to, he bears patiently and calmly. The saint sees the hand of Providence in everything good or evil, and cheerfully accepts the trials and tribulations as loving gifts from the Divine.

Now what is it that enlivens the worries and crosses that embitter life? It is love. Love makes a heaven of hell by shedding its divine charm all around. But for this divine elixir the *samsara*, as it is, would have been a veritable furnace burning and parching souls with torments and

afflictions. Love is the very life and soul of the world. It abounds everywhere. The limitless azure of the sky, the unending stretch of hills and dales, the sombre rush and dash of water-falls and streams, the vast expanse of the ocean and the sweet rustling of leaves reveal this love. It is present as chemical affinity in the atoms and as gravitation in the solar systems that revolve round one another. From the crawling insect to man, the crown of creation—all beings without exception have love within and manifest it by their activities. It is the tie of love that unites parents with children, husbands with wives and friends with friends. Thus family affection, patriotism, devotion to truth and faith in God are only different forms of love. This love, universal and all-pervading, that tinges everything with an unearthly hue, has its primal and perennial source in the Atman, the Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute. Truly has it therefore been said in the *Sruti*:—"The son is loved not for the son's sake, not for his material form, but for the Atman that lives in him. The husband is dear to his wife not because of his physical appearance, but for the Atman that lies behind his body. Wealth is sought after not because it has got an intrinsic value of its own, but for the Atman that is there." Just as the thread runs through the flowers and makes the wreath a thing of beauty and joy, the Atman is at the basis of the cosmos and makes it what it is. In It we 'live, move and have our being.' "We are no aliens in a stranger universe, governed by an outside God; we are parts of a developing whole, all enfolded in an embracing and interpenetrating love."*

But as our vision is blurred over by *Avidya* we miss this one, universal link, weave round our individual egos the webs of *samsara* and confine therein the boundless love which is our birthright. Even as a small pool of standing water with no living current begets obnoxious germs, love that is congested within limited areas becomes polluted, unhealthy and harmful. When carried to the worst extreme such love turns out to be a plague to humanity. Tyranny, murder, suicide, debauchery and such other detestable sins and crimes are its offspring. We see the play of this vitiated love in Nero, that infamous Roman emperor, whose pleasure was in riding rough-shod over the feelings of others. Once how merrily he fiddled on while Rome was burning and her populace were flying helplessly for life and rending asunder the sky with their piteous wails and moans! This love again as insatiable lust once brought the ruin of two beautiful and rising empires—Lanka and Troy. But love becomes a Divine gift when it shines forth in all the glory of its sublime purity and selflessness. It then rings with the triumph song of a happier mankind. It becomes a delight, a blessing and a benediction. It ennobles and uplifts. Worldly loves are only faint shadows and imperfect imitations of this Love Divine. The history of the world is a living testimony to this undeniable truth.

At the lowest stage of spiritual growth a creature centres his love upon his body and evaluates the values of life by the amount of sense-pleasure it brings. He does not care for anything beyond; he has a gross materialistic outlook; his sole concern and aim is to clothe, feed and serve the body as best as he can. The pig eats his fill and at the height of his joy wallows

* Sir Oliver Lodge.

in the mire; the savage-man tattoos his skin and dances in mad delight; the fashionable lady in her gayest finery, fully conscious of her culture and refinement, proudly looks at the mirror and swaggers about with a jaunty air. Although there is an evolution from grosser to finer forms all these are nothing but adorations of the body, the mass of bones and flesh. But as the vision unfolds and widens a creature comes to see that his own happiness is closely bound up with the family and the community of which he is a member. He therefore extends his love to those with whom he is surrounded and also gets theirs in return. Very few, indeed, love and expect no return. Leaving aside the mother's affection for her children, mostly there is an element of calculation and bargaining in our family affections. The same truth holds good as regards our communal love if it is not based on higher religious considerations. Thus worldly love is seldom disinterested. It is true that we sometimes meet with cases where love, though worldly, is sincere and intense. But as it is confined to physical forms it is not immune from sorrow and disappointment that follows separation and death of the beloved. Constantly deceived, embittered and disgusted a creature naturally craves for something permanent and substantial upon which he can rely. Here begins the search for the Beyond, the Real! Hence religion! Hence Love Divine! The story is told of Vilvamangal—how formerly he was a rake of the first water and afterwards a saint of a high order. It was his paramour, Chintamani, the cause of his ruin, that paved the way for his spiritual awakening. Chintamani was his life, his soul, his everything. For her he neglected, nay, almost forgot his near and dear ones, squandered his patri-

mony and lost all sense of shame. One day he was detained at home till late in the evening by the annual *shrâddha* ceremony of his father while there was raging outside a furious storm accompanied with thunder and lightning. Mad as he was for the company of his sweetheart, the frowns of the elements and the inclemencies of the weather meant nothing to him! He was not to be deterred from his campaign of love! Half unconscious he went out, swam across the big river that stood between, scaled the high walls of her house and appeared before her. So absorbed, so beside himself was he with the thoughts of Chintamani that he mistook a stinking carcass floating by for a log of wood and rested his body on it while crossing the river. The wonderful attachment of the man astonished Chintamani who reproved him saying, "Shame on you! Had you directed towards God the intense love that you have lavished on this short-lived filthy body of mine you would have got Bliss Eternal!" This timely reproach instinct with meaning cut the intoxicated lover to the quick and served as an eye-opener to him. His better senses returned. And his life changed altogether.

How rarely is Divine Love vouchsafed unto man! And when it comes, it comes like the onrush of a surging wave sweeping away everything that falls on its path. It drags to forests the son from the warm protection of loving parents, the husband from the sweet company of the beloved wife and the king from the high throne and royal luxury. Bonds of worldly affection fall off before it. Lust, gold and power lose their splendour on its advent. This Love Divine maddened Dhruva and impelled him to search in trackless forests for the Lord with lotus eyes. Again the

sweet notes of Sri Krishna's *murali* that ravished the pure, simple folk of Brindavan signify the imperative call of this Love Divine.

As temperaments and likings differ diverse are the ways by which one may approach and realise the ideal of love. The *Bhakta* considers the relation between himself and his ideal as one of part and whole, organ and organism, or one of those earthly relations viz., servant and master, child and parent, wife and husband and the like. He worships in every form, high or low, his ideal—the Essence of Love inexpressible—“अनिर्वचनीय प्रेमस्वरूपः”—and looks upon creation with all its good and evil as a Divine *lila*. To the *Jnani* it is the Atman, associated with an inscrutable power, that has projected the panorama of the world. And he rejoices to see the One without a second everywhere, in his own self and in others. But Divine Love has its grades. As it evolves it becomes wider, purer and loftier. And when it reaches its culmination it has its fruition and fulfilment. Then the lover and the Beloved, the individual soul and the Paramatman lose their separate existence and become one in blessed *Samadhi*.

Those who are blessed with Love Divine are the salt of the earth. Moulding the higher destinies of mankind they command a power before which brute force is like a straw. They die to live, for their careers—long tales of wonderful sacrifices, are the sources of inspiration to remote posterity. With hearts that ‘beat with each throb of all the hearts that ache, known and unknown,’ they breathe forth, while they live, an atmosphere of love, amity and good-will. In his all-embracing love Buddha, the Light of Asia, offered his life for an insignificant goat that was

going to be sacrificed. Dying on the cross Jesus, the Messiah of love, prayed for his persecutors saying, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Full of Love Divine Pavhari Baba welcomed the relentless cobra when it darted its mortal venom into his body as a messenger from the Beloved. In his high-souled pity for all that suffer Sri Ramakrishna, the latest embodiment of perfect toleration, truth and renunciation, declared, “I shall gladly undergo millions of births if I can help a single weary soul.” In his upward flight towards *Samadhi*—that was so natural to him—he prayed to the Divine Mother that he might remain in a lower plane and be not lost in the Absolute, for otherwise he would not be able to work out his mission of serving the world.

To-day men are divided against men and are on the look-out to thrive at one another's expense. In the universal rush towards the greatest power nations are at war and busy in manipulating the forces of nature for inventing far surer and easier weapons of destruction to cripple one another. Religion, the panacea for all evil, has been relegated to the position of a mere intellectual assent. Peace and good-will have become airy nothings. Now it is only Vedanta with its highest synthetic and rational background and its message of love, universal and dynamic, that can save the world and heal its sores, cuts and bruises

“सो वै सः, संहोवायं लब्ध्वा आनन्दी भवति ।”

“God is Love. Whoever tastes Divine Love attains eternal happiness.”

BRAHMACHARI BHAVACHAITANYA.



PLACE OF MIRACLES IN RELIGIOUS LIFE.

(1)

“EVEN in the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, by such an able author as Swami Saradanandaji, one is tired of the intrusion of miracles such as the enlargement of his coccyx at a particular period of his Sadhana and the like. Besides every page is strewn broadcast with visions and trances as if that pious man was only a *visionary*. The mention of so many visions really makes one sceptic as to the very reality of those events. Thus our religion has become a veritable mess of miracles and supernatural events from which it has become well-nigh impossible to glean out the solid fact of truth and stern reality.” These words of a well-meaning friend of mine, a very distinguished student of our University, still ring in my ears with all the bitterness with which they were uttered. He is a sincere soul but is a bit puzzled, being unable to test the veracity of some of the unique experiences of Sri Ramakrishna Deva by treating them in the menstruum of his scientific knowledge.

Yes, there happened certain events during the period of Sri Ramakrishna's Sadhanas, and, for the matter of that, in the lives of most of the spiritual leaders of the world, which are beyond the ken of our ordinary vision and thus naturally give rise to the suspicion in the *scientific* mind, that these phenomena more or less belong to the domain of miracles. Ordinary mind generally calls for scientific explanations for every happening as if that magic alchemy has been able to solve every riddle of human life and presses for them in the case of psychic or religious experiences as if the progress of religion can be measured by the laboratory barometer or the truth thereof tested in the intellectual crucible of the common people. Even how many physical modifications can be demonstrated by science.

so that they may be understood by all? For the clear understanding of a thing both the subjective and objective study is necessary. How many people among the illiterate know that water is a compound of two gases and not a simple ingredient? The boors and uneducated negroes do not understand even the most proved scientific experiments. It requires a good deal of previous training to be brought to the point of understanding an experiment. Before that one cannot understand it. It is an absurd proposition to say that what science has proved must be accessible to all people. In that case there cannot be any utility or justification for the university education, the sustained effort in a particular branch of science or all the training for years together, if any great scientific deduction can at once be understood by the commonalty. So in order to be convinced of any physical phenomena by means of scientific proofs, there must not only be a perfect and unimpeachable evidence on the side of the phenomena themselves, but a good deal of previous training on the part of those who want to see and understand them. Before that it only indicates our rashness to give an off-hand judgment on any matter. Again if we brand a thing as impossible on the ground that we are not conscious of it that also makes our path bristled with difficulties. Of many things we are not conscious. It can hardly be gainsaid that there is no colour because a blind swears that he does not perceive it. A deaf denies the existence of sound-sensations, but still we feel that they exist for all that. Again who among us has seen his brain? But can we ignore it on the strength of all our accumulated evidence against its physical perception by the organ of sight? Consciousness is not always

co-existent with physical existence as we understand by it. Again like the physical phenomena, it presupposes a certain degree of fitness to be conscious of the psychic or spiritual phenomena. For the profane, knowledge is barred everywhere, either in the domain of the spirit or matter. Thus in trying to understand a thing we always forget to consider if we are fit to receive the demonstration or not, whether we have permitted our body and mind to become fit instruments for their discovery.

This fact is painfully true if we judge of the various spiritual realisations of a devotee. We laugh at them as mere miracles, phantasies of a weak mind or unreal dreams of a sleeping man. There might be some vestige of justification in these grave pronouncements if they were uttered after the critic had risen to that high spiritual altitude. When we judge of these matters we often tread on a forbidden ground whose barest fringe has not yet been touched by the physical science. Even after the age-long experiments and investigations of all the savants of the world into an infinitesimal part of these wonderfully variegated modifications of nature, they cannot as yet definitely say whether it is a phenomenon or noumenon. And still they rush in to give verdict on facts which are outside the scope of their physical senses.

The human being does not like to believe in anything which is not guaranteed by his own intellect. But how rash it is to brand a thing as impossible if it deviates from the common rut. There must be a sudden disillusionment if we only look at the aftermath of the visions and trances of the devotees around which gyrate all the arguments of the scientific mind as these experiences puzzle them. Instead of weakening or paralysing the devotee, they only strengthen him all the more, make his intellect clearer and clearer, infuse into him new stamina to fight with the cravings of the flesh or temptations of the senses, help him to stick to the path

of truth and virtue, guide him along the path of *sadhana* strewn over with difficulties and detractions, kindle in his heart the Promethean fire of spirituality and at last carry him to the haven of his journey abiding in eternal bliss and beatitude which no human mind can conceive of, nor language can give an expression to. The highest and most delicate perceptions of the spiritual world cannot be the property of the mean intellect—the tagrags and bobtails of humanity. They require another training, another effort and lifelong struggle,—even then many years must pass away before one is favoured with one blessed ray of the effulgent Light. Then why, a man may ask, should one give up this worldly pleasure and run a wild-goose-chase after what is so uncertain and far off? Really the wiseacres of the world do not risk their sense-gratifications for the future hope of spiritual felicity. But that is not all. We go on merrily drinking deep these gay pleasures to their bitterest dregs until one day we rub our eyes in wonder and anguish to see that the thirst for enjoyment has not abated by so much a jot or tittle, while the power of the senses to pursue further has been blunted by age, disease or infirmity. Then a voice from within whispers: ‘This is not the way to happiness. Leave it back. Despise your wealth as mere tinsels, gew-gaws and baubles; shun the palaces and pleasure-gardens as mere shanties and paddocks. Run away from the urging of senses as from the venomous hood of a deadly cobra. Proceed straight along this way—the path of renunciation that leads to Immortality—with humility and contrition.’ The fortunate few take up the hint and follow the call of conscience and become holy and pure while the rest are again submerged in the mire of nescience with closed eyes, lest they may coil back in horror and affright at the spectre-dance of the horrible scenes, coming in quick succession in their miserable lives.

The most peculiar characteristic of these

visions is that they are not the property of any particular man in any age or confined to one latitude and longitude, but history shows that they are the common heritage of all people following that path, however much they may be separated from one another by distance of time or place. And again curiously enough they generally happen in the lives of the people, illiterate and unaggressive, so that there cannot be any possible room for the piquant contention that they are biased from a study of one another's lives. Rather is it not due to the fact, that because all of them pass through the same stage of spiritual consciousness, transcend more or less the same stadia of spiritual progress and tread more or less along the same planes of realisations that they experience much the same kind of spiritual visions and trances? The heart in one is the heart of all, belonging to the same group however distanced by time, place or circumstances; not a valve, not a wall, not an intersection is there anywhere in nature that can separate one superman from another; but one blood rolls uninterruptedly, an endless circulation through all these men, as the water of the globe is all one sea, and truly seen its tide is one. Thus visions, whether seen in the lands of the Pharisees and the Sadducees or in the desert of Arabia, coincide more or less with the visions perceived by the same master-minds either at Nadia or at Dakshineswar. Is it not an ironical reflection on the soundness or otherwise of our own judgment to cast a squintish look of mistrust on their nonpareil sobriety or think of them as noodle or crazy when the world at large stands or falls by their commandments, still pays homage at their feet, carries aloft the banner of their message and turns to them, being disgusted with the ephemeral pleasures, as the ultimate source of inspiration and happiness? But what a fallen time! What a travesty of truth reigns over the world! Foolish people ask you, when you have spoken what they do not wish to hear, 'How do you know it is

truth and not an error of your own?' But we know truth when we see it, as we know when we are awake that we are awake. It is no proof of man's understanding to be able to affirm whatever he pleases; but to be able to discern what is true is true and what is false is false—this is the mark and character of intelligence.

But there is the other side which we do not like to less emphasise. It must not be construed from what we have stated above that the visions of various gods and goddesses are indispensable in the path of religious progress, or in every case a *sine qua non* for the higher divine realisations. Higher spiritual realisations may come and, in fact, they not infrequently come, unattended by these visions. These are but the milestones in the way of progress and they can only measure the way of progress and must not be thought of as the be-all and end-all of the struggle for God-realisation. It is quite possible that the devotee may experience one or two visions in the beginning of his Sadhana by the help of concentration or the play of certain emotions; but if he stops short of all further attempts, thinking that to be the consummation of his devotion, then he will only be deluded by a self-deception. Again people are not wanting who cast sarcastic looks upon those beginners, who do not see supernatural visions and thus belittle their sincere efforts. To these people miracle-mongering and religion pass for one and the same thing. Exclusive concentration for those visions or bragging upon them is no part of religion and often incapacitates the aspirant for further progress. That alone constitutes true religion and indicates sure milestones in the way of a devotee's progress which makes a man holier and purer day by day, kindles in his heart the lambent flame of spirituality, helps him to gird up the loins with truth, and disregard the world for its sake, whets his desires in the quest of God, turns him back from the temptations of the senses, and lastly gives him an impetus to come to the

summit of his goal, transcending all the obstacles in the way—now be it through these visions or without them. If a man sees these visions but at the same time does not feel within a greater hankering after God, then he is still outside the domain of true religion and his visions are the results of a weak brain. They have no bearing upon his real progress. And again without seeing any visions if a man feels holier and purer day by day, finds in himself more strength to fight with the evil propensities of his mind and lives in closer communion with God, then he is surely following the right path and in time he would be blessed with divine visions if they are so necessary for his progress. A certain devotee of Sri Ramakrishna Deva, not having seen any vision even after long meditation and protracted struggle, one day came and laid before him the burden of his mind. "You speak like a stupid," answered Sri Ramakrishna with a smile, "Do you think a vision or two during meditation is all that is required for the realisation of God? Is that a great or creditable thing in any way? True renunciation and faith help much more than all the visions put together in the path of God. Narendra* rarely sees any vision, but look at his sacrifice, renunciation, strength of mind, faith and steadfastness."

Visions may or may not come in the life of every devotee. But these are invariably seen in the lives of the Incarnations and great Messengers of God because they embody and exhaust in their lives all the phases of worship and devotion, so that men of all shades of opinion and whims, diverse predilections and temperaments may find in them friends, philosophers and guides to suit the particular proclivity of their mind and illumine them each in his own way. Thus an Incarnation is later on claimed by all people, holding diverse views, as their particular prophet, because everyone finds the fulfilment of his

ideal in that great soul. The Presbyterians, the Quakers, the Methodists, the Roman Catholics, the Protestants all draw their inspiration from the simple life of that Carpenter's Son, and yet the views they hold are often as different as poles asunder. Sri Ramakrishna mixed with all the religious devotees of the time that came to him. Though they belonged to various sects, yet each one of them claimed him as his own man. Thus he was a source of perennial inspiration to all whether he sat in company of Keshub Chandra Sen, or sang with Vaishnav Charan, or attended the mystic circles of the *Tantrik* devotees, or mixed with the *Kartabhajas*, or conversed with monks on the problem of Advaita Brahman or on the teleology of the universe. Those who followed the path of devotion, or associated visions with the progress of Sadhana drew equal felicity from his company as the men who did not believe in these visions and treaded on the way of knowledge or action. "Those who are Paramahansas," would often say the Master, "must pass through all the phases of religious experiences." He followed all the paths and found by actual experience that Truth alone is the goal of every way and the same goal is realised whatever path one sticks to with sincerity—a great legacy, the greatest perhaps achieved by any great soul in the spiritual history of the world, for a disputing people scratching each other's eyes like wild vultures, to prove that his God alone is true whereas my God is false. It is an actual resuscitation of the eternal truth, the rehabilitation—not by empty jabbering but by lucid demonstration—of the sayings of the Rishis of old that 'the Real is one but the sages call It by different names'—'एकं सद्ब्रह्म बहुधा वदन्ति ।'

ANANDA,

* Later on famous as Swami Vivekananda.

THE STORY OF MANKI.

(Adapted from the *Yoga-Vasistha Maharamayana*)

IN ancient times there was a Brahmin named Manki who after visiting the various holy places of Aryavarta was returning home. He came across an extensive forest through which his way lay. It was an intensely hot summer day and the sun was shedding its rays, burning, as it were, that forest region. The Brahmin Manki, much afflicted by the fierce rays of the sun, sat down under the cool shade of a tree for rest. By his visiting many holy places his mind had become introspective and as he sat down there the thought of the impermanence of the worldly life came uppermost in his mind. He thought to himself; "I have visited many holy places, but the doubts of my mind are not yet quelled and I have not found peace within. I have not also come in contact with any great soul who can give me spiritual enlightenment. My body has wrinkled and the mouth has become toothless through age, but my intense desire for the impermanent worldly objects is not abated by any means. I have had many births and deaths, but the mind with its insatiable thirst for enjoyment is getting fresh fuel everyday and does not get satisfied at all. Oh! what a pain, what a misery! O sun! you are burning by your fierce rays, the trees and shrubs of this forest; but a heat more intense than that of your scorching rays is burning the vitals of my heart. Overpowered by doubts I am unable to see the Truth and am consumed by the fire of longing for Truth. Is there any great soul in this sun-baked forest who can pour the balm of peace into my feverish soul?" "There are freed, great souls who can cool the fever and heat of the soul consumed by the fire of world-disease;"—said the great sage Vasistha standing behind Manki. Manki, suddenly hearing this unexpected reply, said, "O Divine Sire! who are you? Your holy and calm presence gives an inexpressible joy to my soul." Vasistha said: "O Intelligent One! I am the Muni Vasistha by name, for some reason I was passing through the forest to a certain destination and on the way I met you here. Your dispassionate mind and in-

tense longing for Truth are really commendable." Manki said,—“O Divine Being! The seed of finite and selfish desires within me is not getting destroyed, but is increasing in potency and is leading me like a slave to undesirable and forbidden paths. Blinded by the dense darkness created by the desires, I have lost the true sight and am mistaking the unreal objects for real! O Sire! I ask you what the way is for me who have fallen into the gloom of ignorance,—the way which will lead to Real Bliss. Bless me by giving instructions which will cure this disease of the world.”

Vasistha said: “O Brahmin, just as the trees in spring time nourished by fresh sap spreads new shoots and foliage, thus fed by desires many unreal imaginations arise in the mind of the Jiva. As in the endless void, there is nothing but silence and void, so in this world there is nothing but the Conscious Brahman. This extensive world is but the expression of Brahman. Just as the earthen pot is not anything different from and independent of the earth, so all worldly objects are nothing but the Intelligent Brahman. The seer and the seen are all Brahman. O wise Brahmin, when all existent objects are of the nature of the One Conscious Brahman, where is there the separate existence of yours and mine? The Ego, this ‘I’ is non-existent, all adjuncts of the ego are false and illusory and everything is the One Brahman. By such knowledge one gets released. When such an easy way is at hand and open to you, it is but foolishness to suffer from the miseries of the world. But how great is the power of worldly desires! Just as the fish, without having any idea of the dire result, does not give up the meat of the bait, but sacrifices its life, so man, blinded by delusion without knowing what is of permanent benefit to him, does not give up the worldly objects till he is snatched away by death. He who sees the Changeless, All-pervading and Blissful Brahman in all worldly objects, has his desires quelled and attaining to the knowledge of Brahman obtains ineffable peace and calm. Dependence on external objects constitutes the bondage

of the world, and freedom from that means release. Therefore the wise should renounce the love for worldly objects and abide in the Blissful Brahman."

The Brahmin thus receiving instructions from the sage Vasistha attained to the knowledge of Truth and became merged in ineffable peace.

BRAHMACHARI ANANDA CHAITANYA.

LIFE AT SHANTI ASHRAMA.

SWAMI Prakashananda spent the month of June at the Shanti Ashrama (in St. Antoine Valley, California) with some twenty students who were privileged to join the Yoga classes held there this year.

The weather was generally favourable for the classes to be held in the open throughout the month. The large spreading oak-tree, carved with the symbol of Shiva, afforded us a wonderful shelter during our meditations.

The day commenced at 6 A. M. with chanting and meditation, readings from "The Crest Jewel of Wisdom" and hymns, Upanishads at noon and readings from the unpublished Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna in the evening.

During the meal hours our Swami always read from Swami Vivekananda's Works, and allowed a few moments for discussion on various subjects.

The all-night Dhuni service was held on June 15th. The night was beautiful. The huge fire on the triangle altar sent sparks heavenwards and we were reminded of what the sages taught in ancient times of how the Absolute was symbolised by a huge fire and, we, the tiny sparks thrown out into Maya to wander like lost sheep over the worlds, seeking knowledge of our true nature, until at last a little awakening comes, and like the Prodigal son in the Bible we arise and go to the Father. Then do we consciously take up our cross and by hard and repeated stumblings do we undo the Karma of countless lives. Some were given Sanskrit names, and the Swami invoked the blessings of the Masters upon them. The whole night was made holy by chantings, prayers, readings from Sanskrit sacred literature and hymns.

Our environment was full of opportunities for spiritual unfoldment. To one living in India all this might not seem strange. But to us in the West it is a most rare and wonderful thing and considered it a great blessing to be away from the

marts of trade and be able to forget the eternal striving for worldly possessions and enjoyments and turn our thoughts exclusively to things spiritual with the help of a blessed Acharya as guide.

To most of us going yearly to the Ashrama it has been a veritable pilgrimage. Blessed are those of us who have found in our Swami a friend who with infinite patience and love helps us out of all our difficulties and ever encourages us with such words as these, "You are the children of God, no harm can reach you—children of Immortal Bliss." "Cast off this faint-heartedness, yield not to weakness. It doth not befit thee." (Gita Chap. 2, verse 3).

DURGA DEVI

(Clara M. Pette).

A BHAKTA'S SONG.

Sing we Krishna, sing we the boy of Gokul;
From the heat and toil of the day we rest us;
Cool the evening breeze by the flowing waters;
Come to us, Krishna.

Thou the sun-born, splendid with youth that
fades not,
Thou beyond the empire of Time, our master;—
Lo, the world deludes us, but thou abidest,
Lovely, immortal.

All that seems is Thou, were our eyes not blinded;
All that is Thou art; as the foam of sea-surge
Which appears and fades are the lives of mortals;
Thou art the ocean,

Full of wonders, glad in unceasing movement;
Yet for us, for me Thou art only Gopal
Dream-wrought, whom the Bhaktas adore, the
cowherd,
Krishna Govinda.

Was it thou who sang to rebuke Arjuna,
Sang the song undying, the awful war-song?
Yea, but books suffice not; to Thee I cry out;
Come to me, Gopal.

G. F. HUDSON.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 234.)

प्राणवृत्त्यैव संतुष्येन्मुनिर्नैवेन्द्रियप्रियैः ।

ज्ञानं यथा न नश्येत नावकीर्येत वाङ्मनः ॥३९॥

39. The sage should be satisfied with merely ministering¹ to the vital functions and not with things pleasing to the senses, so that knowledge may not be destroyed and the mind and speech frittered away.

[Verses 39-41 set forth the lessons to be derived from Vāyu, ordinarily rendered as 'wind,' but having also the broader and inner significance of 'vibration' or life-function' (*Prāna*). Verse 39 deals with the latter phase of the principle, and the other two verses with external air.

¹ *Ministering etc.*—i. e. Just as the Prāna-Vāyu merely requires food to sustain the body, so the Yogi also must eat to live, not live to eat.]

विषयेष्वविशन्योगी नानाधर्मेषु सर्वतः ।

गुणदोषव्यपेतात्मा न विषजेत वायुवत् ॥४०॥

40. The Yogi, moving amid sense-objects possessed of diverse characters, should not be attached to them, keeping his mind absolutely free from their virtues and shortcomings, like the wind.¹

[¹ *Wind*—which remains unaffected by the good or bad odour of things over which it blows.]

पार्थिवेष्विह देहेषु प्रविष्टस्तद्गुणाधयः ।

गुणैर्न युज्यते योगी गन्धैर्वायुरिवात्महक् ॥४१॥

41. Even though entering material bodies on earth and associating with their attributes, the Yogi with his eyes always on the Self, is not affected by those attributes, like the wind by odours.

अन्तर्हितश्च स्थिरजङ्गमेषु

ब्रह्मात्मभावेन समन्वयेन।

व्याप्त्यव्यवच्छेदमसङ्गमात्मनो

मुनिर्नभस्त्वं विततस्य भावयेत् ॥४२॥

42. Even though living in the body, the sage, through his identity with the Self, should reflect on the unity, non-attachment, and sky-like trait of the omnipresent Atman, which runs as a substratum through all movable and immovable things.

[Verses 42 and 43 bring out the resemblance of the Yogi with the Akāsha, commonly translated as sky or ether. According to Hindu philosophy, Akāsha is the first and finest of the primordial elements (*Mahābhūtas*),- is indivisible and present everywhere. So it is a fit exemplar for the absolute omnipresence of the Atman. The sage should reflect on this.]

तेजोऽब्रह्ममयैर्भावैर्मघाद्यैर्वायुनेरितैः ।

न स्पृश्यते नभस्तद्वत् कालसृष्टैर्गुणैः पुमान् ॥४३॥

43. As the sky is not touched by things which are the products of fire, water and earth,¹ nor by clouds driven by the wind, so a man² should not be touched by things which are the creations of time.

[¹ *Fire, water and earth*—With Akāsha and Vāyu these form the five successive Mahābhūtas in the initial creative process. We have used here the common English equivalents of the Sanskrit terms *Tejas*, *Ap* and *Kshiti*, which are highly open to criticism. Fire, water and earth are only types or convenient gross manifestations of the subtle principles or states which may roughly be rendered as heat, liquidity and solidity. The reader should remember this inner significance of all these terms to really understand in which sense a particular word occurs in a certain passage.

² *A man etc.*—i. e. realising his identity with the Atman.]

स्वच्छः प्रकृतितः स्निग्धो माधुर्यस्तीर्थभूर्नृणाम् ।

मुनिः पुनात्यपां मित्रमीक्षोपस्पर्शकीर्तनैः ॥४४॥

44. Pure,¹ genial by nature, sweet and a source of imparting holiness² to men,

the sage—resembling water—purifies all, being seen,³ touched and praised by them.

[¹ *Pure etc.* It should be noticed how these adjectives apply both to water and the sage.

² *Holiness etc.*—e.g. the sacred rivers and lakes etc.

³ *Seen etc.*—One becomes pure by seeing touching and singing praises to the sacred waters as well as the saint.]

तेजस्वी तपसा दीप्तो दुर्धर्षोदरभाजनः ।

सर्वभक्षोऽपि युक्तात्मा नादत्ते मलमश्वित् ॥४५॥

45. Bright¹ resplendent with Tapas, powerful, with no receptacle² for food except the belly, and eating everything,—the man of self-control, like fire, is not polluted (thereby).

[Verses 45 to 47 relate the similarity between the sage and the fire.

¹ *Bright etc.*—The adjectives in this and the

next verse are applicable alike to fire and the sage.

² *Receptacle etc.*—The fire consumes only what is put into it; so does the all-renouncing sage accept only what is offered to him.]

कचिच्छन्नः कचिस्स्पष्ट उपास्यः श्रेय इच्छताम् ।
भुङ्क्ते सर्वत्र दातृणां दहन्प्रागुत्तराशुभम् ॥४६॥

46. Sometimes disguised,¹ sometimes patent, being resorted² to by those who desire welfare, he eats everywhere from donors, burning their past and future evils.

[¹ *Disguised*: the fire by ashes, and the Jnani by assumed madness and the like.

² *Resorted etc.*—People make sacrifice in the sacred fire, and entertain the Jnanis, and are thereby ennobled in spirit. This explains the last line.]

(To be continued.)

REPORTS AND APPEALS.

The First Report of the Sri Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Rangoon. From January to June '21.

This Sevashrama has not only given asylum irrespective of caste or religion to the poor people from every part of the town but also from remote districts. To quote from the remarks of Lt. Colonel J. F. Good, I. M. S. "The Hospital is well stocked with drugs and appliances.....The Medical Director is Dr. N. N. Parakh, L. F. P. & S., L. M. (Glasgow) L. S. A. (Lond.) and the staff consists entirely of medical practitioners who give their service voluntarily.....The nursing staff is entirely voluntary and great credit is due to them for the excellent work they perform and their devotion to duty."

We are extremely glad to learn that during the short period of five months beginning from 30th January, 1921, the institution has been able to ameliorate the sufferings of nearly 6000 patients. The indoor ward No. 1 which is used at present consists of 24 beds. The total number of in-patients admitted during the period was 252. Out of this 214 were discharged cured, 4 left treatment,

1 was sent to the General Hospital, 1 was sent to the C. D. Hospital, 12 died and 20 were still under treatment. Altogether 13940 patients were treated at the outdoor dispensary of which 5638 represents new and 8302 old cases.

The total receipts amounted to Rs. 10,009-10, and the total expenditure to Rs. 8,929-8-3 leaving the balance of Rs. 1080-1-9. The financial strength of the institution, we are sorry to find, has not been in proportion to its manifold development. The preliminary expenses incurred for the equipments and arrangements exceed the donations received up till now for that purpose and the monthly subscriptions, at present, do not meet even the monthly recurring expenses. The authorities of the Sevashrama are in urgent need of funds to meet the expenses for the equipments of another ward consisting of 24 beds and for the erection of a shed for the out-patients and their companions as also for a covered passage for the voluntary workers and doctors, which are of great necessity in the rainy season.

We hope philanthropic persons will come forward to help this non-sectarian and highly useful Home of Service. Any contribution, however small, will be thankfully received and duly acknowledged by—Swami Shyamananda, Monk-in-charge.

The Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, Dt. Saharanpur, U. P., for August, 1921.

Indoor patients:—There were 2 old and 19 new cases of which 13 were discharged cured, 4 died and 4 were still under treatment.

Outdoor patients:—Of the total number 3362 there were 1449 new and 1913 repeated cases.

	Rs.	as.	p.
Balance of the last month	5473	6	3
Donations and subscriptions in Aug. 1921	430	2	3
Total	5903	8	6
Total expenditure	436	3	6
Balance in hand	5467	5	0

The Hony. Secretary has the pleasure to announce that one gentleman has contributed Rs. 3500 for the Vidyant Operation room in memory of the late Srijiut Ramgopal Vidyant and the late Srimati Brajeswari Vidyant. The sum of Rs. 6500 is still wanting for the outdoor dispensary building. Persons, desirous of perpetuating the memory of their dear relatives and friends, may contribute Rs. 1500 for each memorial room. All contributions are to be sent to Swami Kalyanananda, the Hony. Secretary.

The Report of the Ramakrishna Library and Free Reading Room, Hardwar, U. P., for August and September, 1921.

It is two years since this useful institution was started. The Library at present receives 32 papers in seven different languages viz. Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujrati, Gurumukhi, Sindhi and English. These include 7 daily, 11 weekly and 14 monthly papers, which are placed on the table of the Reading Room. In the month of August last, 1574 persons made use of the Library and Reading Room and 1671 persons in September. Books and papers were also issued outside the Library to

19 and 44 readers in August and September respectively.

	Rs.	as.	p.
Balance of the previous month	547	1	0
Receipts in Aug & Sept. 1921	114	6	0
Total	661	7	0
Expenditure for Aug. & Sept.	*258	15	6
Balance	402	7	6

*Includes the half-yearly house-rent.

Contributions in aid of the Library and Free Reading Room will be thankfully received by Swami Karunananda.

The Report of the Vivekananda Society, 78/1 Cornwallis Street, Calcutta, for 1920.

The Calcutta Vivekananda Society has been doing many useful and benevolent works for the last few years in the field of religion and philanthropy. This is what the annual report of the Society, for 1920, briefly states:—

The Society arranged 38 public religious meetings in which eminent scholars and religious teachers delivered addresses and read papers. The Birthdays of Lord Buddha and Swami Vivekananda were also specially observed in public meetings.

12 monthly and 1 special religious conversazioni were held in different localities of the city, which were conducted by the monks of the Ramakrishna Order. 30 weekly religious services were held in which religious texts, such as the "Gita" and Swami Vivekananda's "Jnana-Yoga" were read and explained by the monks of the same Order. Religious worship and special Pujas were daily conducted and the members were helped to practise meditation.

From the Public Charitable Homco Dispensary under Dr. N. Bhattacharjee 998 cases were treated free and medicines supplied gratis. 31 students were helped with monthly and occasional donations to the amount of Rs. 274. A small relief work was started by the volunteers of the Society to combat an epidemic of Cholera at Dakshin Barasat, off Mugrahat, E. B. Railway.

169 books were added to the Public Library and Free Reading Room of the Society,

totalling 2322 volumes at the end of the year. 31 Newspapers and Magazines were placed on the table of the Library and Free Reading Room, out of which the editors and proprietors presented 28 and 3 were the gifts of 2 members. There were 478 members on the roll and 45 subscribers, yielding a monthly income of Rs. 186 when fully realised. The total income amounted to Rs. 3286/-/3 including donations to the Building Fund and the total cash of the year was Rs. 4332. The

total disbursement was Rs. 2760 leaving a balance of Rs. 1572.

The first and foremost want of the Society is the proposed Vivekananda Memorial Hall and a habitation for the Society—for its Office, Library, Dispensary etc. The total donation to this fund is Rs 1131 only, mostly subscribed by its members and a few sympathisers. We hope the generous public will help this really deserving philanthropic institution in its noble attempt.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Hindi.

Kavita-Kaumudi, Part II. By Pandit Ramnaresh Tripathi. Hindi Ratnamala Office, Allahabad. Crown 8vo., Pp. 16 + 553. Cloth-bound. Price Rs. 3.

This anthology of modern Hindi poems is a companion volume to *Kavita-Kaumudi*, Part I, in which old Hindi poetry has been represented. The book contains select poems of 40 Hindi poets, living and dead, beginning with Bharatendu Babu Harischandra, and ends with some miscellaneous poems. There is a spirited sketch of the rise and growth of the modern Hindi poetry as an introduction, and short biographies have been given of each poet, which makes the collection quite interesting. The majority of the poems given are in Khari Boli—the language gradually coming to the fore—though a good many are in the Vraja Bhâshâ also. Those interested in Hindi poetry will find in the book under review a good bird's-eye view of the subject, which will prepare them for more extensive study. The get-up of the volume is handsome and we heartily recommend it to all lovers of Hindi verse. One or two biographical sketches might be profitably shortened to make room for some more poems.

Pathik. By the same author. Pp. 81. Second Edition. Price 8 annas.

This is a patriotic tale in five cantos, written in delightful verse (Khari Boli), which strikes a deep note of pathos combined with a genuine love of nature and for one's own country. The poem has also a bearing on the present national movement within the country, and its popularity

is testified to by its running to a second edition in so short a time. The brochure is neatly printed.

Milan. By the same author. Third Edition. Pp. 37. Price 4 annas.

It is a nice love-story, the scene of which is the Italian city, Milan, the struggle for whose freedom gives the poet an opportunity to introduce the other dominant feature of the poem, love for the motherland. Pandit Tripathi wields a graceful pen, and this has made this tiny booklet a success.

Shanti aur Anand ka Marg. Translated by S. J. Dharmanand Tripathi. To be had of the Dharma-Granth-mala Office, Barabazar, Calcutta. Crown 8vo., Pp. 66. Price 8 as.

This is a Hindi translation of Swami Paramananda's well-known book, "The Way of Peace and Blessedness," published by the Vedanta Society, Boston. To those who want a simple and direct exhortation to spiritual life, this translation like the original, will be of great help. The more such books are popularised the better. We wish the book all success.

Atma-Samyam. Translated by the same. Pp. 37. Price 4 annas.

This little book is translated from Swami Paramananda's "Self-mastery." This translation, we are sure, will do useful work. The paper and printing are good. We recommend the series to the public.

Bengali.

Deser Kaj O Palli Vyavastha. By Prabat Chandra Dey. The Saraswati Library, 9 Rama Nath Mazumdar's Street, College Square, Calcutta. Pp. 36 + iv. Price 3 as.

The young writer pleads for the real service to the country and the improvement of the villages through the introduction of sanitary measures and true national education that would put sufficient stress on Brahmacharya and the building of character and would combine the science and practicality of the West with the knowledge and spirituality of the East. The economic degradation and dependence of the country is a menace to the preservation of the moral integrity of the people of India and to solve the great economic problem of the country it is absolutely necessary, as the author rightly says, first to start and improve especially the cottage and small industries connected with the food and cloth problems and thus try to make India economically independent.

We do not relish the unnecessary use of English words with which the pamphlet is interspersed, sometimes even without their translation in Bengali, and feel sorry to come across a number of spelling mistakes which a little careful reading of the proof-sheets could have easily avoided.

Sanskrit.

Mahimna-Stotra—Translated into Bengali by Swami Prajnananda Saraswati. Published by the Saraswati Library, 9 Rama Nath Majumdar's Street, Calcutta. Price 2 as.

We are glad that these beautiful hymns to the God Shiva have been presented before the Bengali knowing public in such a readable form. The grace and beauty of the text has been maintained in the Bengali reproduction and the notes will be greatly appreciated by those who are not familiar with the Sanskrit language. We wish the paraphrase with word-for-word translation had been continued to the end of the book. The printing and get-up are nice and the pamphlet has been moderately priced.

English.

Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master, Vol. II. By Swami Saradananda. Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Pp. 250 + viii. Price Rs. 2.

This volume of the unique life of Sri Ramakrishna deals with the wonderful period of his Sadhana up to the practice of Tantrikism—a period passed in the intensest longing for the realisation of God. The vivid descriptions of the various stages of that superhuman Tapasya, com-

ing as it does from the pen of one closely associated with the life of the Master during its closing years, the brilliant word-pictures of that zeal and thirst which ate him up day by day, the supreme ease and naturalness with which the great teacher passed from one consummation of his religious experiences to another, the lucid and succinct demonstration of the usefulness of the neglected scriptural injunctions, have a peculiar value, we trust, in the present age, when the whole humanity is reeking under the hammer-blow of uninspired materialism, to show to a benighted world the true path of happiness and real felicity.

1. *Thoughts and Glimpses*. 2. *Ideal and Progress*. By Sri Aurobindo Ghose. Published by the Arya Publishing House, 4/1 Rajabagan Junction Road, Simla, Calcutta. Pp. 21 and 94. Price as. 8 and Re. 1 respectively.

We have much pleasure in reviewing these two small books coming from the master pen of Sri Aurobindo Ghose who needs no introduction to the learned public. He presents the ancient Indian spiritual ideal, modifying it to modern requirements. Though there are disputable points in his writings, veiled in powerful and dignified language and containing lofty and valuable thoughts, are, no doubt, a source of inspiration to many.

The *first book* considers, in the light of Vedanta, such metaphysical questions as: What is man in his real nature? How is he connected with this world of diversity and multiplicity? What is he destined for? What are the obstacles that thwart his progress to the goal of life? And how does God, if there be any, reconcile the apparent contradictions and anomalies that we see all around. The author means by man an uncreated and indestructible soul that has housed itself in a mind and body made of its own elements.' In other words 'man is God hiding himself from Nature, so that he may possess her by struggle, insistence, violence, surprise. God is Universal and transcendent Man hiding himself from his own individuality in the human being. The animal is Man, disguised in a hairy skin and upon four legs; the worm is Man writhing and crawling towards the evolution of his Manhood, even crude forms of Matter are Man in his inchoate body. All things are Man, the Purusha!

In striking contrast with the Nihilistic and the Semi-Nihilistic view of the world, the universe, according to Sri Aurobindo Ghose, 'is not merely a mathematical formula for working out the relation of certain mental abstractions called numbers and principles to arrive in the end at a zero or a void unit; neither is it merely a physical operation embodying certain equation of forces. It is the delight of self-lover, the play of child, the endless self-multiplication of a poet intoxicated with the rapture of his own power of endless creation.' Man the Divine has thus been 'playing an eternal game in an eternal garden.' His so-called bondage is nothing but his self-forgetfulness. Let him know what he really is. Liberation which is not self-annihilation or extinction, consists in the discovery of his inherent Divinity, the fountain-head of love, power, knowledge, joy and unity. It is religion that serves as the guide and points out the way. How beautifully does the author enumerate the incalculable gifts of the different religions of the world! 'Paganism increased in man the light of beauty, the largeness and height of his life, his aim at a many-sided perfection; Christianity gave him some vision of divine love and charity; Buddhism has shown him a noble way to be wiser, gentler, purer; Judaism and Islam how to be religiously faithful in action and zealously devoted to God; Hinduism has opened to him the largest and profoundest spiritual possibilities.' Sri Aurobindo has before him the vision of a spiritual revolution in the near future when all the God-visions of each of these religions would embrace and cast themselves into each other and save mankind. May the vision of the Idealist be materialised is also our prayer!

The *second book* discusses at length the two important topics viz., Ideal and Progress, defines Yoga, bringing out its true significance and points out the natural trend of the Eastern mind and the Eastern culture. 'Ideals,' says the author, 'are truths that have not yet effected themselves for man, the realities of a higher plane of existence which have yet to fulfil themselves on this lower plane of life and matter, our present field of operation.' To the pragmatist man of sense-enlaved consciousness who evaluates the values of life by what he calls tangible facts 'ideals are not truths, not realities, they are at most potentialities

of future truth and only become real when they are visible in the external fact as work of force accomplished.' But to the superconscious man whose intellect is 'not imprisoned in its own workings,' who can dive deep beyond the flux and 'can reflect something of that Master-Consciousness' that governs the cosmos, 'the ideal is a greater reality than the changing fact, obvious to its outer senses.' 'The Real, the Idea, the phenomenon—this is the true order of the creative Divinity' according to Sri Aurobindo. A harmonious blending of the idealist and the pragmatist, the originative soul and the executive power is what is required for perfect manhood. Napoleon and Alexander belong to this type. 'They have been great executive thinkers, great practical dreamers.' 'The Messiah or Avatar is nothing but this, the divine Seer-Will' towering high above the majority of mankind and 'descending upon the human consciousness to reveal to it the divine meaning.'

Next Yoga or skill in works is dealt with. 'By Yoga is signified a spiritual condition of universal equality and God-union,' when there is 'a perfect adaptation of the soul and its instruments to the rhythm of the divine and universal Prakriti, liberated from the shackles of egoism and limitations of the sense-mind.' It is not an ordinary kind of skill in works, otherwise the consummate general, the cunning lawyer and the expert shoemaker would have been each a Yogi.

Change, according to the author, is the secret of life, though 'the conservative mind is unwilling to recognise this law.' 'Because the change was always marked in the internal but quiet and unobtrusive in the external we have been able to create and preserve the fiction of the unchanging East.' The East unlike the West saw revolutions, spiritual and cultural and this is why political and social changes, though real and striking, fall into the background here. But 'if religion has changed its form and temperament, the religious spirit has been really eternal, the principle of spiritual discipline is the same as in earliest times, the fundamental spiritual truths have been preserved and even enriched in their contents' in the East. 'The hope of the world,' bursts forth the author, 'lies in the re-awakening in the East of the old spiritual practicality and large and profound vision' that is latent in dead forms and 'in the flooding out of the light of Asia on the Occident' in 'forms stirred, dynamic and effective.'

NEWS AND NOTES.

**The Ramakrishna Mission Relief Work,
Khulna**

The public has already been informed that since last June the Mission has been carrying on the relief work in the affected area of Shamnagar. A very large number of people of that place have been greatly emaciated due to starvation and are placed in absolute nakedness. As they have no cloths to cover their bodies many are sure to fall victims to various diseases due to exposure to cold in this winter season. The Mission is trying its best to help those distressed men and women with both old and new cloths, and medicines. At present the Mission is distributing rice among 2749 recipients in 76 villages at the rate of two seers per head per week without any distinction of age or sex. As the area of work is gradually extending it hopes that the generous public will come forward to help their distressed brothers and sisters to the best of their capacity.

Contributions will be thankfully received at the following addresses:—(1) Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta. (2) Sri Ramakrishna Math, Belur, Howrah.

Industrialism—its Dangers and Remedies

Professor Radhakamal Mookerjee of the Lucknow University in course of his lecture on women's place in economic life at Isabella Thoburn College, Lucknow, dwelt on the evil influences of city life upon population, both in weakening the vitality and in diminishing the birth-rate. He stated that not only is the birth-rate smaller but the death-rate in cities is higher than in villages.

Of the Indian cities Cawnpore shows the highest infantile death-rates and next comes Lucknow. In Cawnpore more than half the number and in Lucknow more than one-third of the children die within a year of their birth. In industrial towns in England only one out of ten children dies in the same period. All this makes a strong case for child and labour welfare and the civic conscience must be aroused in provinces to grapple with the serious problems of urban mortality and disease.

Congested slums and overcrowded workshops

in our industrial cities have their deleterious effects not merely on mortality, but they also lower the tone of domestic life and in fact lead to criminality and vice. A working class that maintains infant marriage and lives herded together, men and women, like beasts in cellars and far away from the checks and influences of the family and communal life, easily falls a victim to vice and disease. Moreover in mill towns there is a striking excess of males over females. Such unnatural conditions are undoubtedly a contributory cause of vice in our cities. Revival of agricultural industries as well as village and cottage production for women will be thus seen to be an indispensable step not merely towards the economic rehabilitation but also towards the maintenance of the Indian family tradition.

* * *

Great is the danger of industrialism and the injury it has already done in India is nothing short of appalling. Those who have cared to study the effects of industrialism on the moral life of the labourers as well as those coming in close contact with the industrial centres and towns of India, can never be blind to the fact that domestic morality is being greatly endangered and is even breaking down owing to the dangerous conditions which the industrial expansion has created in the country.

Cut away as the poor people are from the beneficial influence of society and as it often happens of even their own families, there is no wonder that they would easily succumb to the temptations of the towns. Industrialism would exist at least to some extent as the tendency of the age clearly indicates. But it is necessary to put a stop to the increasing moral break-down of the workmen.

To check the unnecessary expansion of big industries and maintain the moral tone of the people:—
(1) Indians should cease to imitate an artificial and high standard of living, and following in the footsteps of their forefathers must try to live, as far as present conditions permit, a plain and simple life, which still exists to some extent in villages unaffected by Western influence. (2) Cottage

arts and industries are to be introduced and developed all over the country and their products should be given preference to those manufactured by mills and factories. (3) The economic condition of the poor agriculturist is to be improved by the introduction of modern scientific methods of farming etc. that would greatly increase the production of the land. Besides there must be some suitable cottage industries that may be attended to in leisure hours to supplement the income and may even be depended upon to save the people from starvation during the failure of crops. (4) Proper provision should be made to enable the workmen to earn a living wage enough to enable them to live with their families near the factories etc. when these are situated far from their homes. And above all it is absolutely necessary to maintain a healthy moral atmosphere at all such places.

But the first step towards the real solution of the problems of the agriculturist and the labourer is to teach them to work out their own problems themselves. Ideas are to be put into their heads and they will do the rest themselves, for no one can work out another's salvation in the true sense of the term.

Wisdom of India in a Remote Country

The following interesting correspondence we have received with great pleasure :—

To The Editor, Prabuddha Bharata,
Sir,

In course of my wandering I came upon a sage this summer. He is a Norwegian by birth, but something of a Brahmin in spirit. Need I tell you that I met Prof. Steu Konov of the Kristiania University.

Here is a man teaching the wisdom of India in this remote northern country. And what is more—when I met him I felt that the man lives what he preaches.

It is wonderful to sit here and talk Advaita. Dr. Konov feels that the Absolute Reality though completely unqualifiable yet has something to do with this world. I urged upon him the statement that this world has the unfortunate position of letting us see, through its imperfection, the Perfection of God. But it is not necessary that this world is real.

He of course insisted that one should not be a fanatic; for all statements are an approximation towards stating the same One Truth. And above all what we need is that "Karuna," that look of "Daya," (compassion) which is in the eyes of the Lord Buddha. We need that 'Ahetuki-daya-sindhu' (unbounded compassion for compassion's sake) attitude towards all existence in order to experience the full meaning of the Absolute Reality.

I am not going to tell you more about our arguments. Need I add that Dr. Konov is a real Guru who has the tolerance of a true Advaita-vadin. He is going to study Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna. I do look forward to the day when he will probably lecture on our prophets.

The wheel of Vedanta is moving. In Dr. Konov I find another spoke of the same wheel. Though our paths may be different we meet at the end. And this sense of an ultimate Unity of Truth has been given me abundantly by this sage.

Sept. 1, 1921.

Dhan Gopal Mukerji.

The Possibilities of the Charka

In an age in which most complex and gigantic machineries are being worked by steam-engines, oil-engines and dynamos etc. the simple and tiny Charka that can be easily accommodated in even a corner of the humblest cottage looks indeed very insignificant and unpromising. But the part that the Charka played in the old days of plenty and economic independence cannot be judged from its humble appearance, for it produced the yarn that woven by hand-loom not only used to clothe the Indian population but was also responsible for the export to foreign lands of the famous muslin—"the webs of woven winds" "those fine textures the thread of which could not be followed even by the eye" and other valuable merchandise. The primitive plough along with the simple spinning wheel supplied India with food, cloth and comforts. The destruction and neglect of home arts and industries has brought about the present-day economic degradation and dependence of India and their innumerable attendant evils; and unless these arts and industries are rehabilitated, there can never be brought about the economic salvation of India.

India is primarily an agricultural country where the peasantry constitute the bulk of the population.

The majority of these spend a considerable portion of the year in indolence as they have not work enough for the full year and do not follow any subsidiary occupation. From his lessons gained from the Khulna famine Dr. P. C. Roy has been convinced that the Charka will prove to be the salvation of the agricultural people in India and that the spinning wheel and the hand-loom which require very little capital outlay are calculated to play an important part in India's economic salvation if both the classes and the masses take up the work with all the seriousness which it undoubtedly deserves. And these conclusions gain all the more importance as they have been arrived at by a great scientist who is intimately associated with at least half a dozen industries fitted up with up to date plants and machineries and who cannot, therefore, be charged with any partiality for home and small industries.

"The population of Bengal," says Dr. Roy, "is about 45 millions or $4\frac{1}{2}$ crores. Even if we leave out of consideration $3\frac{1}{2}$ crores and pin our faith on one crore of able and willing workers (men and women), and if they earn only half anna per day by spinning or Re. 1 per month this would yield us one crore per month or twelve crores of rupees per year. There is no reason however why one should not earn Rs. 2 per month in the above manner. This would add twenty-four crores of rupees to the income of the people. Political economy tells us that one should not waste his time over unproductive undertaking if he can utilise his time more profitably. But here you have to deal with a people who are notorious for their indolence and who have no alternative occupation or industry to fall back upon in time of such dire distress."

The output of the Charka and the hand-loom is no doubt very limited compared to that of the modern spinning and weaving machineries; but the numerical strength of the Indian population is not an insignificant factor and should not on this account be left out of consideration. And Dr. Roy very rightly remarks—"It is true we are industrially very backward, but one thing is to our advantage,—our population is to be counted by millions and the magnitude of our numerical strength ought to turn the balance in our favour." A true business man that he is Dr

Roy says with his admirable practicality—"In order to make the Charka effective in the remote villages, there ought to be an organisation for supplying the people with raw-cotton and taking back the finished yarn after paying the wages of labour either in cash or in kind. To ensure success it is however necessary that the Bhadrak-classes should set the example as it is well-known that the lower classes always take the lead from the higher classes and are incapable of any independent initiative."

The time and energy which all classes of people waste for want of useful occupations entail a great national loss especially in these days of economic distress, of scarcity of food and cloth, the two greatest necessities of man. If a fraction of this time can be properly and usefully utilised the economic condition can decidedly be improved individually as well as nationally. All people should bear in mind the dignity of work which is certainly better for human progress than sloth or lethargy as the Gita says कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः—action is superior to inaction.

Famines have been raging in India on more or less wide scales almost every year and the organisations that carry on relief works do nothing but to distribute food, cloth and medicine to the distressed. And even able-bodied men and women have no other occupation than to receive articles of food and idly pass away their time waiting for better days! Such a course is economically unprofitable, nay even demoralising. It is therefore very desirable that the Famine Relief Organisations should take upon themselves the task of introducing to the people useful and profitable cottage arts and industries—and of these the working of the Charka and the hand-loom has undoubtedly the greatest claim as it would solve the problem of clothing which comes next to that of food—that men may earn an income that would go at least to some extent to save them from the throes of starvation. Such a step is all the more desirable as besides enabling the people to help themselves at least partially during the period of the failure of the harvest, it would also go to no small degree towards their permanent relief. Besides the resources of no charitable organisation being unlimited, thus a larger number of really helpless persons, who are physically unfit to earn

their livelihood, would get the chance of being relieved which may not be possible otherwise ; and the strain on public charity would also be comparatively less taxing.

The Hindu Temple, San Francisco, America

The public lectures at the Temple by Swami Prakashananda of the Ramakrishna Mission have a steady increase in attendance and sometimes the lecture hall barely sits the people who hear the Swami with great pleasure and joy—thus writes a correspondent.

Another letter says:—Under the leadership of Swami Prakashananda the Vedanta Society of San Francisco has prospered in every way. There has been an increase of attendance at all services as also of the membership. The Swami's lectures, both public and private, are growing in power and understanding, so that sometimes the seats are all filled in the Temple Auditorium.

The Executive Committee of the San Francisco Vedanta Society, we are glad to learn, has decided at a meeting held on Sept. 15 to send \$50 for the work of girls' education in India.

The Durga and Kali Pujas In Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras

This year the celebration of the Durga Puja on the 8th, 9th and 10th October was a unique event in the annals of the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras. The Puja was performed on a grand scale with great enthusiasm and devotion. His Serene Holiness Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Ramakrishna Mission, had previously arrived with His Holiness Swami Sivandaji Maharaj, the Vice-president, to join in the celebration and grace the occasion with their presence. The image of the Divine Mother, brought all the way from Calcutta to Madras, was placed for worship in the spacious hall of the Math which was tastefully decorated and brilliantly lighted. People from different parts of the city came to witness the novel function—the worship of this special aspect of the Divine Mother with elaborate rites and ceremonies as enjoined in the Shastras. The sonorous and melodious chanting of Vedic hymns by the Brahmin boys of the local Ramakrishna Students Home before the Goddess on the Puja days had a great elevating influence on

the minds of the hearers. On the 9th October, the most important day of the Puja, Tamil and Marhatta Bhajana parties sang devotional songs which were highly enjoyed by the local people. A large number of friends and admirers of the Mission were invited to see the Puja and on the Mahashtami day about 400 Bhaktas partook of the holy Prasadam with great joy in the Math premises. The worship of 'the Mother of the Universe,' the chantings, the devotional songs—all performed in the inspiring presence of Their Holinesses, created a spiritual atmosphere and awakened the sense of devotion and bliss in the hearts of many a devotee who were made to feel the divine presence of the Mother in Her image of earth.

The Kali Puja was performed on the next new moon night in the Math temple itself. It was the worship of the Goddess Kali—the Blissful Mother as Sri Ramakrishna called Her—Who, pleased with the worship of the Priest of Dakshineswar, manifested to him Her real nature and made him realise that 'She is no other than the Brahman of Vedanta, the personal aspect of the impersonal Brahman.' The beautiful image, also brought from Calcutta, was placed by the side of the life-size portrait of Sri Ramakrishna installed on the altar. The worship commenced at 10 P. M. and the last function, the Houa, was over at 4 o'clock next morning. It was indeed an inspiring sight and a source of noble emotions to witness the worship of the Divine Mother conducted by devotees who have renounced the world and have dedicated themselves solely to Her service.

A Notice

We published an advertisement in the February issue of the Prabuddha Bharata this year stating that the Mysore Government Security and Marriage Assurance Co. Ltd., Mysore, intended to establish certain charities under the guidance of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission. We are authorised to announce for the information of our numerous readers that there is no connection whatsoever between the Mission and the company, although the latter proposes to carry on its charities in the name of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.