

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

Awakened India



इच्छित्त जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 6.

Vol. XXVI, No. 299, JUNE 1921.

CONTENTS :

The Bay of Bengal—A Description., by Swami Vivekananda	...	...	121
Occasional Notes	...	...	122
Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna., by Swami Saradananda	...	...	125
Some Views on Education., by Swami Vireswarananda	...	...	129
Swami Vivekananda's Message of the Vedanta., by Khagendra N. Sirkdar, M. A.	...	...	133
Stories of Saints—VII.—Sister Marianna. (Retold by G.)	...	...	137
Sri Krishna and Uddhava	...	...	138
Reports and Appeals	...	...	139
The Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home, Madras	...	...	141
Review	...	...	142
News and Notes	...	...	143
TO OUR FOREIGN SUBSCRIBERS	...	...	U

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

1921

Single copy As 4.

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 Upan. I. vi. 8

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XXVI]

JUNE 1921

[No. 299

THE BAY OF BENGAL—A DESCRIPTION.

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

NOW our ship has reached the sea. The description which you read in Kalidasa's Raghuvamsam of the shores "of the sea appearing blue with forests of palm and other trees," and "looking like a slender rim of rust on the tire of an iron wheel" etc.—is not at all accurate and faithful. With all my respect for the great poet, it is my belief that he never in his life saw either the ocean or the Himalayas. †

Here there is a blending of white and black water, somewhat resembling the confluence of the Ganges and Jamuna at Allahabad. Though Mukti may be rare in most places, it is sure at "Hardwar,

Allahabad and the mouth of the Ganges." But they say that this is not the real mouth of the river. However let me salute the Lord here, for "He has His eyes, head and face everywhere." ‡

How beautiful! As far as the eye reaches, the deep blue water of the sea is rising into foamy waves and dancing rhythmically to the winds. Behind us lies the sacred water of the Ganges, whitened with the ashes of Shiva's body, as we read in the description, "Shiva's matted locks whitened by the foam of the Ganges." ¶ The water of the Ganges is comparatively still. In front of us lies the parting line between the waters. There ends the white water. Now begins the blue water of the ocean,—before, behind and all round there is only blue,

* Written *en route* to the West to a brother-disciple.

† Swamiji afterwards changed his opinion with regard to the last point, i.e. Kalidasa's acquaintance with the Himalayas.

‡ Gita XV.

¶ Sankaracharya's Hymn

blue water everywhere, breaking incessantly into waves. The sea has blue hair, his body is of a blue complexion, and his garment is also blue. We read in the Puranas that millions of Asuras hid themselves under the ocean through fear of the Gods. To-day their opportunity has come, to-day Neptune is their ally, and Eolus is at their back. With hideous roars and thundering shouts they are to-day dancing a terrible war-dance on the surface of the ocean, and the foamy waves are their grim laughter! In the midst of this tumult is our ship, and on board the ship, pacing the deck with lordly steps, are men and women of that nation which rules the sea-girt world, dressed in charming attire, with a complexion like the moonbeams, looking like self-reliance

and self-confidence personified, and appearing to the black races as pictures of pride and haughtiness. Overhead the thunder of the cloudy monsoon sky, on all sides the dance and roar of foam-crested waves, and the din of the powerful engines of our ship setting at naught the might of the sea—it was a grand conglomeration of sounds, to which I was listening, lost in wonder, as if in a half-waking state, when, all of a sudden, drowning all these sounds, there fell upon my ears the deep and sonorous music of commingled male and female voices singing in chorus the national anthem, “Rule Britannia! Britannia rules the waves!” Startled, I looked around and found that the ship was rolling heavily, and I was roused from my reverie.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

“**H**OW can you know man until you know God” was the characteristic retort of an Indian sage, who was told by the great Greek philosopher Socrates that the greatest study for mankind was man. The Vedanta philosophy declares in no mistakable terms that the real man, though associated for the time being with body and mind which cover his Self-knowledge, is no other than Brahman, the cause of all causes. By the realisation of Brahman alone can man attain to the true knowledge of himself and everything else in the world and is able to find out a real solution for the riddle of the universe, thereby gaining peace that passeth all understanding. And this Self-realisation or God-vision is the aim and goal of human evolution. Like motion in a straight line, eternal progress. ever

approaching but never reaching the goal, exists only in the world of theory and were it possible, it would be no more fruitful than the labour of the deer in running after the mirage to quench its thirst. An ideal which ever remains unattained and eludes our grasp is not of much practical value unless it finds its realisation in actual life.

Human evolution is the gradual unfoldment of the divine powers that lie dormant in man, by the control of nature, external and internal, reaching its goal in the full expression of the Self-power and knowledge in everything, towards which all the activities of life consciously or unconsciously move. This evolution is as a rule a slow process and is to be brought about with great care and patience, that

we may not baffle the very object of life in our haste to reach the goal. Difficult as it is to realise the highest ideal in practical life, we are to proceed step by step with great perseverance, from lower truths to higher truths until the very highest is reached.

It is imperative on our part to have a clear conception of the ultimate goal and never to lose sight of it in our advance towards it. We may have, at the outset, to rest satisfied with only a working ideal, which we are forced to adopt as a temporary measure owing to our incapacity to follow the highest, but it is of the utmost importance to bear in mind that this is only a means to the end, a step towards the attainment of the *summum bonum* and has to be transcended as we develop and muster strength.

Truth comes to those who are ever ready to follow the path of righteousness regardless of consequences, without any sense of fear or barter. Whatever deficiency we may have in working out the ideal owing to the limitations and infirmities of human nature, any attempt to lower it down to conform to our weakness, to pursue it for the sake of some ulterior motive, to take it up as a means to some social or political end, will only lead us astray and bring about the utter ruin of the spiritual life, however intense may be our struggles and endeavours, however earnest our selfless work, meditation, devotional practice or Yogic Sadhana.

Spirituality does not consist in the observance of certain rules of eating, drinking and marriage, nor in the mere acceptance of some forms or dogmas.

which though serving as supports in our spiritual childhood cannot constitute our goal. It means the realisation of the divinity within by means of an intense yearning for God and a pure selfless life. And this spiritual hankering is like the organic wants of hunger and thirst a reality to him who finding no satisfaction in the creature comforts of life, and being spurred on by the sense of want and consequent pain, cannot rest till he comes at last to the Self, the real home and haven of peace and safety. He is then fortunate enough to get a glimpse of the truth which exists in the depth of super-consciousness, beyond the domain of mind and matter and this marks the dawn of his spiritual life.

The intensity of the life spiritual is to be measured by real *Vairagyam* which is often wrongly supposed to mean a negative virtue but really implies an intense love and striving for the ideal and consequent dispassion for things that stand as obstacles in the path of its realisation. The very thought of renunciation is, not infrequently, enough to strike terror into the hearts of many, as it seems to conjure up in their mind a spectre which threatens to destroy the human society with all its sympathy, friendship and love and thus cut away the very source of the so-called fullness and varied experiences of the natural human life. But the fear is the product of ignorance and misunderstanding. The advocates of renunciation do not in reality denounce the world. The ideal is the deification, a transfigured vision from a different centre, of the world with its objects and interests, that now attract the mind and the senses by their glamour and superficial values. It is the giving up of the false to realise the true nature

of things which is no other than God Himself. So does the Isopanishad advise—“ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत्”—“Whatever exists in the ever-changing world is to be enveloped with the Lord.” Though it is unquestionable that renunciation in its extreme form, both external and internal, is absolutely necessary for those aspiring to gain the full vision of truth, yet a gradual advancement towards the highest ideal of renunciation for the majority of mankind who cannot be expected to follow it *in toto* is in keeping with the spirit of the Scriptures.

At the dawn of the spiritual career, whatever course of Sadhana a person may follow, he begins as a dualist and limited as his vision is, thinks himself to be different from God and His universe. As he continues in his path, the intensity of his soul becomes greater, and higher and higher visions come to him. The limited individuality is gradually replaced by an ever-broadening sense of existence, and the increasing feeling of unity with the Divine and all that exists, brings to him greater freedom and peace, which are sure indications of his progress. But at last when the individual loses himself in God, the ocean of universal Existence, Bliss and Knowledge, he is for ever freed from desires and clinging to body and matter. He becomes perfectly pure, regains his lost glory, becomes his Self again; death, misery and error lose all their meaning for him. There is no more fear, no more birth and death. “Where is there ignorance and misery for him who sees the Unity?” says the Sruti. Through multiplicity and duality he at last has reached the Unity, has attained the end of human progress, and evolution can proceed no further. He has indeed

known the cause of all causes for आत्मनो वा दर्शनेन श्रवणेन मत्या विज्ञानेन इदं सर्वं विदितम्—“By the vision, hearing, meditation and knowledge of the Atman everything is known.”

When the man of realisation descends from the height of superconsciousness to the plane of mind and matter, to the world of senses, his life is tinged with an unearthly hue and he finds everything to be transformed. He is, as it were, transported into a world he never knew before, whose light and meaning are different from those of his previous natural world which has perished along with the destruction of his desires and attachments. He sees as the Gita says—

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानम् सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥

“With his heart concentrated by Yoga, with the eye of evenness for all things, he beholds the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self.” Such a man alone has got the full vision of Truth. His life itself is a veritable consecration, and all his manifold activities form parts of one continued worship to God.

It is narrated in the Puranas that the sage Vasishtha seeing Sri Ramachandra's intense *Vairagya* and determination to renounce the world told him—“Rama, first reason with me and then leave the world if you please. I ask, is the world separate from God? If it be so, you are at liberty to forsake it.” Pondering over these words Rama saw that it was God who manifested Himself as the individual souls and the universe, and in His Being everything existed; and so he remained silent. To the person on whom such a vision dawns the effulgence of the Atman shines forth in and through everything—the

beautiful reflects the beauty of the Soul, the love of God finds a transfigured expression in the love of man, from the highest being down to the meanest worm that crawls on the face of the earth everything manifests His glory, and is sweet and blissful. This is possible only for him who has been blessed with the vision Divine by cutting through the lower strata of ego as Sri Ramakrishna says to the effect—"You go back to the Supreme Being and your personality becomes one with His. This is Samadhi. You then retrace your steps, get back your ego and return to the point whence you started only to see that your ego is derived from the same Supreme Being and that God, Soul and Nature are but different phases of the one Reality."

The attitude of the Knower of Brahman is clear. But perplexing is the mentality of those who without knowing the Reality, without purging the mind of its dross of desires, and passions for name, fame and gratification of the senses, dare to enjoy the world with renunciation and think that they taste the bliss of *mukti* amidst the infinite bonds of the world; but unlike the man of knowledge they suffer from misery and pain which sense-enjoyment brings in its train.

There is, however, a surer way to happiness and of this Swami Vivekananda spoke to Ingersoll, the great atheistic lecturer of America—"I know a better way to squeeze the orange of this world than you do and I get more out of it. I know I cannot die, so I am not in a hurry; I know there is no fear, so I enjoy the squeezing. I have no duty, no bondage, wife, children and property; I can love all men and women. Everyone

is God to me. Think of the joy of loving man as God! Squeeze your orange this way and get ten thousand-fold more out of it. Get every single drop."

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

Their Spiritual Relation.

[RENDERED FROM SWAMI SARADANANDA'S
"LILAPRASANGA."]

(Continued from page 104.)

SRI Ramakrishna understood Narendranath as possessing a high spiritual capacity and therefore endeavoured to make him realise the truth of the Advaita philosophy, the identity of Jiva and Brahman. When he visited Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna would give him books on Advaita philosophy like the "Ashtavakra Samhita" to read. Narendranath was at that time a believer in and worshipper of the formless but qualified Brahman and to his mind books on Advaita philosophy appeared to be affected with the taint of atheism. At the request of Sri Ramakrishna, reading a little from such books, he would speak out openly: "What is the difference between atheism and such views (Advaita)? The created being will think himself as one with the Creator! Can there be a greater sin than this? I am God, you are God, all mortal things are God—can there be a more unreasonable statement than that? The Rishis, the authors of such books, must have lost their head, how else could they write such stuff?" Sri Ramakrishna laughed at hearing such words from the plain-spoken Narendranath, but without abruptly crossing his feeling and sentiments, said,

“You may not accept those views but why should you on that account condemn the Rishis or limit the infinitude of God? Your work is to call on the Lord who is Truth, and believe in whatever way He manifests Himself to you.” But Narendranath would not pay much heed to such words. For whatever was not provable by reason, appeared to him as false and to stand against all falsehoods was his innate nature. Therefore in conversation with other persons besides Sri Ramakrishna he would show arguments against Advaitism and sometimes would not hesitate to use words of sharp criticism and biting sarcasm.

A man named Pratap Chandra Hazra then lived at Dakshineswar. His worldly condition was not very prosperous. Therefore, even while seeking after spiritual progress, the desire for money often reigned in his heart and selfish desires lurked at the root of his spiritual practices. But hiding that idea from the outward view of people, he would speak lofty words of the unselfish love of God and endeavour to get the praise of men. And moreover it was natural to him to estimate in £. s. d. every step of spiritual practice and perhaps the idea of the satisfaction of the desire for money by the acquirement of supernatural powers through spiritual practices would sometimes peep into his mind. Sri Ramakrishna from the first day understood that feeling of his mind and instructed him to renounce those selfish ideas and to follow the unselfish worship of the Lord. The weak-minded Hazra, discarded such instructions and impelled by self-delusion, egoism and self-interest, lost no chance to proclaim himself before persons coming on a visit to Sri Ramakrishna that he (Hazra) was no ordinary spiritual personality.

In spite of all these, there was still within him a genuine desire to be good. For Sri Ramakrishna even knowing of such conduct on his part and rebuking him sharply for it occasionally, did not send him away from him altogether. But he would sometimes warn some amongst us not to mix familiarly with him, saying: “Hazra has a very calculating selfish mind; don't listen to him.”

Among other characteristics, Hazra had this feeling within him not to believe in anything easily. Considering his scant education, his intellect was sharp. Thus, he could follow well, when Narendranath would discuss the philosophical views of Western agnostic philosophers. The intelligent Narendra was very pleased with Hazra for that and coming to Dakshineswar would spend an hour or two according to leisure with him in conversation. The mind of Hazra always bowed to the sharp intellect of Narendranath. He would listen attentively to the words of Narendranath and sometimes prepare a *chillum* of tobacco for him. Seeing such a pleased attitude of Narendra towards Hazra, we would sometimes make fun and say: “Hazra Mahasaya is the friend of Narendra.”

On the occasion of Narendra's visit to Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna would fall into trance at the very sight of him. Afterwards regaining a half-external mood he would spend with great delight a few hours with him in spiritual converse. Then by words and endeavours he would try to make him realise in inner consciousness the high spiritual truths. Sometimes he would feel a desire to hear songs from him; but hearing the sweet voice of Narendra would fall into a trance. But Narendranath's song would not stop at that and he would go on singing in an

absorbed consciousness song after song for hours together. Sri Ramakrishna regaining a half-external consciousness would ask him to sing a particular song. But he would not be satisfied without hearing at the last from Narendranath, the song, 'Whatever is in the world, art Thou Thyself.' Then some time would pass in talk on the points of Advaitavada, e. g. Jiva and Ishvara, their real Swarupa, etc. Thus Narendranath's presence raised a wave of bliss at Dakshineswar.

One day Sri Ramakrishna spoke to Narendranath many words about the identity of Jiva and Brahman in Advaita knowledge. Narendranath attentively listening to those words could not appreciate them, and when his talk ended, he (Narendranath) went to Hazra Mahasaya, and raised the topic for discussion and said: "Is it ever possible? The glass is God, the cup is God, whatever you are observing and all of us are God!" Hazra Mahasaya also joined in the talk and ridiculing in a similiar strain raised peals of laughter over the subject. Sri Ramakrishna hearing Narendranath laugh, came out of his room in a half-tranced condition and saying, 'What are you talking?' touched Narendranath and fell into a trance. Narendranath said: "At that wonderful touch of Sri Ramakrishna that day a mental change came on me in a minute. Astonished I began to see that really there was nothing but God in the whole universe. But even beholding like that I kept silent, observing how long that state of consciousness would last. But the absorption of that mood did not abate a bit that day. I returned home, and found it was the same thing there, and whatever I saw was He Himself—I felt like it. Sitting down to eat I saw the food, the plate, the man who was serving, all these and I myself

were nothing else but Him. Taking one or two morsels, I sat silent and absorbed. 'Why are you sitting silent, eat.' my mother called out and roused from the mood at these words I began eating again. Thus, while eating, sleeping, going to college, I began to feel and observe like that, and lived always as one absorbed in that spiritual consciousness. I was walking along the street and a carriage was coming but I felt no inclination as before to move away from its path for fear it might come upon me—I felt, as if it and I were identical. My hands and feet remained benumbed and I got no satisfaction by eating but felt as if someone else was eating. Sometimes I would lie down in the course of eating and again getting up I would start eating. Some days I would eat too much, but felt no uneasiness for that. My mother feeling anxious for my condition said: 'I see you have a dire disease within you'; and sometimes would say: 'He will live not long.' When the above possessed mood of the mind abated a little, the universe appeared to me as made of the stuff of dream. Walking along the side of the tank in the public park I would strike my head against the railing and test if it was a real tangible iron railing or formed of the stuff of dream. From the numbness of the hand and feet I suspected if it would develop into paralysis. Thus I could not escape from the absorption and possession of that state of consciousness for some time. When the normal external consciousness returned, I thought that it was a glimpse of Advaita knowledge. Then what the scriptures say is not false! Since then I have not been able to doubt the truth of Advaitism."

Another wonderful incident we heard from Narendranath at another time. He

mentioned it to us in the winter of the year 1884 when we were specially intimate with Narendranath. But we infer that the incident happened about the time of the above narration. Therefore we will narrate it to the reader now. We remember that on that day a little before noon we arrived at Narendranath's house and spent up to 11 o'clock in the night with him. Swami Ramakrishnanandaji was also with us. The divine attraction which we felt towards Narendra was increased a thousand-fold that day. Previous to this we knew Sri Ramakrishna as a God-conscious man, a *Siddhapurusha*. But the impressive words of Narendranath brought a new light within us this day. We understood that the wonderful facts and incidents which were recorded in the life of such world-teachers as the blessed Sri Chaitanya and Jesus, and which we had so long disbelieved, were daily happening in the life of Sri Ramakrishna—that by mere wish or touch he was loosening the bonds of past actions of man and giving him divine love, or by putting him in trance was making him a partaker of divine bliss, or by turning the life of his devotee in a spiritual path and bringing about the vision of God within a short time he was making him feel blessed for ever. We remember distinctly how speaking of the divine realisations which had come in his life by the grace of Sri Ramakrishna, Narendranath took us out for a walk to the side of the tank in the Cornwallis Square and there staying sometime absorbed within himself gave vent to the inner spiritual bliss which possessed him by singing in his angelic voice—

The Lord is distributing the treasure of Divine Love,
Come all who will partake of it :

The Love flows in profuse abundance and yet
there is no end.

In that tide of love,—Santipur is about to sink,
While it overflows Nuddea.

(In the waves of Divine Love of Sri Gouranga
Nuddea is flooded over).

When the song ended, Narendranath as if addressing himself slowly said: "Truly is he distributing Love, Devotion, Knowledge and Mukti. The Lord is freely giving to all whom He chooses. What wonderful power (remaining silent for some time)! In the night I was sleeping with closed doors, suddenly he attracted and brought at Dakshineswar—him who is within this body; then after many instructions and spiritual talks permitted me to return. He can do everything—the Lord of Dakshineswar can do everything."

The shades of evening deepened into the darkness of night. We were not able to see each other, and there was no need to see. For the flaming words and sentiments of Narendranath entered the inmost recesses of the heart and brought such a divine intoxication that the body was reeling and the long familiar and tangible world receded into the distant world of dream, and the truth that the Infinite and Eternal God impelled by unselfish grace descends on earth as a finite embodiment to release the bonds of man and turn the wheel of Religion,—which the majority of mankind thinks to be an unreal figment of imagination—took form and appeared before us as a living reality. Unconscious of the passing of time, we suddenly heard the stroke of nine from a distant clock. With reluctance we were thinking of taking leave, when Narendranath said: "Come, let me accompany you some distance to your home." While walking, we got so absorbed in talk on the previous subjects, that reaching home we thought we did not do well in

allowing Narendra to come so far with us. Therefore inviting him home and making him partake of a little food, we also walked and accompanied him back to his home. We remember another fact of that day. Entering our house Narendra suddenly stood still, and said, "I have seen this house before. The passages of this house, its rooms are all familiar to me—wonderful!" We have related before the fact of Narendranath's realising similar phenomena and the reason which he gave for them. Therefore we do not re-narrate them here.

SOME VIEWS ON EDUCATION.

THE present writer will endeavour in this article to interpret the views of Swami Vivekananda on Education from his published utterances on the subject. "Education," as Swami Vivekananda says, "is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. It is neither book-learning nor diverse knowledge but the training by which the current and expression of the will are brought under control and become fruitful." It is a preparation for life. With the ancient Hindus it was not only a preparation for this life but also for the life to come. Both these aspects were given a proper place unlike the modern education which leaves the latter either as impracticable or as useless. Many, however, think that education in ancient India was one-sided, the religious side alone being developed; that the Hindus' love for philosophy which taught the unreality of the world led them to neglect the practical side of life. But if we study the history of ancient India we find that this is not true. No doubt religion was given a greater prominence but all the same, the practical side of life was also developed and given its proper

place. Even from the oldest Upanishads we learn that the students were taught various other branches of knowledge also. From the conversation between Narada and Sanat-kumara in the Chhandogya Upanishad we find that mathematics, politics, astronomy, logic, science, fine arts etc. formed parts of the curriculum. The Hindus had made great progress in all these subjects. But unfortunately owing to unfavorable historical circumstances the progress of the nation was arrested and no more development was made in these sciences. But with religion it was different. It was the central preoccupation of their life and this they could not give up. That is why religion still survives and that is what keeps us a nation yet. Had the political and social circumstances been more favourable India would have had a worthy place among the nations of the world even in the practical side of life as she has in religion.

The most characteristic feature of ancient Indian education was the relationship between the teacher and the disciple, which was considered even nearer than that between the father and the son. Nowhere do we find such an ideal relationship. The student entered the life of Brahmacharya at an early age. From that time till he finished his studies he lived with his teacher who regarded him as a member of his own family and undertook to teach him everything he knew. The teacher took no fees though at the end of the course the student usually made presents to him. The student on the other hand had to do some services to the teacher. He paid him great reverence and obeyed him implicitly. The life at the Guru's was not only a period of learning but also one of strict discipline which was intended to hold before the student an ideal of high morals and character. The student was directed always to select such a teacher as was versed in the Vedas and was a knower of Brahman. At any rate the teacher was a man of great intellect, spirituality and moral character,

Another characteristic of the ancient Indian education was that the teaching was concerned more with individuals than with a class. Every student was separately instructed by the teacher. This was advantageous, for every student could develop at his own pace according to his intelligence. The class consisted of a rather small number of students so that the teacher could give equal attention to everyone. Even when there were big universities they were each only a collection of a number of such groups.

Let us now turn to the present system of education. It has not the good points of the ancient days while its defects are many. Swamiji says: "An education which does not help one to fight out successfully the battle of life, which does not mould one's character nor create the idea of self-sacrifice for the commonweal, do you call it education?"

The greatest defect of the present day system which Swamiji pointed out was the loss of Shraddha. "We have had a negative education all along from our boyhood. We have only learnt that we are nobody. Seldom are we given to understand that great men were born in our country. Nothing positive has been taught to us. We do not even know how to use our hands and feet * * * We have learnt only weakness. We believe we are weak. So how can it be but that Shraddha is lost? This loss of Shraddha has brought in all evils among us and is bringing in more and more." This Shraddha has to be brought back again—the Shraddha which emboldened Nachiketas to face Yama and question him. Truly does the Gita say, "अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति"—"The ignorant, the man without Shraddha, he who doubts comes to grief."

How then to get back this Shraddha? Swamiji's view was that we have to introduce again the worship of the great saints. Sri Ramachandra, Mahavira and Sri Krishna thundering forth the strong words of the Gita

are to be held up as ideals to the people. The worship of the Divine Mother, the giver of strength and purity, the source of all power, must also be encouraged. Our young children must be given books written in easy language containing stories from the Ramayana and Mahabharata, the Upanishads and also the lives of heroes like Mahavira, Bhishma, Pratap Singh, Shivaji etc. A history of ancient India written according to the modern ways of thinking must be prescribed as text-books for students of higher classes. This will bring before them the glory of the past and create self-reliance in them.

Let us next see what Swamiji's views were on the elements of a true Indian educational system. He laid great stress on three points: The period of Brahmacharya, Guru-grihavaasa and thirdly, religion. The period of Brahmacharya is quite essential. The student ought to be trained to practise absolute Brahmacharya. That is the basis of the whole future life and character-building. He was very much against the early marriage of boys, especially when they have not yet finished their student career. No one can stand the burden of two stages of life at one and the same time. It would mean killing the student by putting great strain on him. As to Guru-grihavaasa Swamiji says, "My idea of education is personal contact with the Guru. Living with the Guru as of old is very essential. But it has to be put on a broader basis to suit the modern conditions and times. One should live from his very boyhood with a Guru whose character is like a blazing fire and should have before him a living example of the highest teaching. Without the personal life of a teacher there would be no education. Take your universities, what have they done? They have not produced one original man. Every man of originality that has been produced has been educated elsewhere and not in this country, or they have gone to the old universities

to cleanse themselves of superstitions." Some, however, criticise this system of Guru-griha-vasa as it is said to enslave the pupil's mind and produce a mentality devoid of originality and initiative. The fact that this system had produced great men, they explain away by saying that, that only shows the capability of the human mind to transcend all limitations and not the goodness of the system. In fact these remarks seem to be made loosely. There was nothing enslaving in it. The student was given full freedom and opportunities to develop in his own way, the authority of the teacher being exercised only in extreme cases of unmanageability. There was also nothing in it oppressing the mind of the people. All the rules framed were such as only tended to strict obedience and discipline which is very much lacking in the present system. The system in itself was good though in the carrying out of it defects might have crept in, which is a factor that cannot be avoided in any system unless the teachers have the ideal always before them. Again the capability of the human mind to transcend limitations being the same in all ages and climes, the fact that the old system produced more great men shows that it was much better than the modern.

The next point that Swamiji emphasised upon was that education must be put on a religious basis. "Religion is the innermost core of education. It is the root thing." The modern system of education is not at all fit for imparting Brahma-vidya. Ancient India did not fail to put education on a religious basis. The Musalmans also had done so. But by an educational control pledged to religious neutrality in the matter of the Indian education, the problem of religious education will not be solved. This is the reason why National Universities are necessary.

Some of our leaders, however, think that religion has been the one cause of our downfall and unless it is banished or its ideals

changed to suit our worldly purpose, no good will come to India. But these good people forget that each nation has one central fact which cannot be so easily neglected. With India it is religion. "We know that to the Indian mind there is nothing higher than religious ideals; that is the keynote of Indian life and we can only work in the line of least resistance. Work in any line without first strengthening this would be disastrous. Our life-blood is religion, if it is strong and pure everything is right; political, social or any other material defects will all be cured if that blood is pure. You have withstood the shocks of centuries simply because you took great care of it, you sacrificed everything else for it. That is the national life-current. Follow it and it leads to glory. Give it up and you die." Every nation has a national purpose of its own and it dies when the main purpose of its life is hurt. The Indians have always fixed Moksha or Spiritual Independence as the goal; this is our national purpose and education is only a means to this end. Granting that God, Soul and Mukti are all false, yet these forces have determined our national character for thousands of years and is it possible to change it now? A change would mean death. Neither is our national ideal after all a mistaken one. If we compare ourselves with other nations we find that we are yet a nation living and that our life is in religion. Whatever change we wish to bring about in this country, must be through religion. Then what is the cause of our degeneration? Our degeneration is not due to our religious ideal but due to the utter want of Dharma which allows man to seek for legitimate happiness in this world. In ancient days Dharma was compatible with religion. Buddhism however neglected the former and thrust the path of Moksha upon all. Such a thing is impossible for a nation as a whole. Renunciation can only result from a fully-lived life, from its experiences gathered and its values worked up.

One rule cannot apply to all. No doubt Moksha is superior but the way to it is only through Dharma, the fullness of ethical and practical life and unless one has gone through this he cannot attempt the life of Moksha, for he would be incapable of doing it and if he should in spite of that attempt, the result will only be destruction. We are now under a great self-deception. We think we are Sattvika whereas in reality we are Tamasika. Arjuna had also fallen into such a deception but was put on the right path by the Lord and the result was that he took one big stride towards what he was posing himself to be. क्लृप्तं मास्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते—“Yield not to unmanliness. O son of Pritha! Ill doth it become thee.” तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यथा लभस्व—“Therefore arise and win fame.” These shall be the ideals for the generality of the nation at present. It is only by following this teaching of the Lord that we can rise again.

The Vedic religion had realised that one rule cannot apply to all and so it had made provision for Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. The last they made the goal and the previous subservient to this and means to this final goal. Our aims and ideals are all right. But we have only to take care of the method by which to attain them. Our reformers are only too much aware of the degeneration that has set in and in their eagerness to throw out the rotten portion there is the danger of their inserting the knife so deep as to kill the patient also.

Another thing we have to guard ourselves against is the tendency in us to lower the ideal by compromising it with the worldly life. We should never reconcile fleshy vanities with the highest ideals. That would be dragging God to the level of the apparent man. There is no use giving apologies for our sense-vanities. Rather we must rise one step higher in order to elevate ourselves to our chosen ideals than drag the ideals down to reconcile them with our imperfect conduct. This is also one of the causes that has led to our

degeneration. It is this pretended adherence to our religious ideal which springs from a mere negative attitude towards it, that has caused our degeneration. True spirituality on the other hand is something positive. All legitimate and regulated material happiness is bound to follow it. It alone can give strength, courage and fearlessness so essential in life. From religion spring all other expressions of man such as art, science etc.

Next let us see what Swamiji has to say with respect to the method of imparting education. “No one can teach anybody.” he used to say. “The teacher spoils everything by thinking that he is teaching. Thus the Vedanta says that within man is all knowledge—even in a boy it is so—and it requires only an awakening and that much is the work of a teacher. We have to do only so much for the boys, that they may learn to apply their own intellect to the proper use of their hands, legs, ears, eyes etc., and finally everything will become easy.” Another point which he used to emphasise upon was that true education is gained by constant living in communion with nature. To support this he used to cite the story of Satyakama. The seats of education, the Ashramas of ancient days, were very much suited for this communion with Nature, as they were situated far from the turmoil of society on the outskirts of some forest or countryside. The new school of reformers however criticise this. They say that boys and girls must be educated in such places where they are surrounded by the condition of life in which they have to move and which they have to meet in later life. Hence according to them the colleges and universities must not be situated in localities far from the bustle of city life and from the temptations incidental to it; for boys brought up in isolation always succumb to the first temptation they come across. They go to greater extremes of laxity of character and looseness of behaviour than the former. In

order that such a statement could be made we must have boys trained in isolation, side by side with those trained amidst society and observe their conduct in life. But we have not got the former class of boys and in the absence of such boys no comparison which is merely an imagination would be of any value. On the other hand, reason seems to prove the superiority of the former class. For one could fight the evil tendencies and circumstances better when he is spiritually stronger than when he is weaker. The sapling of a banyan tree requires hedging to protect it from cows, though when it grows to be a tree many cows may take shelter under it. To expose boys when their character is not yet built to the temptations of society is to undermine it from the very beginning.

A question may naturally arise: Was then Swamiji against our learning anything from the West? The reply is—certainly not. Nobody else was more aware of the deficiencies of our nation than he and this he wanted to make up by assimilating what is best in other nations. "You must understand this, my friend, that we have many things to learn from other nations. The man who says he has nothing more to learn is already at his last gasp. The Nation that says it knows everything is on the very brink of destruction! 'As long as I live so long do I learn.' But one point to note here is that when we shall take anything from others we must mould it after our own way. We shall add to our stock what others have to teach but we must always be careful to keep intact what is essentially our own. We must mould it after our own fashion, always preserving in full our characteristic Nationality."

The following quotation from the works of Swami Vivekananda gives us his views on an ideal education in a nut-shell as it were: "With our education has to be combined modern Western sciences. Both these are necessary. What we want are Western science

coupled with Vedanta, Brahmacharya as the guiding motto and also Shraddha and with in one's own Self; to study, independens of foreign control different branches of the knowledge that is our own, and with it the English language and Western science; we need technical education, and all else which may develop the industries, so that men instead of seeking for service, may earn enough to provide for themselves, and save something against a rainy day."

SWAMI VIRESWARANANDA.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S MESSAGE OF THE VEDANTA.*

THE deep significance that underlies the advent of Swami Vivekananda at the critical juncture of Hinduism is not very apparent. In the beginning of the present century when Occidental influence began to pour into India, when it began to be demonstrated to the children of the sages that their religion, God, soul and everything they had been struggling for, were mere words without meaning, that thousands of years of renunciation and austerities had been a gigantic failure, it was Swami Vivekananda who rose as the mouthpiece of Indians and voiced forth the accumulated wisdom and the synthetic civilisation of the Hindus and showed to the world at large that the Indians are not mere barbarians steeped in ignorance, but possess a rich civilisation and a wide culture which have come down to them in essential integrity from their ancestors. It was not for the first time that this note of hope was sounded, but the feeble notes of his predecessors fell flat more or less on the unwilling ears of their countrymen. India

* An address delivered at the Ramakrishna Mission, Dacca, on the 59th birthday celebration of Swami Vivekananda.

needed at this time a man of invincible moral courage and strong patriotic fibre who could handle the situation with a masterly grasp and with a bold spirit of conviction which no power on earth could shake. This was fulfilled in the person of Swami Vivekananda whose activities produced such a magical effect that the wavering national mind began to come back steadily to the true fold of Hinduism. He held up before the country the glowing national ideals and exhorted the people to cast off the sloughs of unassimilated culture and to be enthused with a spirit of self-reliance. The Indians who were a civilised Aryan nation even four thousand years ago, have, after seven centuries of national lifelessness, been showing indications of a reviving life and trying to stand on their own legs and to go beyond the dead forms of religion for recovering what is pure, nourishing and life-giving.

Some thinkers of the present day have laid much emphasis on the point that the salvation of India lies through politics and politics alone. Here Swamiji has totally differed from them. Swami Vivekananda with his forecasting vision and masterly grasp of the genius and temper of the national mind, declared again and again that if India ever rises, she must do so through religion. Read the histories of the great nations of antiquity that flourished on the memorable banks of the Tigris, the Euphratis and the Nile. Where are now to-day those great empires of the Near East which were once the wonders of the age? The grand fabrics of the Assyrian and the Babylonian, the Persian and the Egyptian, the Grecian and the Roman empires were built by the sword on the quicksand of militarism; but when that sword—the fulcrum of their strength—began to rust, the huge superstructures of their magnificent empires crumbled away into the dim region of dust and desolation. But India lives to-day in spite of so many vicissitudes which have swept over the land. What is then that

force which has kept the Indians a living nation even after so many changes of fortune and countless revolutions? It is the religion and the spirituality of Indian culture, which is the motive-power of the Indians' inspiration and the sustaining stamina of their national existence. No doubt politics has been one of the subsidiary aspects of Indian interests, but it never was, as it will also never be, the predominant factor of the life of the people. Swami Vivekananda has thus truly struck the keynote of the drift of Indian nationalism when he said,—“Each race has to make its own result, to fulfil its own mission. Political greatness or military power is never the mission of our race; it never was and it will never be. But there has been the other mission given to us, which is to conserve, to preserve, to accumulate, as it were, into a dynamo, all the spiritual energy of the race, and that concentrated energy is to pour forth in a deluge on the world, whenever circumstances are propitious. Let the Persian or the Greek, the Roman or the Frenchman march his battalions, conquer the world, and link the different nations together, but the philosophy and spirituality of India is ever ready to flow along the new-made channels into the veins of the nations of the world. The Hindu's calm brain must pour out its own quota to the sum-total of human progress. India's gift to the world is the *Light Spiritual*.” The spiritual basis of our national ideals and aspirations is all the more proved by the glowing examples of history that adorn the annals of India from the ancient to the modern times. If we transport ourselves in imagination to the dim but glorious days of antiquity—away back where history even fails to peep into the gloom of the past, we will find that during the reign of Sri Ramachandra, the whole field of India from the lofty Himalayas down to the distant Cape Comorin, was flooded with an inundation of spiritual upheaval which brought in its wake a vast accession of

national glory and material prosperity. Besides these, in the glorious days of the Pandavas, the mighty hosts of the Kauravas were destroyed on the memorable field of Kurukshetra where "Evil was sacrificed at the altar of Righteousness." Even if we sail down the stream of time and make a judicious analysis of the Buddhistic period, we find the same spirit at play and the Asokan empire was but an inevitable offshoot of the spiritual upheaval that began at the advent of Gautama Buddha. The rise of the Rajputs, the Marhattas and the Sikhs was unquestionably due to the waves of spiritual resurgence which India had witnessed during the Middle Ages.

Thus we see that religion is the backbone of the Indian life; and the experience of the lack of national solidarity in this land is due not to the influence of religion, as some would have us think but to her giving a go-by to the true spirit of the religious ideal and clinging to the mere shadows thereof, which consequently has debilitated the strong fibres of India's political, social and economical life. The glory of Hinduism lies in the fact, that it is far from teaching us weakening morbidity, or the suspension of the healthy culture of the noble qualities and faculties of the human mind and life, but it holds before us those great models and perfect ideals of charity, love and unselfishness which lead human life to blessedness and purity. But what is that religion which has been working through the national life? We had had enough of weeping and namby-pamby ideas, enough of enervating theories that have stunted the all-round growth of our humanity. What our country now wants is the organ-voice of the Upanishads in which we find the germs of all the subsequent development of India's religious thoughts. Every one who has studied the Indian aspirations and the bent of the national mind will easily find that in the sublime conceptions of our Hindu ideal, the principle of the Vedanta is deeply

ingrained. Vedanta with its dominant note of Advaitism has twice in the past saved India from degradation and to-day Swami Vivekananda has again brought the message to the Indians. Strength, strength is what the Upanishads speak of from every page. What a sublime picture it is to imagine the time when a naked Brahmin sitting upon a block of stone could be bold and fearless before even Alexander the Great who came to tempt him with gold and honour! Roused at seeing his boldness and strength Alexander standing on his authority as an Emperor said, "I will kill you, if you do not come." The Brahmin burst into laughter and said, "You never told such a falsehood in your life as you tell me just now. Who can kill me? Me you kill, emperor of the *material* world? Never! For I am the Spirit unborn and undecaying, never was I born and never shall I die, I am the Infinite, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient, and you desire to kill me, child that you are!" Such is indeed the teaching of the Vedanta philosophy. Strength, physical, mental and spiritual is the watchword of the Upanishads. Have faith in our scriptures and believe "I am the soul." Remember the immortal words of the Gita—

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥

नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥

"This Self weapons cut not; This, fire burns not; This, water wets not; and This, wind dries not. . . . Changeless, all-pervading, unmoving, immovable, the Self is eternal." This is the strength that we get from the Upanishads; this is the faith we get from there and this is the religion in which we are born.

There is still the opinion current amongst many thinkers that the Vedanta talks only of the forest life of the recluse! But read the Gita, the greatest and the most authoritative commentary on the Vedas. It is there for

everyone in every occupation of life. "These conceptions of the Vedanta must come out, must remain not only in the forest, not only in the caves, but they must come to work out at the Bar and the Bench, in the Pulpit and the cottage of the poor, with the fishermen that are catching fish and the students that are studying. If the fisherman thinks that he is the Spirit he will be a better fisherman, if the student thinks he is the Spirit he will be a better student, if the lawyer thinks that he is the Spirit he will be a better lawyer and so on. Let every one be taught that the Divine is within and everyone will work out his own salvation." With the ushering in of a new era Swami Vivekananda stood before the world with this sublime message of the Vedanta which is alone competent to solve the intricate problems of the present and the coming generations. A man who has realised in his heart of hearts, that he is free, eternally free, becomes the recipient of the nectar of true liberty which is denied to those who are steeped in the mire of gross materialism and dense ignorance. Swamiji realised the glorious truth that God is in every person,— "working through all hands, walking through all feet and eating through every mouth," and naturally therefore his magnanimous heart beat with each throb of all the hearts that ached, known and unknown, and embraced the whole world in its all-encompassing love. It is this Vedantic idea of the equality of all men, the perception that there is that one eternal indivisible Soul dwelling in the tabernacle of each human body from the Brahmin, Kshatriya and the Vaishya down to the Chandala, the Pariah and other so-called untouchables who form the lowest strata of the society, that enabled Swamiji to call them his brethren and embrace them as his kith and kin. On one occasion at the Belur Math Swamiji while addressing a few Sannyasins in the year 1902 said, "Breaking the barriers of Don't-touchism, let us all go

at once and call out, 'Come all who are poor, miserable, wretched and down-trodden,' let us bring them all together in the name of Sri Ramakrishna. I see with divine vision there is one Brahman in all, in them and us— one Shakti dwells within; the only difference is of manifestation." This is indeed the spirit that lies at the root of our national evolution and furnishes the real basis for any idea of service to humanity. Herein lies the consummation of Jnana, Bhakti and Karma. This Vedantic message Swamiji has again delivered to the world and it is highly gratifying to note that his ideas and aspirations are no longer "airy nothings," but are securing a permanent foothold in the field of action which is an unmistakable sign of a glorious era which will shortly open a new chapter in Indian life.

Europe, too, wants to-day the dictate of Indian philosophy, "the infinite oneness of the Soul which is the sanction of all morality." The Swami carried this message to the West and established in the Parliament of Religions the supremacy of catholic Hinduism. The clarion-note of the Vedanta still vibrates across the ocean in the distant lands of America and the continent of Europe. The rational West is earnestly bent on seeking out the rationale of all its philosophy and ethics. This great principle is even now unconsciously furnishing the basis of all the latest political and social aspirations that are coming up in England, in Germany, in France and in America; for it is the Vedanta and the Vedanta alone that can become the universal religion of man and the basis of all human aspirations. This is the one great life-giving idea which the world was waiting for and Swami Vivekananda, the pioneer of the modern movement, has delivered it to humanity.

KHAGENDRA NATH SIKDAR, M. A.



STORIES OF SAINTS.

(Retold by G.)

VII.

SISTER MARIANNA.

NEAR a quiet, little country town in Italy, stood long, long ago a convent shaded by chestnut trees; and a river flowed by. Here, in this old convent, dwelled some good Sisters, devout women, who went out among the poor, helping where help was needed. Early and late the Sisters laboured, nursing the sick and feeding the poor. And among all these good women, Sister Marianna was the most patient. Kind and willing, never sparing herself, quietly she went about, choosing for her share the heaviest and most difficult tasks. Thus she lived always content quietly to bear the burden of others. She loved God and this made her most happy. And she was rich too, for God had given her the grace to choose not the world's deceitful riches, but the wealth one cannot lose,—the wealth one takes with him when this earthly life is done.

The old and the feeble and the sickly and the heavy-hearted, all knew and loved Sister Marianna. For she was always sure to appear when her presence was most needed. And to have Sister Marianna near was such a comfort! Her kindly eyes and cheerful countenance and encouraging words brought hope unto the most desolate heart. And she carried food and warm clothes and blessing as she wended her way over mountain paths in summer heat and winter cold. And with her travelled One whom she always kept close to her heart. And He was the source of all her strength.

And Sister Marianna was happy—oh, so happy!—if in her scanty hours of leisure she could enter her little whitewashed cell. For there, from the wall, looked at her the dear and holy faces that she loved above all else. From an old and faded picture the Holy Infant, Jesus, in His Mother's arms looked at her. And her faith and spirit of devotion lent to the dear faces a beauty and glory not seen there by anyone else. And often when she returned in the early morning from a lonely home where she had watched the sick by night,

she would gather a few flowers, with the morning dew still on them and place them on the wooden shelf before the Holy Child and His Blessed Mother. And so Sister Marianna's life was full of sunshine, for in toiling for the Lord she had found the hidden sweetness that lies stored in common things.

But the time came—poor Sister!—when her step grew heavy as one winter, day after day, she climbed the steep mountain path covered by snow, to a poor rough home, far away from neighbours. And her rosy cheeks grew pale as night after night she nursed the poor young mother lying there helpless in her dingy room attacked by a malicious disease. Many a night the good Sister had been watching and during the day she had little rest, for her heart was with the poor patient and her babe. The husband had gone to the plains to seek for work when the young wife was taken ill and now word was slow to reach him. Waiting and hoping, patient and nurse prayed for the husband's return.

Weeks went by and the young mother grew more feeble. In vain did Sister Marianna try every simple cure she knew. The doctor had given up hope and had left his last instructions. And the priest had done his last office. Sister Marianna was left alone with the mother and the child, all unaided, still to watch and think and labour, with what little strength she had.

Two days more the patient lay sleeping and Sister Marianna watched beside the bed saying prayers to help the soul departing and rocking the baby in her lap. Then something stirred within her heart. And she spake with eyes dilated and her soul in every word, as to one she saw before her—"Thou hast been a child, my Lord! Thou hast lain as small and speechless as this infant on my knees, then, oh listen to my plea; Lord, remember for one moment what Thy Mother was to Thee! Oh, for love of Thine Own Mother, save the the mother of this child!"

Then she paused and waited breathless, for she knew and felt that the Lord was there in the room listening to her passionate appeal. And she bowed her head and a strange light came in her eyes for her soul had heard the answer that the young mother would not die. Yes, the prayer of faith has saved the mother. The change began that day.

And now night came, a lonely night. And the wind and rain beat against the door and window. And Marianna, faint and weary with the strain of many days, lighted a fire on hearth, for the poor woman she cared for would need to eat before morning. So she prepared a dish that would strengthen the patient, a dish made of food brought from the convent. The food had to be prepared with care, so Marianna planned to do her best. But oh, she was so weary for want of sleep and rest. "Now, Lord, help me this night's labour to complete," said the Sister. And she placed the broth upon the fire stirring it to keep it from burning. But so sleepy was the poor Sister that the spoon kept falling from her hand. Then again she would rouse herself and struggle bravely to drive off the languor. Fear filled her heart that she might faint from fatigue and no neighbours were near and the storm was raging outside. Her head ached strangely as it never did before. "Oh good Lord, only help me through the night that my eyes may not close till the mother and babe are safe. She is better but a touch may turn the scale. To-morrow I can send for help, but this night they depend on me. Lord, grant that I may not fail them."

But her pleading was in vain. For sleep had conquered and her prayer died away in a faint murmur. And she slept the sleep of the weary, unconscious of how the hours sped on. Her head reclining against the wall, the firelight flared and flickered on her pale and peaceful face. And the broth was on the fire all untended.

Had the Lord not heard her prayer? So earnestly she had pleaded for just a little more strength. Oh, the Lord has many ways to send answers to prayers,—ways that His children think not of.

A long time she sat there sleeping in front of the fire. But the fire-wood kept burning and the pot boiled gently. And when suddenly, with a sense of guilt, at last the Sister awoke, a strange and sweet vision greeted her eyes. At her feet, near the fire, stood a child watching the boiling pot and keeping the fire alive. And when the child turned his face towards her and smiled, she knew that it was the Holy Child. It was the Lord who stood before her, the Child Jesus. When her willing hands had failed, when her weary eyes were closed, He had finished all she had failed in.

He had watched while she rested. Sister Marianna did not shrink nor start, for her faithful heart was filled with joy.

And when afterwards curious lips would ask the Sister how the Child looked, all she would say was: "I knew it was He, my heart melted and you will also know when you meet Him."

With that one sweet look and smile the Child passed away from her vision. But the peace it left in her heart lasted till her dying hour. The storm had ceased and the morning star was shining through the window. And when later the sun was rising and Sister Marianna looked out and softly opened the door to let in the morning breeze, she saw through the trees a moving form. It was the husband returning home. Thank God! He came at last. All night long he had been walking in the darkness and the rain. And when his eyes questioned Marianna, her answer was: "God has helped us, the danger is over." And leaving joy behind her in that home of many tears Marianna returned to the convent. There was music in her heart. And gathering a few flowers on her way, she placed them lovingly on the little shelf before the Holy Mother and her Child.

SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA

(Continued from page 116.)

यश्चिन्त्यते प्रयत्नपाणिभिरध्वराम्ना

त्रय्या निरुक्तविधिनेन हविर्गृहीत्वा ।

अध्यात्मयोग उक्त योगिभिरात्ममायां

जिज्ञासुभिः परमभागवतैः परीष्टः ॥११॥

11. Thy feet, O Lord, which are meditated upon in the prescribed manner in the sacrificial fire¹ by priests taking oblations with folded palms, and by Yogis desirous to know Thy Maya—through spiritual union; and which are worshipped all around by the highest devotees²!

[¹ *Sacrificial fire &c.*—The god of whom they think while offering the oblation is not distinct from Brahman.

[² *Highest devotees*—who look upon the whole universe as Brahman.]

वर्युष्टया तव विभो वनमालयेयं
संस्पर्धिनी भगवती प्रतिपत्तिवच्छ्रीः ।

यः सुप्रणीतममुयार्हणमाददन्नो
भूयात्सदाङ्घ्रिरशुभाशयधूमकेतुः ॥१२॥

12. O Omnipresent Lord, the Goddess Lakshmi is jealous¹—as from a co-wife—of thy garland of wild flowers, even though withered; Thou dost accept the worship done with this (garland) as duly offered.² Oh, may Thy feet ever be the fire to consume our evil desires!

[¹ *Jealous &c.*—The garland also hangs on the Lord's breast, a place reserved for His Divine Spouse, Lakshmi.

² *Duly offered*: The Lord makes much of even the humblest offerings of His devotees—this is the idea.]

केतुस्त्रिविक्रमयुतस्त्रिपतत्पताको
यस्ते भयाभयकरोऽसुरदेवचम्बोः ।

स्वर्गाय साधुषु खलेश्वितराय भूमन्
पादः पुनातु भगवन्भजतामघं नः ॥१३॥

13. O Infinite, O Lord, may Thy feet rectify the sins of us, Thy devotees,—the feet which with its three steps¹ became Thy banner,² as it were, with the Ganges³ flowing in three regions as its pennon; which caused fear and fearlessness to the armies of the Asuras and the Devas respectively; which conduce to heaven in the case of the good, and to hell⁴ in that of the wicked!

[¹ *Three steps &c.*—The reference is to the Vámana or 'Dwarf' Incarnation of the Lord, in which He for the sake of Indra begged of Bali, the Asura usurper of heaven, as much earth as would be covered by His three steps. The king consenting, the Lord assumed a mighty form, one step of His covering the earth and the second the heaven, while there was no space for the third, whereupon Bali—whose name is a household word in India for generosity—offered his head for this purpose and was asked by the Lord to go and live in the nether regions.

Banner—because they proclaim His glory.

³ *Ganges &c.*—The Ganges is believed to have sprung from Sri Vishnu's feet, and to flow through heaven, earth and the nether regions under the names of Mandâkini, Bhâgirathi and Bhogavati.

⁴ *Hell &c.*—because they commit outrages in defiance of the eternal moral principles and are degraded thereby.]

नस्योतगाव इव यस्य वशे भवन्ति
ब्रह्मादयस्तनुभृतो मिथुरर्धमानाः ।

कालस्य ते प्रकृतिपुरुषयोः परस्य
शं नस्तनोतु चरणः पुरुषोत्तमस्य ॥१४॥

14. May Thy feet contribute to our welfare! Thou art the Supreme Being, Thou art Time, beyond Prakriti and Purusha,¹ under whose sway² are Brahmâ and all other embodied beings—who fight mutually—like unto bullocks with strings passing through their noses!

[¹ *Prakriti and Purusha*—Sankhyan phraseology. The Prakriti corresponds with certain vital differences to the Avyakta of Vedanta, and the Purusha to the Jiva or individual aspect of the Soul; and Brahman is of course beyond all relative aspects.

² *Sway etc.*—because Brahman is disembodied Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute.]

(To be continued.)

REPORTS AND APPEALS

Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Charitable Dispensary, Belur, for the year 1920.

The work of the Dispensary has been steadily and rapidly growing. While in 1913 the total number of patients treated was only 1000, in the year under report the number rose to 12514 of which 3872 represented new cases and the rest repeated ones. The careful treatment of the patients by the workers of the Mission, supplemented, as it is, by the expert advice of several experienced and skilful medical men in complicated cases, has made this Charitable Dispensary better known to the surrounding places than before.

When necessary, patients are treated in their homes and arrangements are also made for the supply of proper diet in case of need. For these

reasons the popularity and usefulness of the institution are daily increasing and its sphere of activity is extending over an ever-increasing area—viz. Howrah, Salkia, Ghusari, Lillooah, Serampore, Uttarpara, Bally, Belur etc.

We tender our sincere thanks to the Bally municipality for their kind and generous contribution of Rs. 120 per annum since 1917. We anticipate a similar grant in 1921 towards the support of this institution which ministers chiefly to the rate-payers of the above municipality. Our best thanks are also due to the Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works Ltd., Calcutta, the Indian Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works, as also to many chemists and Kavirajas who helped us with medicines etc.

Our special thanks are due to Messrs. B. K. Paul & Co., Calcutta, whose generous assistance ungrudgingly given, has been of the utmost help to us; they supplied the greater part of our annual stock of medicines free of cost and sometimes even articles of diet for poor patients also free of charge. It is needless to say that the help received from the above firm was found doubly valuable in these hard times. May the lord bless them and other helpers for their disinterested charity!

We beg to express our indebtedness to Drs. Bipin Behari Ghosh, M. B., J. M. Kanjilal M. B., Durga Pada Ghose M. B., and Shyama Pada Mukerjee M. B., all of Calcutta and to Drs. Kshitish Chandra Banerjee M. B. and Hari Charan Banerjee (Homœopath) of Bally and Barackpur respectively, for their help and valuable advice in difficult and complicated cases.

The total receipts of the Charitable Dispensary during the year amounted to the sum of Rs. 500-7-6 and the total expenditure to Rs. 167-9-0.

As it is a philanthropic institution and affords help to all alike without distinction of caste or creed, a sympathetic response from our generous countrymen is expected, so that the Institution may prove a real refuge for the sick and the poor. All contributions in the shape of money and medical necessaries are accepted and acknowledged most thankfully by (1) The President, R. K. Mission, Belur P. O., Dt. Howrah, (2) The Secretary, R. K. Mission, Udbodhan Office, 1. Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

An Appeal.

The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, is constructing an extension of their present buildings to accommodate the increasing number of patients seeking relief in the institution. On account of the rise in the prices of building materials and labour, the funds collected for the purpose is exhausted, and in apprehension of a further rise, it is thought imperative to finish the construction as soon as possible. The plan of the outdoor dispensary in contemplation includes ten rooms and one verandah: one dressing room, one operation room, one sterilising room, one Doctor's room, a waiting room for male patients, one waiting room for female patients, one dispensing room for males, one room for stocking medicines, one dispensing room for females, one lumber room for keeping bottles and other medical accessories. The cost for the nine rooms is estimated at the rate of Rs. 1500 for each; the operation room which will have marble floor and extensive skylights is estimated to cost Rs. 3500. The total estimate for all the rooms is Rs. 17000; of which the sum of Rs. 7000 has been collected and the balance of Rs. 10000 is now urgently needed. For want of money, the construction has stopped at the plinth-work. Last year the number of outdoor patients amounted to over twenty thousand, and the present dispensary buildings with only two small dispensing rooms and no dressing and operation room, is quite insufficient to meet the demands of the situation. The above estimate given, is approximate as it is not possible to be sure of the prices of materials and labour which are fluctuating from time to time. The Secretary appeals to the generous public to realise the needs of suffering humanity and come to their aid by contributing to complete the construction of the above works and thus help the Sevashrama to render relief and succour to the distressed. Persons desirous to perpetuate the memory of their dear relatives by constructing rooms bearing memorial tablets may contribute Rs. 1500 for any one of the nine rooms or Rs. 3500 for the operation room.

All contributions may be sent to—Swami Kalyanananda, Hony. Secy., The R. K. Mission, Sevashrama, P. O. Kankhal, Via Hardwar, Dt. Saharanpur, U. P.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HOME, MADRAS.

OPENING CEREMONY OF THE NEW BUILDINGS.

On the 10th of May, the auspicious Akshaya-Tritiya day, were opened the new buildings of the Ramakrishna Students' Home, a magnificent edifice erected on the Sullivan's Gardens Road, Mylapore. The Institution, which is a unique one in Southern India and has in the past played a very important part in the cause of the education of the poor, and of moulding the character of the youths in right direction, has a prospect of still more useful work in the future. The function of the dedication was itself imposing and inspiring. The procession with the picture of Sri Ramakrishna and the Salagrama Sila used for worship in the Home, started from the present habitation on the Cutchery Road, Mylapore, with the usual temple paraphernalia, music, chanting of the Vedas and Bhajana. It passed through the principal streets of Mylapore round the temple and reached the new place at exactly 9 a. m. The procession was headed by Swami Sharvananda, the President of the Committee of the Home and the presiding member of the Ramakrishna Mission Branch at Madras. His Serene Holiness Sri Swami Brahmananda, the President of the Mission, and Sri Swami Shivananda, the Vice-President, joined the party very near the new buildings. Swami Nirmalananda, the head of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Branch at Bangalore specially came for the function and accompanied the procession. Under shouts of "Sri Guru Maharajji ki Jai," Sri Swami Brahmananda first placed his foot in the buildings and blessed them. As soon as the whole party entered the library hall the Sanskrit verses in praise of Sri Ramakrishna composed by Swami Vivekananda were chanted in chorus by the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins of the Math. Then followed 'puja' and 'homa' performed by Swami Sharvananda, to purify the place. There was a large and respectable gathering. In the evening there was a Ramanama Sankirtan party at which devotional songs were sung by the Sannyasins. Mr. Visvanatha Aiyar of Kumbakonam contributed to the enjoyment of the party by singing some of the

famous Kirtanams of the devotees of Southern India.

HISTORY OF THE HOME.

A short history of the Home will be a useful adjunct to the report of this day's proceedings. The Home was started in 1905 by His Holiness Swami Ramakrishnananda, one of the devout and direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, who had been preaching the gospel of his Master in this Presidency incessantly for about fourteen years. Starting practically as an orphanage, the Home has grown into an institution giving free boarding and lodging to the absolutely indigent but promising students studying in the colleges and schools in the city of Madras. It is open to all classes of Hindus. A prominent feature of the institution is the attention that is being paid to the development of character of the boys and to their religious instruction in right lines, with unusual opportunities for coming under the direct and sole influence of Sri Ramakrishna Mission. Marriage is a disqualification for admission and continuance in the Home. Quite satisfactory progress of the student in studies is an essential condition of his retention in it. The Home, during its progress, has been visited by many of the prominent men of Southern India and its work has been uniformly applauded. The boys are trained in the actual management of the Home. Much of the correspondence and accounts of the Home is looked after by the boys themselves. Self-reliance and dignity of labour are prominently brought home to the students while they remain as inmates.

THE NEW BUILDINGS.

The Home had been located in a rented building which was obviously found unsuited to its growing needs. Impelled by the successful working of the past fourteen years, the authorities of the Home drew up a scheme for building a permanent habitation for the institution. In this they were assisted at the initial stage by the substantial help of a generous friend who made a free gift of 15 grounds of valuable land which forms now the major portion of the site on which the new buildings stand. The main structure is a two-storied building in the form of the letter 'E,' the central arm forming the library and reading-room on the ground-floor and a prayer hall on the first floor. The prayer hall is

still in an unfinished condition, the floor alone remaining to be laid. The hall is designed purposely on a grand scale to suit the purpose for which it is intended. The walls and ceiling are in perfect white with glossy appearance, the large doors and door-ways being richly carved. The western end of the hall carries a magnificently carved canopy to accommodate a marble statue of Saraswati which is being worked by Mr. Nagappan, the Sculptor of Madras. The other portions of the main buildings consist of the warden's room, an office and 36 rooms, each accommodating three students. Most of these rooms have been built by individual donors.

The kitchen block, lies exactly west of the main buildings and is separated from them by a neatly laid-out Puja-flower garden. It consists of a central kitchen and store room with large adjoining dining rooms on either side, one intended for Brahmins and the other for non-Brahmins. Behind the kitchen block is a cluster of small buildings which provide necessary bathing arrangements for the large number of boys that will be accommodated in the Home. For bathing and washing purposes, the water of the well dug in the compound is utilised. This water being pumped by means of electric motor, is stored in two elevated large iron tanks and drawn for use therefrom by a system of pipes laid in the bathing place. This special arrangement has been designed with the sole object of effecting economy in recurring water charges, payable to the municipality if the institution were to use municipal water for all its needs. The medical ward, stores and other out-houses have yet to be erected. The want of these did not stand in the way of using the buildings at present. The rooms are also furnished and the building has been fitted with electric lights. Each student has been provided with a stool, a small table and a shelf to keep his books and also with a small bedding consisting of a mat, a pillow and a bed-sheet. The estimate for the building scheme amounts to a lakh and eight thousand rupees. The Madras Government have been graciously pleased to pay half the cost.

To the south of the site on which the buildings stand, a plot of two acres of land has been acquired at a cost of about Rs. 30,000 for the purpose of providing a play-ground for the stu-

dents and preventing the growing up of dwelling quarters close to the Home.

MAINTENANCE.

The Home is maintained by voluntary contributions and donations which amounted in 1920 to Rs. 6,012 and were contributed by 320 persons. The amount ranged from annas 4 to Rs. 204. It is the endeavour of the authorities of the Home, hereafter, to found the endowments necessary for the upkeep of the large number of the students that will eventually be accommodated in the new buildings. So far the Home has been able to secure endowments to the extent of Rs. 48,993.

The authorities of the Home are contemplating the early starting of a technical institute to be attached to the institution, so that the promising students who show a leaning towards the technical line may be given adequate training to fit them up as useful mechanics or future managers of industrial concerns.

The authorities of the Home are to be congratulated on the excellent work that has been accomplished. Much yet remains to be done to carry out the programme they have in view. We wish them and the institution every success.

REVIEW.

The Heart of the Bhagavad-Gita. By Pandit Lingesh Mahabhagavat of Kurtkoti, Ph. D., now His Holiness Sankaracharya of Karvir and Sankeshwar. Published by Professor A. G. Widgery, The College, Baroda. Pp. 230 + LIII. Cloth-bound. Price Rs. 2-4.

The structures of those religions that are built on the teachings of some great personages are in the danger of receiving shocks so rude that they may tend to collapse and with them also the faith of their followers, if the historicity of their founders or the authenticity of the Scriptures that are said to embody their teachings is called in question. But Hinduism enjoys the great advantage that it stands on the bed-rock of eternal principles and is not founded on the personality of any particular teacher. There are no doubt the Avataras, the Rishis, the Acharyas and other great personalities but they receive respect and worship as embodiments of the principles, as preachers of

Truth that is not affected by time, space and causation.

Hinduism is thus founded on a securer basis. Even if the personality of Sri Krishna who preached the inspiring Message of the Song Celestial is demonstrated to be a mere myth, and the historicity of Veda Vyasa to whom the authorship of the Gita is attributed is proved to be false, the wonderful teachings of the Gita which contains the essence of the Upanishads, do by no means lose their value on that account. The historical researches and the so-called higher criticisms, however unfavourable they may be, cannot at all touch the soul of religion.

The author of the volume under review has very wisely avoided all discussions of a doubtful value and with great success has been able to represent truly 'the heart of the Bhagavad-Gita.' "If reason vouchsafes," he says, "the truths and if conscience approves of the ethics, we shall accept them and not otherwise." Indeed a broad outlook is absolutely necessary to understand and explain the liberal spirit that breathes through the whole of the book. "If Krishna were to teach a modern world, we should not be surprised to hear him include the Dhammapada, the Bible, the Koran and the Zendvestha among sacred books, and Buddha, Jesus, Mahammad and Zoroaster among persons to be revered as manifestations (of God)"—so writes the learned author.

The Gita is to be regarded as a philosophy of Brahman and a science of Yoga. "Its object is to show how the highest Vedantic truths are at the same time the simplest of all; how everyone of them can be applied and is meant to be so applied to the very practical work-a-day world and how religion means no more than philosophy applied to everyday life."

Various writers have tried to explain the Gita in different ways. Some think that in it Jnana-yoga is extolled, some identify it with Dhyana-yoga, others see in it an endeavour to exalt the Bhakti-yoga, others again say that it is a Karma-yoga Shastra, and so on. The learned author maintains, and that very rightly, that "no sectarian can claim the special sanction of the Gita in his favour. Knowledge, work, love and concentration are all here commended but none at the expense of the other." "Each of these four Yogas lead to

equanimity, the real Yoga and thus to the realisation of Brahman." His thoughts on the relation between the Bhakti-yoga and the Jnana-yoga are very illuminating—"When a Jnana-yogin attains to that ripe condition of knowledge called 'Jnana-nishtha' or firm adherence to knowledge, his realisation becomes absolutely indistinguishable from Para-Bhakti." He has also very ably refuted the misinterpretations of the Gita and repudiated baseless charges made by the Christian missionaries, the ignorance of the majority of whom about the true spirit of the Hindu Shastras is equalled only by their zeal to establish the superiority of their own Scriptures and culture.

The book under review was accepted by the Oriental University of Washington, U. S. A., as a thesis for the degree of Ph. D. It has since been included in the Gaekwad Studies of Religion and Philosophy and forms the third book of the Series. We hope it will prove to be of great help to those who want to acquaint themselves with the real "Heart of the Bhagavad-Gita."

NEWS AND NOTES.

THE following is the report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal P. O., Dt. Saharanpur, for the period from Dec. '20 to April, '21:—

Indoor patients:—There were 2 old and 68 newly admitted patients of whom 56 were discharged cured, 9 died, 1 left treatment and 4 were still under treatment. Outdoor patients:—The total number of cases were 10956, of which 4919 were new and 6037 repeated cases.

	Rs.	as.	p.
Last year's balance ...	9861	8	6
Received during the period	8001	4	3
Total receipts ...	17862	12	9
Total expenditure ...	10244	9	3
Balance ...	7618	3	6

THE Thrice Blessed Day of the life of Lord Buddha was observed by the Vivekananda Society of Calcutta, with 'Puja,' 'Bhoga' and 'Arati' on the Vaisakhi Purnima day in the Society premises, and was celebrated in a public meeting held on Saturday, the 28th May, in the hall of the Bengal Theosophical Society. Rai Bahadur Dr. Chuni

Lal Bose, Sheriff of Calcutta, presided. Babu Kiran Chandra Dutt, the Hony. Secretary, welcomed the respectable audience in a nice little speech explaining the significance of holding such an anniversary. After the recitation of the "Jaya Mangala Gatha" by the Buddhist monks, the chairman delivered a short but impressive speech, in which he said that this anniversary of the Birth, Enlightenment and Mahaparinirvana of the Lord Buddha should be observed by the Hindus and Buddhists alike, and the Vivekananda Society, a non-sectarian religious association had set an example by holding such anniversaries of the different prophets of the world. Speeches were delivered by several speakers on the Life and Teachings of Lord Buddha from different standpoints. Revd. Anagarika Dharmapala's pamphlet on 'Buddhism in its Relationship with Hinduism' was distributed.

The eleventh anniversary of the Sri Ramakrishna Samaj, Cuddapah and the Birthdays of Sri Sankara, Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were celebrated on the 12th May by the members of the Sri Ramakrishna Samaj. The programme for the day began with Archana and Abhisheka in the temples of Sri Visvesvara and Sri Anjaneya at exactly 6 a. m. In the evening a public meeting was held. The Secretary read the annual report, giving a very good account of the activities of the Samaj during the past year. This being over, Mr. K. Raghunatha Acharya, B. A., Joint Secretary of the Samaj, read his paper on "Vivekananda and Hinduism," which was much appreciated by all.

SRI Ramakrishna Girls' School which was established some fifteen years ago under the inspiration of His Holiness the late Swami Ramakrishnanandaji and was hitherto under a private management, has now been handed over to the Ramakrishna Mission, Madras Branch. Efforts are being made to develop it into an ideal institution.

THE President, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, begs to acknowledge with hearty thanks the following kind donations to the Ashrama:—J. S. Pinto Esq., Blantyre, Rs. 75; C. K. Iyer Esq., Rs. 25 (through Mr. R. Koyaji).

The Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission has sent the following communication to the Press:—

The public is hereby informed that the contributions to the R. K. Mission Relief Fund during famine and flood in Bengal and Orissa in the year 1920 amounted to Rs. 23945-11-9 and that a part of that amount was intended by some of the donors to be entirely spent in Midnapur Dist. Of the above sum Rs. 14604-3-0 were spent in relieving the distress of the suffering people of the affected areas in Kanas, Gorisagoda and Bhubaneswar of Puri Dt., Jenapur of Cuttack Dist., and Ghatal and Tamruk of Midnapur Dist. The balance of Rs. 9341-8-9 was proposed to be spent on the poor cultivators of the affected areas in the Midnapur Dist. during the cultivation period in March and April last in the shape of seed distribution. A local enquiry was made for the purpose in April last and it was found that the cultivators of the Midnapur Dist. had secured necessary seed grains for their use and that help at that period was unnecessary. While the Mission authorities were considering about spending the amount in that district on some future occasions when necessity would arise, the news of the sorrowful plight of the Assam Tea Garden Coolies and of the great distress due to scarcity of food grains prevailing in Khulna Dist. reached them through the columns of the newspapers and through the direct appeal of the Khulna Famine Relief Committee, of which Sir P. C. Roy is the President. The Governing Body of the Ramakrishna Mission has therefore thought it prudent to utilise the aforesaid balance in favour of these distressed people whose conditions demand immediate help. The Governing Body of R. K. Mission hopes that its decision will meet the approval of the donors of the aforesaid amount as well as of the general public.

The Mission has deputed a band of workers to Chandpur for Coolie Distress Relief with instructions to halt at Goalundo and to give necessary relief to the needy. At Goalundo 450 coolies were given pecuniary help and despatched to Naihat. The workers then left for Chandpur where they have been daily distributing 40 mds. of rice, 2 mds. of Dal and necessary salt to the coolies.

(Sd.) Swami Saradananda,
The R. K. Mission Branch, 1 Mukherji Lane,
Baghbazar, Calcutta.