

THE VEDANTA KESARI

“ Let the lion of Vedanta roar.”

“ Let me tell you, strength, strength is what we want
And the first step in getting strength is to uphold
The Upanishads and believe that ‘ I am the Atman . ’ ”

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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P R A Y E R

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य ।
त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो ।
लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभावः ॥
तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायम् ।
प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः ।
प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोडुम् ॥

THOU art the father of the world—of all that moves and all that stands. Greater than the great, Thou art the object of its worship. There is none equal to Thee. Who, then, can surpass Thee? Incomparable is Thy power in all the three worlds.

Therefore prostrate I fall before Thee, O Lord, and seek to win Thy grace. Bear with me even as a father with his son, as a friend with his friend, as a lover with his beloved.

GOSPEL OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

[*Dakshineswar—September 1884*]

IT is Monday, the third day of Sri Sri Durga Puja, being the 29th September of 1884. The day has just dawned : the holy aratrikam is done in the Mother's temple : the minstrels are still playing their morning tunes in the Nahabat : the gardeners and the priests are gathering flowers for the Mother's worship.

The Master has left his bed early in the morning when it was still dark. Bhavanath, Baburam, Niranjana and M. have opened their eyes to find him dancing ecstatically all over the floor, repeating all along : " Hail Durga ! Hail Durga ! Hail ! " Just a child as he is—his loins are bare !

Bhavanath and others had passed the night in the verandah of the Master's chamber.

A little while later, Sri Ramakrishna utters : " Sahajananda ! Sahajananda ! (Bliss Innate !) "

Next he thus repeats Govinda's name : " O Govinda—my soul, O my life ! "

The devotees are seated on their bed and are intently observing the Master's divine moods.

During this period, Hazrah is staying in the temple, with his seat in the south-eastern corridor. Latu also is then living there in constant service of the Master. Rakhal has gone to Brindavan ; and Naren who is expected to-day, often comes to visit him.

The northern corridor where the devotees passed the night was protected by partitions, it being now winter. There Sri Ramakrishna has taken his seat on a mat, after all have done their morning wash.

Bhavanath and M. sit close by him and others are now and then attending to him.

Sri Ramakrishna (to Bhavanath) : " The *Jivākotis* (*i. e.* ordinary individuals), you know, cannot easily have

faith. The faith of the *Iswarakotis* (*i. e.* divinely gifted individuals) is instinctive. When Prahlad went to write the letter *ka* he at once burst into tears for the letter reminded him of Krishna. But to be sceptical is the nature of the *Jivakoti*.

“ Hazra will never believe that Brahman and Sakti, and Sakti and Saktiman (*i. e.* he in whom Sakti or Energy inheres) are identical. When That is inactive, I call It Brahman ; the Same, when It creates and sustains and destroys, I call Sakti. But It is bothways the same identical Entity. From the word ‘ fire,’ its burning power necessarily follows, and from ‘ the burning power,’ the fire : you cannot think of the one without the other.

“ I then prayed : ‘ Mother, Hazra is trying to controvert this doctrine ; either convince him or remove him hence.’ The next day he came and confessed that he admitted the truth of this doctrine and said ‘ *Vibhu* (the All-pervading one) is existing everywhere !’ ”

A devotee : “ You were so much upset by Hazra’s words ! ”

Sri R. : “ My nature has undergone a change : I cannot now wrangle with people. I am not in a mood to debate and contend with Hazra. Hriday told me in Jadu Mallik’s garden, ‘ Uncle, do you no more want to enter into discussion with me ? ’ ‘ No,’ said I, ‘ I am no longer in that state of mind, it is not in me now to wrangle with you ! ’

“ What do knowledge and ignorance mean ? So long as one feels God distant, it is ignorance ; and when He is perceived as near, very close to you,—it is knowledge.

“ When one attains true knowledge, all objects appear to him as sentient. I used to talk to Sivu, a mite of a child of 3 or 4 years. I was then staying in those parts*. One day it was cloudy, with thunder and lightning flashes ; Sivu says : ‘ Uncle, look, how they strike

* Master’s birth place.

the match !' [*All laugh*]. Another day I found him going alone to catch butterflies ; the leaves of a tree near by were quivering ; he says to them : 'Hist, Hist ! I am to catch butterflies !' To the boy everything appeared as living.

"You cannot attain to God unless you have sincere faith, the faith of the child. Oh, what moods were mine ! One day something stung me amongst the grass. I feared it might be a snake. What could I do then ? I was told that if the snake repeats its bite, it withdraws the poison. So I at once began my search for the hole so that the snake might sting me again. Thus I went on when some one asked me what I was doing and when all told, he said, 'The second bite must be on the same part as the first.' Then only I came away. Probably it was some insect bite.

"Another day I heard from Ramlal that the autumn dew is wholesome. There is something of a rhyme on it, and Ramlal had told me that ; so that when I was driving back from Calcutta, I thrust out my head from the carriage to get the full benefit of the dew. The result was I fell ill." (Ramlal is the Master's nephew.)

Now the Master comes into his room and seats himself. His legs have slightly swollen, so he asked the devotees to examine if the pressure of their fingers make any depression therein. They find there are slight depressions ; but they all console him that it is nothing.

Sri R. (to Bhavanath) : "You will call Mahinder of Sinti, his assurance will set my mind right."

Bhavanath : "You have such great faith in medicine! We have not."

Sri R. : "Medicine is also His ! It is He, in one form the doctor. Gangaprasad told me not to drink water at night. I look upon his behest as the very Veda, for I know he is the very person of Dhanwantari*."

*The presiding deity of the art of medicine and healing.

Now Hazra joins the group. After some uncertain talks, the Master says to Hazra, "Look here, why did the sight of Narendra move me so much, although so many others like Bijoy and Kedar were present there at Ram's? Kedar, I have seen, belongs to the plane of *Karanananda**"

Yesterday, the second day of Sri Durga Puja, Sri Ramakrishna had been to Calcutta to see the image of the Mother Durga, and, on his way to Adhar's, he stopped at Ram's where many devotees had assembled, and amongst them Narendra. As the Master saw him he stretched his leg over his knee and went into Samadhi. The Master is referring to this incident.

In a short while Narendra makes his appearance. The joy of the Master knows no bounds.

*Ananda or Bliss of the *Karana sharira* or *anandamaya kosha*, the sheath or *kosha* nearest to the Atman and which is analogous to the *upadhi* of *Iswara*.

HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM*

SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

WHEN I was requested to preside at this meeting I accepted the invitation without any hesitation for the special reason that Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Foster is my personal friend and a student. I have been her guest in her home at Honolulu, and when I was lecturing in San Francisco after establishing the Vedanta Society of San Francisco, she became one of the members and attended my classes and lectures on every occasion. . . . Mrs. Mary Foster told me when I spoke to her about Vedanta Philosophy, that she did not know anything about it. She thought she helped Mr. Dharmapala and asked whether I knew him or not. I said, "Yes". He has been my friend for many years. I knew him in 1891 before he went to America, when Charu Babu was his Secretary and the Maha-Bodhi Society was established ; we were then living as monks in Baranagore and afterwards at Alambazaar. I also met Dharmapala in New York while he was travelling. He did not succeed in establishing a temple for Buddhism in any part of the United States ; but we were more successful. Mrs. Foster told me that she had given considerably to India through Mr. Dharmapala. So I consider this building as ours, not only as belonging to the Buddhists only, but to the Hindus as well. It is the temple of Universal Religion which Lord Buddha preached and which we are preaching to-day. Buddha's teachings and the teachings of Vedanta are not different. Lord Buddha preached the doctrine of the Upanishads—the pure Advaita Vedanta. Buddha described Nirvana as : " There is neither coming nor going, neither standing, neither death or birth. It is without basis, without procession, without cessation—that is the end of sorrow, that is *Nirvana*." It is the same thing as the Absolute Truth which is described by Sankaracharya as Brahman. Buddha neither denied nor emphasised the existence of Atman ; still he was cognisant of the Absolute Truth which was afterwards described by the Madhyamika School of Buddhists as *Sunyam*. *Sunyata* is the same as Brahman of the Vedanta.

*Presidential Speech at the Maha-Bodhi Society, Calcutta, on Monday 21st September, 1925, on the occasion of the 81st birthday anniversary of Mrs. Foster, a patroness of the Maha-Bodhi Society.

ऊर्ध्वशून्यं अधः शून्यं
 मध्यशून्यं यदात्मकम् ।
 सर्वशून्यं स आत्मेति etc.

That is the negative side which was emphasised by the Madhyamika School ; but the same negative expression was contradicted by the positive expression which was

ऊर्ध्वपूर्णं अधः पूर्णं
 मध्यपूर्णं यदात्मकम् ।
 सर्वपूर्णं स आत्मेति etc.

Everything of the relative phenomena is destroyed and reduced to nothingness or noumenon. In order to get out of relativity, we must proceed towards the Absolute, transcend the limitations of time, space and causation, and enter into the abode of noumenon where we shall find the fulfilment of the saying,

पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदचयते ।
 पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

The whole universe is pervaded by the Infinite Being ; every atom of the universe is pervaded by that One Existence, Intelligence and Bliss. That is more solid than ether of space. Sir Oliver Lodge in his book on "Ether of Space" says that ether is more solid than steel. There is no such thing as empty space in any part of that solid substance which is known as "ether of space" ; but Brahman is more solid than ether of space ; it is solidity—*Chidghana*—itself. We cannot imagine a speck of space which is not pervaded by Brahman.

Buddha's teachings are grand and glorious because he taught the truths of the Sanatana Dharma. When the orthodox Hindus rejected Buddha and his teachings and called Buddha an atheist, they struck at the very core of the Sanatana Dharma. They did not know what harm they were doing by denying the teachings of Buddha ; but in the teachings of Sankaracharya and of other great masters we have found that the truth which was proclaimed by Buddha was the universal truth of Vedanta, the essence of the Vedas, although he was wise enough not to go into discussions regarding the existence of God which prevailed in those days. His religion was based upon the humanitarian principles. Buddha was extremely practical and he wanted to see happiness established in the hearts of all. His four *Noble Truths* were the truths which

were taught in the Upanishads—the existence of evil, the cause of evil, the cessation of evil, and how to attain to happiness. All these four noble truths were not Buddha's invention. He inherited them from the teachers who preceded him and those teachings he gave to the masses belonging to all creeds. He was broad, liberal and generous. If we accept the teachings of Buddha, we accept the teachings of the Sanatana Dharma, and this hall which was erected by the gifts of Mrs. Foster should not be considered as a thing belonging to a particular school. It belongs to India and to the Hindus among whom Buddhists are included. Buddhists are not outside of the Hindus. There are good Hindus and there are bad Hindus amongst us. We might be worse than they are, but still we are brethren. We might worship images in the form of Durga, Siva, etc.

BUDDHISM AND IMAGE WORSHIP

But do you know that the image-worship was introduced by Buddhists themselves? If some Buddhists condemn image worship to-day, they must know that their fore-fathers first created the statues of Buddha, Vajratara and other Devas. They introduced the worship of images first relating to Buddha and his life, just as you see here on the walls. I have seen them in stones in Taxilla near Rawalpindi, Peshawar and Calcutta museum. I have got books on them too. So Buddhism introduced many things among the Hindus. The worship of Jagannath was introduced by Buddhists. Jagannath, Balaram and Subhadra of the Hindus at Puri were the emblems of the Tri-ratna of the Buddhists at the temple of Sri Kshetra. Only two years ago, I crossed the Himalayas on foot and went to Tibet. There I saw the three figures carved out on the stones of the Himalayas in black, white and yellow. If you read Huen Tsang's travels and his life you will find that Sri Kshetra was a great Vihara of the Buddhists. So, my friends, Buddhism has introduced this worship and do you know that Shiva is nothing but Buddha in another form? The snake over the head of Buddha becomes the snake on the neck of Shiva and Vishnu as the Seshasayi is Buddha in his Pari-Nirvana lying down on his right side, with devotees worshipping him with folded hands. When I try to trace image-worship I have to go back to the Buddhistic period, and if I have to blame any one, I have to blame the Buddhists for image-worship that has crept into Hindu community and religion.

Therefore we should be broad and liberal. We should embrace Hinduism in our fold. Buddhism was at one time a very dry philosophical doctrine. It needed some emotion and works of emotion in it, and which were afterwards introduced in the religion of Chaitanya Dev. The best part of Buddhistic thought still exists in India and will be found in the religion of Vaishnavas—I mean the element of Bhakti. You know that the Sahajiya sect of Vaishnavas, especially of Chandi Das and Vidyapathi, advocating free love, were originally a sect of the Buddhists in Bengal. The 'Domas' were originally worshippers of Dharma—'Dhamma' in Pali became 'Doma,' the God of the untouchable sect of the Hindu community. The Hindus hate them as outcastes, because they did not perform the purification ceremony and become converted into Hindus. This is the beginning of 'Asprisyata' in Bengal and other parts of India. Those who were 'Asprisyata' were originally Buddhists; and because they did not accept the 'Prayashchittam' which was offered to them by the Hindu leaders, they were punished by ostracism. Buddhism has done a great deal of good and Buddhism has also introduced all these faults that we find to-day in Hinduism. At the time when Buddha lived there was no image worship. You don't find any mention of it in the Vedas. So the worship of the images of Shiva, Durga, Krishna, Rama, etc., was a later introduction. Their statues and temples were the imitation of the Buddhistic statues and temples. If you go to Rangoon you will find the Swedagon Pagoda which has four Lion Gates—Simhadwara—just like those of Jagannath temple. Before this modern temple was rebuilt by the Hindus, it looked similar to the Swedagon Pagoda temple of Buddha in Rangoon, Burma.

Mrs. Foster by donating to Mr. Dharmapala and the Maha-Bodhi Society has donated to the Hindu Religion and I shall be very glad to see that Mr. Dharmapala appoints a Committee of Trustees. The members of this Trust should come from all sects of Hindus, not merely from the Buddhists of Ceylon, and they will form the trustees of this beautiful mansion and temple which was built through the bounties of Mrs. Foster. But if he wants to make it a sectarian thing, Mrs. Foster's desires will be frustrated. She thinks she has helped India and Indians by donating such a large sum of money. She told me positively about it. When I asked her for donation she replied, "Why should you ask for further

donations when I have already done so much for India through Mr. Dharmapala ?” That was her answer and I am very glad to express her ideas here at this meeting when we are honouring her during her eighty-first birthday anniversary. I shall write to her about this meeting. She will of course come to know through correspondence from her friends and the secretary of this Vihara. I will tell her that I had the honour and privilege of presiding over this meeting.

VEDANTA AND BUDDHISM

I wish to say only one word more before I conclude. I have great respect for Buddhism and the life of Buddha and his teachings. When I was waiting on Sri Ramakrishna at the Cossipore garden while he was sick in bed, Swami Vivekananda, myself and another Swami went to Buddha Gaya. We were studying ‘Lalitavistar’ at that time and we were admiring his Tapasya, austerities and determination which Buddha had just before he attained to Buddhahood. We used to recite

इहासने शुष्यतु मे शरीरं
त्वगस्थिमांसं विलयं च यातु ।
अप्राप्य बोधिं बहुकल्पदुर्लभां
नैवासनात्कायमतच्चलिष्यते ॥

“I shall firmly sit on the seat under this tree and shall not move until I have attained to Buddhahood. That Bodhi which is so difficult to attain I must attain. Let the bones of my body be scattered by the winds and my flesh be destroyed and reduced to atoms ; still I shall not move until I have attained to that Bodhi.”

There is another passage which I often used to recite :—

वरं मृत्युः प्राणहरो धिक्
ग्राम्यं नो च जीवितम् ।
संग्रामे निधनं श्रेयः
न च जीवेत् पराजितः ॥

When he was fighting against the temptations of Mara, the personification of Evil, he was talking to himself, “ I shall fight to the finish. I shall rather die than live defeated by Mara, the Evil Doer. It is better to die on the battle-field fighting, than to live at the mercy of the enemy.” What determination he had ! What courage and strength of mind Buddha showed to the world ! We must take his example and hold it before our eyes. Let us follow his path and live up to the ideal

which Buddha preached in the world. The Nirvana of Buddhism is not a state of negation ; it is the attainment of absolute peace and happiness. If Buddha emphasised the negative side of Nirvana, it was Sankaracharya who emphasised the positive side of Nirvana. Therefore we must combine both and consider that a higher ideal of Nirvana was represented not by Buddha alone nor by Sankara, but by both Buddha and Sankara. They described both sides of the same thing. Therefore we should regard them both as our Leaders, Masters and Saviours.

PESSIMISM AND LIFE'S IDEAL : THE HINDU OUTLOOK AND A CHALLENGE

(With a criticism of Life and an interpretation of History)

PRINCIPAL KAMAKHYA NATH MITRA, M. A.

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(Continued from page 212)

OUR political subjection and social evils are not due to our philosophy and religion. Swami Vivekananda was never tired of repeating this truth. It is the decline of the influence of our philosophy and religion and the perversion of the truths they contain that have brought us to this sad pass. Raja Rammohan, the founder of the Brahma Samaj, did not understand this cardinal fact though he studied all our Shastras and really meant well. True it is that he was the first to translate into Bengali the Upanishads and the *Sankara-bhashya* of the Vedanta. It is also true that he talked of *Nirguna Brahma* now and then. Yet a man of realisation he emphatically was not, for the practice of *Vairagya*, which is the secret of vision and which alone can enable a man to catch the spirit of the Shastras, is not to be found anywhere in his life. In accepting the suggestion of David Hare to introduce Western education in the country systematically and on a large scale and in approaching the Government on this behalf he did well, no doubt, for a comparative study of the two types of culture is necessary for us to appreciate the greatness of our achievements, but that is a matter for which his services need not be exaggerated in as much as Western education on a small scale had already been introduced by the Christian missionaries of Serampore and it would have been more widely spread sooner or later without the least effort of Raja Rammohan to support its claim. As long as it is England's political necessity and as long as England produces philistines like Macaulay so long Western education will not be without its champion. Western science we gladly welcome. Had India been free like Japan, the dissemination of Western science might have been wider and quicker and her contribution to science, the development of which was arrested a few centuries ago, might have been much greater still. But there is something greater than science. What, therefore, is most objectionable is the Raja's

disparagement of our philosophy and religion in the petition he addressed to Lord Amherst, the then Governor-General of India, though in justice to him it must be said that he was not a snob but had self-respect enough to stand in defence of Hinduism when it was unfairly attacked by the Christian missionaries, the kith and kin of the ruling civilians. If Hinduism had been false, he need not have defended it from patriotic motives, but it is more true than he ever imagined. He had yet to know that the highest realisation can come to a man even through the worship of images if his heart is in the right place, though image-worship is not compulsory for a Hindu. The defence of Hinduism he attempted therefore was a halting performance. He paid the Christian Missionaries back in their own coin by attacking Trinitarianism and by showing that it is not far removed from Hindu "idolatry." He composed a song that reminds us of Shakespeare's lines :

" We are such stuff
As dreams are made of ; and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep. "

But in the very next breath he said that India had gone to the dogs through her doctrine of Maya. Maya-vada, the greatest doctrine the world has ever produced, is not at all responsible for our country's degradation and the Jesus of the pamphlet Raja Rammohan wrote, entitled *The Precepts of Jesus : The Way to Peace and Happiness*, is not at all necessary for our country's salvation, though every true Hindu has respect for Jesus as He comes up to our ideal of a perfect *Sannyasin*. How dynamic is the doctrine of Maya, how inestimable its moral value, I have already shown in this paper. Let me but add that *Advaita-vada* (non-dualism), the great doctrine, " Thou art That, " the counterpart and positive aspect of the negative doctrine of Maya, is not Pantheism as many people erroneously believe. " A-cosmic Pantheism " it may be called though the term is awkward and reminiscent of a " circular square. " That moral life cannot stand on Pantheism is quite clear from the glaring inconsistency between the Ethics and Metaphysics of the system of Spinoza. Because Nature is unmoral, therefore Pantheism is false. The All of *Sarvam khalvidam Brahma* is not the All of Pantheism; but the All of Advaita. Nor should *Advaita-vada* be mistaken for the Monism of Europe with its anti-ascetic morality the monism with its fancied harmony between the Unseen

and the Seen, the monism with its apotheosis of the Concrete Universal. The Pragmatism and the Pluralism of James are a thousand times better and more vital than this sort of Monism. Bradley writes his *Appearance and Reality*. From the first part of the book it appears that he is approaching our *Maya-vada*. But what do we find in the latter part of the book and in his later work as a whole? The answer we find in the following words of Muirhead: "Though all these things are not the realities they sometimes appear, yet they are the appearances of reality and if we do not find it in them we shall not find it anywhere at all. It is this voice that speaks in the latter part of the book (*Appearance and Reality*) and in his (Bradley's) later work as a whole (*Mind*, April, 1925, pp. 183-184)."

Raja Rammohan never truly understood *Advaita-vāda* nor could he enter into the spirit of the other schools of Hinduism through the want of *Vairāgya* in his life. The Hebrew Bible and the Greek Bible Raja Rammohan may have read, but he could not enter into the spirit of Christianity either, for to understand Christianity a man must understand the spirit of renunciation above all. The Raja passed through the phase of French Illumination and Deism and at last accepted Unitarianism as final. The Mono-theism of Islam also appealed to him. Unitarianism, Arianism or Socinianism which was once the religion of the Vandal barbarians is not the last word of Christianity. It does not appear that the Raja was ever acquainted with the religious experience of a Christian saint like St. Francis of Assisi. That is why with all his reading of the Vedas and Vedanta he found his final resting place in Unitarianism - cum - Mono-theism - cum-Protestantism - cum-Eclecticism and it is on that foundation that he presumed to build the fabric of Universal Religion. The Raja was a Mono-theist and his mono-theistic interpretation of Hinduism is unacceptable. Hinduism never is and never was co-extensive with Mono-theism. It means much more than Mono-theism and at the same time has a place in the niches of her temple for the Personal and Anthropomorphic God of Mono-theism and all the gods, avatars, prophets and saints worshipped by the Hindus. The Hindus believe in One in Many (Immanent), in One above Many (Transcendent), in One in Many and above Many both (Pan-entheism) and One only (*advaitavada*) which is neither immanent nor transcendent nor immanent and transcendent both, but some sort of

One they all accept. Swami Vivekananda's interpretation is that all the different sects and cults and systems have a provisional value but they all lead to *adwaita-vada* which is the last word of philosophy and religion—and *in our country philosophy and religion are one*. Swami Vivekananda's interpretation is based on the facts of actual religious experience. In the words of Emerson, "consciousness moves along a graded plane." What the Hindus are unanimous about is the spirit of renunciation on which they all insist. Dogmatic monotheism, as we know it, is a very poor affair. It is "a miserable conception" in the words of Plotinus. The last word of Hinduism (as distinguished from Jainism and Buddhism of the *Hina-yana* school) is *Ekamevaadvitiam* (One without a second). But the One of *Ekamevaadvitiam* is neither the One of Mono-theism nor the One of Pan-theism nor the One of the so-called Monism of Modern Europe. It means *atma-tatwa* or the Truth about the Self. It means THAT THOU ART. *This Self is the True Absolute*. It is not the reality that underlies appearances, It is neither the Abstract Universal nor the Concrete Universal. It is not the thing-in-itself. It does not underlie anything. It does not overlie anything. It appears as Many, but that is *Avidya* (Ne-science). As long as we see the Many, the One is not. When the true Illumination or Self-realisation comes, the world simply vanishes with its manifold. To those who have arrived at this stage "this world which is so real with all its suns and milky ways"—is nothing. It is not merely a philosophy but the greatest fact of religious experience. *Here is the True Absolute, and the Religion which lays down the discipline (Sadhana) for the realisation of this True Absolute is the Absolute Religion and not that which Hegel and Rudolf Eucken make out to be.*

The Universal Religion of Raja Rammohan is a chimera. No Universal Religion can be based on mere rationalistic Mono-theism which rejects Revelation, and even when Monotheism is based on Revelation—of Revelation there are degrees, the final Revelation being *Adwaita Sruti*—it has no claim to be called Universal Religion, for it rejects the varieties of religious experience and is perhaps the most intolerant creed that has afflicted mankind. Lecky in his *History of European Morals* has pointedly brought home this truth. That which is supposed to be the worst Poly-theism with the worship of Images and Symbols has at least the merit of toleration to com-

mend itself to men. But the vaunted Mono-theism with its colossal pretensions to superiority has no such merit to speak of. It has drenched the earth in human gore. It is against the genius of Hindu civilisation. That is why Raja Rammohan failed and Keshab Chandra Sen failed with all the spirit of their eclecticism, and where Rammohan failed and Keshab failed Rabindranath with his æstheticism is not likely to succeed. Eclecticism is contemptible. Syncretism is colour-less. That is why the Brahma Samaj to-day is a moribund institution. The house is divided against itself. A tiny, insignificant sect without the ideal of *Sannyasa*, it is split up into three sections not very friendly to one another—and yet the funniest part of the thing is the parade it makes of its so-called cosmopolitanism which is not quite unintelligible, for when a movement is rejected in the country of its origin, it must lean for support on the world without ; but the world knows what it is what.

The correct evaluation of Raja Rammohan is that presented by Sir John Woodroffe and Mahatma Gandhi than whom more impartial students it is not easy to conceive. What Sir John Woodroffe said he said as President at a Rammohan anniversary meeting, and his words came as a sharp rebuke to Dr. Brajendra Nath Seal whose exaggerated and pedantic estimate of Raja Rammohan was more than what Sir John could bear. As for the words of Mahatma Gandhi, they have inflicted a blow from the effects of which the Samaj has not yet recovered.

It is only the other day that Mahatma Gandhi launched his criticism of the Arya Samaj and its most fanatical manual known as *Satyartha Prakash*. The Arya Samaj took the criticism so very seriously that it actually thought of sending a deputation to the Mahatma at Sabarmati. Whether the deputation was actually sent I do not remember. But the Mahatma's criticism disturbed the sleep of Lala Lajpat Rai who issued a very ineffectual protest from his retreat at Geneva. A poorer performance than the Lala's protest it is hard to imagine. Dogmatic mono-theism is the creed of the Arya Samaj of the Punjab, but it differs from the Brahma Samaj in that it has a backbone that is strong for it recognises *Sannyasa* as the highest ideal of life and accepts Revelation, though its interpretation of the Vedas is vitiated by a bias. It has more life than the Brahma Samaj of Bengal and, in spite of

its grossly vituperative literature, has done more good to the country. In the words of Sir Herbert Risley : " The Aryas start with a definite creed resting upon scriptures of great antiquity and high reputation ; their teaching is of a bold and masculine type and is free from the limp eclecticism which has proved fatal to the Brahma Samaj " (Risley's People of India, Edition of 1915, page 254).

Our Pessimism with its resulting conception of Mukti cannot be environmental and temperamental. It is the outcome of profound feeling and deep thought. Where in the world is environment so beautiful and sublime ? Such environment is well calculated to make man optimistic, and whoever will survey the history of India will be struck with the festive temperament of her people. The proverbial " thirteen festivals in twelve months " have not yet completely disappeared from the country. What has happened to British India is known only to those who have studied well the present economic and political condition of the country. Many hold that India is getting poorer and poorer and the burden of her sorrows getting heavier and heavier. Sir Michael Sadler who came here the other day mournfully observed : " Smile has departed from the face of Bengal." But even if it be supposed for the sake of argument that India is really getting happier and her cash balance in the banks is steadily mounting higher, does it follow from such admission that optimism must be the necessary consequence of such a happy state of things ? Did the Prince Gautama ever want for anything in his palace with its paraphernalia ? It is a pity that such silly stuff occurs in one of the greatest books of the world—I mean, Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.

Now let us compare Pessimism with Optimism. A strict Optimist is he who can say with Leibnitz that everything is best in this best possible world. If anybody really believes in the truth of this dictum, then he should remain perfectly contented with things as they are. That being so, how can he claim to have moral life at all ? Moral life is the logical consequence of Pessimism. Optimism can never give it. Hence Optimism is unacceptable. It is false and is the outcome of thoughtlessness or theological prejudice or both combined.

Let us come to Meliorism next—Meliorism, the prevailing creed of the West to-day, a cross between Optimism and Pessimism, the creed of infinite rectilinear progress, occasional

set-backs notwithstanding. That Auguste Comte and Frederic Harrison, his well known disciple, should have entertained this unscientific belief is a matter of extreme regret, to say the least, —and the most surprising thing is that William James, who boldly raised the standard of revolt against the despotism of Hegel, could not shake off the spell of the master-wizard, for Hegel's Meliorism he wholly accepted. When James saw disjunction, the greatest disjunction between moral life and the life of Nature certainly could not have escaped his notice, and in Maya-vada was his true deliverance. He came in contact with Swami Vivekananda, was a great admirer of the Swami but he shrugged his shoulders at the mention of Maya and sought refuge in the pluralistic world. If James had accepted Maya-vada, he might have been the greatest philosopher of the West to-day, for not even Plato and Kant could rise above Dualism proper. Then how Huxley, according to whose premiss there is a yawning gulf between the ethical process and the cosmic process between which no harmony is possible, in whose Biology there is no such thing as infinite progress and whose Evolution means regression and reversion as well—how Huxley, one of the frankest men the world has ever produced, could at all hold out the melioristic hope, the most illogical conclusion ever seen, is a phenomenon that is simply inconceivable. Is it a case of Tennyson's "believing where we cannot prove"? No "Will to Believe" of James can lead one to such belief. And still one believes—but why? "Prejudice" is the only answer. For a world of so much political progress, so much economic progress, so much Will to Power, such belief is but natural. **THIS IS THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MELIORISM. INDIA'S PHILOSOPHY ALONE COULD RISE ABOVE HER ENVIRONMENT.** The unscientific character of Meliorism I have already established in this paper. That *it is unhistorical* I also firmly maintain. No historical proof can be adduced in support of this creed. If you talk of a God in History, you will have also to recognise the Devil there. On the broad field of History, a ceaseless battle is raging between God on the one hand and the Devil on the other. Sometimes God emerges victorious, sometimes the Devil. **THIS IS THE TRUE PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY.** This view is supported by India's philosophy and this is the conclusion of my historical studies. **BARBARISATION OF THE CIVILISED WORLD** has happened more than once. What proof is there that barbarisation will not occur again? Many thinkers are of opinion that **RE-BARBARISATION IS ALREADY**

THERE. Carlyle, Ruskin and Tolstoy contemplated with horror the moral degradation of Europe and sounded a note of warning just in time, but theirs was a voice lost in the wilderness. THE LAST EUROPEAN WAR, its disastrous effects and another such diabolical war—no Armageddon—looming in the horizon are facts about which the less said the better. The tall talk of Right and Justice which assails our ears in times of such wars has never deceived any one who knows what is what. Not that we deny that just wars are possible. Just wars and righteous wars we Hindus frankly recognise. Pacifists as a nation we never were—not even in the Buddhist period of our history. KURUKSHETRA we call DHARMA-KSHETRA. The traditions of the Maha-Bharat and Ramayana, the history of the Rajputs, Mahrattas and Sikhs are sources of perennial inspiration to everyone who has the true Hindu blood in his vein. The Kshatriya's *dharma* and the righteous war the Hindus can therefore very well understand. But the last European War and the war not very far off do not show Right and Justice on any side whatever. IF THIS IS NOT RE-BARBARISATION I DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS. Where is then the historical basis of melioristic faith and hope? It is nothing but a poet's dream—this “Parliament of man and Federation of the world.” All that we can concede in favour of Meliorism .. that looked at from the ethical standpoint, it has a pragmatic value of its own, but that is because there is an element of truth in it and that truth belongs to Pessimism. The element of hope in Meliorism—the hope of infinite progress—is no hope at all, because it is the vainest hope as Science and History incontestably prove. And if pragmatic value be at all our test in the matter, then the pragmatic value of Pessimism is decidedly higher, for Pessimism is truth and nothing but truth and Meliorism an illusion, a mirage, the philosopher's fiction and the poet's dream. At first it appears very attractive no doubt, but it melts away as we see it through.

MY ARGUMENT THUS IS TRILEMMATIC. There are three alternatives and not more than three—Optimism, Meliorism and Pessimism. A fourth alternative may be that of blank despair and suicide, but this is not the meaning of Pessimism in philosophy and so it should be ignored altogether. Neither Indian Philosophy nor the Philosophy of Schopenhaur is pessimistic in this sense. We all say that there is a way out but the world is essentially an evil. We have got to choose between the three alternatives only. We must call ourselves

either Optimists or Meliorists or Pessimists. There is no escape from this. Now both Optimism and Meliorism have been proved to be false. PESSIMISM THEREFORE IS THE ONLY TRUTH AND THIS IS THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE. As for the POSITIVE PROOFS OF PESSIMISM, I have also placed them before my readers.

If there is any true view of life, it is Pessimism alone. *It is not a pose.* That Pessimism is a pose, we have heard from RABINDRANATH himself. When the poet visited Europe in the year the Nobel Prize was awarded to him, he contributed an article on Pessimism to the Hibbert Journal of England. It is in that article that Rabindranath called Pessimism a pose. Whether 'pose' is a term rightly applicable to Rabindranath or to the Yogis and Rishis of India is a matter I leave to my readers to decide. I admit that a pseudo-pessimist like Byron may strike an attitude for the sake of effect, but the inner meaning of Pessimism I have discussed at length and so an emphatic protest against Rabindranath's view of Pessimism is absolutely needed before I finish my paper. The two chief reasons that appear to be responsible for Rabindranath's estimate of Pessimism are : (1) the theology of the Brahma Samaj to which he belongs and (2) the inspiration he derives like Wordsworth from Nature. As for the theology of the Brahma Samaj, everybody knows that it is optimistic mono-theism with the Unitarian, the Protestant and the eclectic elements in it propped up by convenient texts from the Upanishads ; and as for the poets of Nature it is a remarkable fact that a hopeless confusion of ideas that exists in their mind about the Moral Law and the Law of Nature stands in the way of their true interpretation of human life and activities. Even such a poem as Wordsworth's Ode to Duty may be cited to illustrate the truth of my remark. It is one of the greatest poems in the whole range of literature, and some of the greatest truths have been feelingly uttered by Wordsworth in this poem. But there is one false note which jars on our ears and it is this :

" Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
And the most ancient Heavens through Thee
are fresh and strong. "

These are lines of considerable beauty no doubt ; but our poet of Nature here has made a mess of the whole thing as he has confused Moral Law with the Law of Nature—two laws that are quite distinct, for Physical Law is unmoral. Many more

examples may be cited like this, but one typical instance is enough.

That Nature, though unmoral, is beautiful and sublime none can deny. From Nature comes the poet's inspiration—and the contemplation of her beauty, it is quite true, brings not only joy and calm to the mind but causes even trance to certain soft souls. Wordsworth, for instance, was subject to this trance. Whether Rabindranath also falls into this sort of trance I do not know. BUT THIS KIND OF TRANCE IS NOT AND CANNOT BE THE SAMADHI OF OUR YOGIS. Had that been so Wordsworth would never have written like this :

“ Me this uncharter'd freedom tires ;

I feel the weight of chance desires. ”

The man who passes into *Samadhi* ceases to have any moral struggle at all, perfect self-mastery being his constant experience. The man returning from this state is a new man altogether like Lord Buddha of hallowed memory. This is THE MEANING OF TRANSMUTATION. On the heights of the mountains and in the depths of the forests were the hermitages of the Yogis of India. The Himalayas and Vindhya-chal, the banks of the Ganga and the Yamuna, the Godavari and the Saraswati, the Narmada, the Sindhu and the Kauvery, the solitary shores of the heaving seas of Malabar and Coromandal, the deep forests of Naimisaranya and Dandakaranya are still vibrant with their spirituality and are the places of pilgrimage to thousands of weary souls craving for the Beyond. Face to face with the Sublime and the Beautiful in Nature they always stood, and it would be absurd to suppose that they had no feeling for Nature because they habitually shut their eyes and retired into themselves. They had all the feelings of the poets and a great deal more. They knew a higher healing power than the healing power of Nature, and they knew that Nature can never be a substitute for the Self. They knew Nature not only as beautiful and sublime, but they knew her also “ red in tooth and claw,” and they knew also the instincts she has implanted in man—the instincts that bring all our woes. The æsthetician's weakness was never theirs and they knew that communion with Nature can never take the place of self-discipline. Wordsworth felt this and that explains his invocation to Duty, “ the stern daughter of the voice of God.” *The apotheosis of Nature is but refined idolatry.* That which is beautiful is not necessarily good and necessarily true. *Satyam, Sivam, Sun-*

'*daram* (the True, the Good, the Beautiful), *Raso vai sa* (He is Bliss itself) are texts that have nothing to do with the world of Maya, and even the most innocent joy arising from the contemplation of Nature is not *Paramananda* (Supreme joy) but *Vishayananda* (fleeting joy arising from the world of sense). The *rishis* knew all about the feeling of Wordsworth for Nature and Rabindranath's feeling for Nature—and above all they had a taste of that Joy after tasting which it is impossible for a man to be joyless again ; but wonder of wonders ! their unanimous verdict is that life is full of misery and it is reserved for Rabindranath to say that pessimism is a pose ! In justice to Rabindranath I must say that he has smitten on the chord of sorrow as very few have done, and his best poems I believe are those with a sad note in them. As Shelley has so well said :

“ Our sweetest songs are those
That tell of saddest thoughts.”

Thus we see that not only the highest life but also the best poetry comes from Pessimism. The poem that to my mind comes straight from the heart of Rabindranath in spite of his theology and attitude towards Nature is that well-known song in his *Gitanjali* :

Jaraye acche badha,
Chharaye jete chhai and etc.

The delicacy of the poem it is impossible to communicate through an English version but the sense is this : “ Entangled am I in the meshes of life. How I yearn to be free from these, yet the thought of freedom fills me with pain. I come to You, Lord, to pray for Mukti. I know that you alone are to be sought after, but when I look within and see the number of desires there, I feel ashamed of myself and the word Mukti sticks in my throat. The dust of earth covers my soul and brings to me death after death. I hate all this from the bottom of my heart and yet cannot help loving all this. That is why I tremble with fear when I come to You to pray for my good.”

What is all this but Pessimism—not THE SOARING PESSIMISM OF THE HINDU, the Pessimism that leads to Mukti, but the very wail and groan of despair. That being so, does it lie in the poet's mouth to say that Pessimism is a pose ? Why again do his disciples say that *vairagya sadhan* is no part of their *dharmā*, it is enough if they feel joy in life, hold communion with Nature, read poetry at leisure and visit the *mandir*

(church) now and then to hear a song, a prayer and a sermon? Why is it that they do not admit that there is a higher chastity than that of the married state and why is it that they have such rooted antipathy against the ideal of *Sannyasa*? Unless they come forward with a straight reply to these straight questions, I am bound to say that RABINDRANATH'S VOICE IS NOT THE VOICE OF INDIA AND HE IS NOT AT ALL OUR REPRESENTATIVE POET. The man who will interpret India must have reverence for India's ideals. The man who will interpret India must enter into the spirit of her cultural continuity and cultural history from the Vedic times to THE PRESENT AGE—THE AGE OF RAMAKRISHNA. If the people of the West fail to understand that Rabindranath's message is his own message—for Rabindranath is a man of genius in his own way and has his share of originality though *originality does not mean anything absolutely new*—, for that matter if they fail to understand that his message is the message of the Brahma Samaj based on Unitarianism-cum-Protestantism-cum-Eclecticism embellished with those texts from the Upanishads which suit its purpose, or for that matter if they fail to understand that his voice is the voice of the poets of Nature and the so-called mystic poets of the West with slight variations here and there, then it is the duty of India to disabuse the mind of the people of the West of the false impression they are labouring under. That in Rabindranath's nature there is a strong element of Bhakti—that he is a Bhakta goes without saying—that he has also drawn much inspiration from the poets of Vaishnavism, Kabir and the Bauls I readily admit. Still the reservation with which he has spoken and his suppression of all the distinctive features of our Bhakticult—the reservation and suppression due to the creed of his Church—stand in the way of our accepting him as the representative poet of India. I wonder how his voice can ever pass for the voice of our country. If the mellifluous lyrics of the Vaishnava poets of Bengal which Mr. Chapman of the Imperial Library of Calcutta is translating into English—the lyrics in which the names of Radha and Krishna occur again and again, the lyrics without the least reservation or suppression to suit the so-called refined modern taste,—if these lyrics of sublimated love are taken by the West for the voice of India, then it will be partly right, for the voice of India they partly are. THE FULL MESSAGE OF INDIA WAS DELIVERED TO THE WEST BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ALONE—BY FAR THE

GREATEST MAN OF THE AGE NEXT ONLY TO RAMAKRISHNA. Look where you may, you will not light on one who has the realisation, fire and force to repeat the feat of that prophetic soul—and not only did he deliver his message to the West with the boldness which was his, but he also saw THE VISION OF AWAKENED INDIA not because he was an optimist, not because he was a meliorist, but because he believed in the Great Law of our country's Pessimism that every rise has its fall and every fall its rise.

KAMAKHYA NATH MITR.

CONCLUDED

A WESTERN REVELATION OF THE SOUL OF INDIA

K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRIGAL, B. A., B. L.

QUITE recently I came across a book, entitled *India and the English*, written by Barbara Wingfield-Stratford and published in 1922. I thought at first that it was a mere globe-trotter's effusion. But I found that the Right Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri had written a preface to it. He says in it : " Art and music, sport, the monsoons—nothing of human interest escapes notice in these pages—all illuminated by a clear understanding and vivified by the touch of sympathy. The book has problems for the wise and lessons for the ignorant." Hence I felt interested in the book. My interest turned into delighted appreciation as I read through the pages. Insight into India's soul is rare even among Indians—'educated' as they call themselves—; but the talented author of this book has shown wonderful insight into India's soul in her valuable book.

We cannot and do not expect such insight from the average European in India. He comes with, or soon gets up, a prejudice against India. The author says : " For there never was a more philistine community on this earth than Anglo-India. Art, literature, music, practically do not exist for them !" They are lacking in sympathy and imagination. The author says : " But on the whole this miserable spirit of race-snobbery is almost universal." On the other hand, as she says : " Never was a real rapprochement between England and India more needed than it is at present. East and West have still so much to learn from each other. How much, for instance, would not the weary, war-worn peoples of Europe benefit by a leaven of that calmness and wise detachment, that abstraction of outlook and infinite patience that characterise Indian thought at its best ? "

Miss Wingfield-Stratford says : " Perhaps the greatest charm about life in India is, however, its peace and leisure." About Indian character she says : " The Indians are—once you begin to know and understand them even a little—one of the most charming and delightful races of people imaginable." She refers to their " unfailing courtesy and distinction of manner " and says : " Not the acquired politeness of convention and self-interest, but the courtesy that arises from natural good-heartedness, a real desire to give pleasure and an instinctive unself-conscious tact." She points out how Indians never wantonly take life. " The portentous doctrine of sport, held so sacred by Britons, is a sealed book to the average Indian. . . . But the English habit of

killing innocent beasts and birds simply for the sport of the thing is to him a mystery. Taking life, destroying, mutilating, does not give him the exquisite pleasure it affords his highly-civilised white ruler."

Her estimate of the Indian peasant is equally full of true insight. She says : " His strength lies rather in his quietude and aloofness, in spirituality of outlook that runs all through the often grotesque worship of his local deity." Sir W. Sleeman once said in his famous *Rambles and Recollections* : " I am much attracted to the agricultural classes of India generally and I have found among them some of the best men I have ever known. The peasantry in India have generally very good manners, and are exceedingly intelligent, from having so much more leisure and unreserved and easy intercourse with those above them." The author pays a just tribute to their simplicity and affection for relations and says : " It is significant, too, that there are no work-houses in India. One hardly ever sees a professional beggar except in large towns like Bombay and Calcutta. If only a little of this spirit of kindly and self-sacrificing family feeling were to arise in England, how quickly the problem of pauperism would be solved." She says again : " An innate, contemplative calm is his, redolent of the soil he cultivates, that lifts him above the power of circumstances, and gives him, illiterate and unsophisticated as he is, an age-old culture, an earnestness, a kind of spiritual refinement that marks him apart from the poor and needy of all other nations. Let those who advise the indiscriminate adoption of Western civilisation, with all its drab utilitarianism, its sordid squalor and its spiritual sterility by the peoples of the East pause and think of this before they endeavour to destroy good and evil alike, all that is not standardized and docketed and squeezed dry of individuality."

This rarity of insight justifies us in expecting in the author a clear vision of the soul of India, and our expectation is found to be already justified. We in South India, who are frantically flinging away the real life of the real India, may well ponder over these words of hers : " Then, lastly, there are a good many thinking, moderate men who are sincerely of opinion that India's natural spirituality of outlook and load of religious tradition unfit her for the modern battle for commercial success and economic prosperity. These elements of unfaith are to be found principally in Bengal and Southern India, the centre and north holding imperturbably to true old ways. Still, this spirit of revolt has had little effect upon India as a whole. The masses still dream on in the villages, perform their worship exactly as their ancestors have done for hundreds of years before them, give honour to Brahmans, and envisage the problems of existence with that quiet detachment which is the innermost strength of the Indian character. *The true Indian type will*

always be the same." About the Indian religion she points out : " The greatness of spiritual India was less in its mystery and strangeness than in the great unity of purpose underlying its multitudinous ramifications The doctrine of the great ninth-century reformer Sankaracharya, for instance, which has to-day a vast number of adherents, is one of an austere mono-theism beside which Christianity, in its commonly accepted form, is a polytheistic creed. It is the religion of India which has made her civilisation what it has been. *For of all peoples the Indians alone have held consistently to one main religion throughout the ages from the earliest dawn of their history as a nation* Looked at, however, from any point of view, the noble simplicity of the language, the purity of the worship of nature and wonder at her greatness, the fresh and primal vigour of the *Rig Veda* make it a monument of a far more advanced order than any other of equal antiquity, and a fit starting point for the lofty and mystic faith of Hindustan." In equally just and true words she says : " If there were no other proof of its religious vitality, of the underlying spiritual unity that binds its ramifying components together, the facts of Hinduism's indestructibility, its bloodless victories over all that would have destroyed it, its power of absorption would be enough. This absorbent quality of Hinduism is all the more curious because it has never been a fighting or even proselytising religion." Nay, she goes further and says : " Our own Christianity has dwindled in our hands from its first glorious state to a mechanical device for maintaining the respectabilities of life. We were entrusted with this priceless treasure, and through our own laziness and worldliness the vital sap within it has been allowed to dry up. Buddhism is too pessimistic and apathetic to help us, Mahomedanism is too narrow. The Hindu alone has a living religion which really means something to him, which he possesses as a heritage and a right, not as a worked-up neurotic effort of conscience, and which is large enough not only to suffice him but to pour some of its strengthening vitality into the wilting faith of the West. Lord Christ—Lord Krishna—do not the noblest heights of these two great religions meet ? And may not the majestic beauties of the Hindu religion help us to a better understanding of our own ?" She rightly points out " the keynote of Krishna worship " as " the immanence of God in nature and man." Another great interpreter of India's culture—Sister Nivedita—says about Krishnaism : " To the Vaishnava lover Brindavan is the heart of man, where the eternal play of the love of God continues."

Bound up with the religions of India is its social life. The Indian caste system has been generally misunderstood and abused. All the same it lives and will survive its foes. Mr. Vincent Smith says about

it in *The Oxford History of India* : “ The system grew up of itself in remote antiquity because it suited India, and will last for untold centuries because it still suits India on the whole, in spite of its many inconveniences.” Miss Wingfield Stratford says : “ The caste system supplies, before all else, a standard of social obligation. But caste is more than a social obligation, it is also a very powerful trades-union system. Thus blacklegging is totally unknown in India wherever caste is strictly kept. It certainly makes, on the whole, for efficiency. Another aspect of caste life which is not recognised is the true democracy of the system. For caste confers a dignity upon even the humblest of its followers.” In respect of the now persecuted and depressed Brahmans and their glibly asserted past domination she says : “ The Brahman is revered first and foremost as the repository and conservator of the sacred lore of Hindustan. They kept the flame of Hinduism burning throughout the superficial domination of Buddhist thought, and in the darkness of mediæval India they were the core and stronghold of the oppressed and fainting spirit of the Hindu race. Even to-day, though their temporal power is on the decline, they are still dispensers of esoteric knowledge, skilled in sacred doctrines, saturated with ancient lore and learning. Therefore, when an Indian does reverence to a Brahman he is honouring the sacred office rather than the man, just as a soldier is told that he salutes the King’s uniform rather than his officers.” Pursuing the subject of caste system further, she says : “ It develops a spirit of comradeship and mutual helpfulness. Then caste encourages cleanliness of person, refinement of appetite, self-control and regularity of life. Taking it altogether, a system that creates self-respect and dignity in the individual, that encourages loyalty and comradeship and, in the main, upholds the decencies of life, is not one to be scrapped without due consideration and the provision of an adequate substitute.”

The author’s insight into Indian art is equally remarkable. Indian art, like Indian character, is a child of the Himalayas. In the holy Himalayas great rivers rise ; they compel the vapour-laden winds to give the blessed rain to India ; and they form a natural barrier “ keeping in the essential Indianness of India.” She says : “ Without this barrier, it is probable that the Indo-Aryan race would never have kept their national character so distinct and inviolate through the ages. . . . The greatest attraction of this mountain range probably lay in its appeal to the imagination—the cool place of snows, the home of holy mystery and romance.” In the same breath as this vast wonder of God’s creation can be mentioned, though with bated breath, that wonder of man’s creation, that dream in marble which shines with the married radiance of the light of the crescent and the beauty of the white lotus—

the Taj Mahal. The author says about the Indo-Saracenic architecture : " Their architecture is symbolic of their mentality—the architecture of a people with an eye above all for outline and massing, a desert people who visualize mosque, mausoleum or palace as seen in silhouette against a sunset sky rather than in the detail the Hindu loves to elaborate. There is nothing finer in all architecture than the grandeur and simplicity, the mingling of a clear, severe asceticism and a calm and happy serenity that characterises Indo-Saracenic buildings of the best periods." She says about the Taj that it " is a true dream-palace of delight, the essence of that strange sense of far-off romance that steals over one on hot summer nights, when the scent of roses and jasmine mingle in the still air." " Mysterious and only half-understood, it has the glamour of amorous Eastern nights and the virginal aloofness of Himalayan snows." Mr. Havell has stated and shown that the Taj was the spontaneous outcome of Indian art and thought, a blending of Indian and Saracenic art. Miss Wingfield-Stratford says : " The delicate graciousness and attention to symbolic detail of the Hindu mingle with the Saracenic feeling for silhouette and love of grand massed effects." The designer of the Taj—Ustad Isa—deserves the world's homage for having dreamt and created a building which is " not only one of the loveliest buildings of the world, not even the greatest monument of human love alone, but also the supreme symbol of spiritual unity of India, of the infinite calm strength of its undying ideal of beauty and goodness." The very core of India's artistic ideal is thus rightly shown by the author : " Hindu art at its best has always been an attempt of singular success to catch the spirit of the subject—usually sacred—to be represented in stone or paper, rather than its mere outward form. Indian sculptors and artists were as capable as any one of a faithful and exact reproduction of nature, but it is characteristic of their mentality that mere imitation did not appeal to them. Elaboration of physical detail they held to be little more than a technical knack, and although they sometimes indulged in a *tour de force* of minute accuracy in the portrayal of animal or plant life, and occasionally even in the representation of a human being, yet when modelling or painting the holy forms they loved they strove after a higher ideal,—that of bringing out in the lines of the body, its pose and atmosphere, the divine attributes, the vigour or the serenity or the compassion of the god or goddess portrayed. This artistic theory of the insistence on the character and inner life of the thing portrayed, its aura rather than a literal rendering of its outward form, is one which some of the artists of the very newest European school are just discovering. It will be curious if, after all, Europe, sick of the barrenness of modern artistic achievement, goes back to learn of old

India. Stranger things have happened. Be that as it may, in no other country, European or Asiatic, has the representation of the stupendous qualities of divine beings, the sense of the supernatural, been so successfully attempted. Never was stone so imbued with the very Personality of God as the Trimurthi of Elephanta—the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer—with its majestic sense of Eternity. Never was the glorification of divine and human love portrayed with such loving tenderness and nobility as in the “Marriage of Siva and Parvathi” of the same cave temple. Such an idealistic school of sculpture could only proceed from a people whose religious and artistic lives were in such close harmony as to be almost one.” She points out how such Buddhist paintings as that of “Mother and Child before Buddha” at Ajanta are full of wonderful loveliness and suggestiveness ; how Akbar revived Indian painting ; and how the Rajput and the Kangra schools “began to produce masterpieces that have come down to us, little hunting and night scenes, episodes from the great religious epics.” “The Kangra school, indeed, flourished until as recently as 1905, when a terrible earthquake obliterated the larger part of this district, and killed art and artists alike.” The modern Bengal school has “endeavoured to shed not only the corrupting influences of cheap European Art, but the decadences that have been creeping upon the art of India for centuries, and to go back to the spirituality and freshness of the ancient Buddhist frescoes of the Golden Age, and the magnificent colouring of the Mughal and Rajput schools.” She asks in a spirit of sympathetic enkindling passion : “Will not the gods once more confer the glories of artistic expression upon a nation that strives thus, even though but here and there, to keep the fire alight?” She answers herself in a prophetic mood : “The contemplative nature and calm contentment of the Hindu character, the richness of the country and its glorious traditions all combine to give Indian art its largeness and peace, and it in turn reflects and concentrates the vitality and spiritual power of that India whose unity of thought has always been a reality and whose perfect unity shall some day be no longer a dream.”

(To be continued)

EDITORIAL NOTES

REORGANISATION OF HINDU SOCIETY.

A wave of depression is now passing over India. Though it is mainly economical and political in its superficial aspect it has much deeper causes than mere economical and political. There is discontentment everywhere and in every sphere of the national life. The situation has been aggravated no doubt by a foreign domination, and the consequent economical poverty. The main problem of India has become to-day the bread-problem, and assuredly the political condition is responsible for it to not a small extent. Naturally the intelligentsia of the land is deeply stirred into a revolt against the modern Government. The idea behind this expressed and unexpressed revolt of the thinking man of the country is that, with the removal of the modern political conditions, there will come the hey-day for the land. But there is a great fallacy in this supposition.

It is a stern fact of life that nothing can happen without a previous cause. The present state of disorganisation and weakness of the Hindus is directly caused by some grave tendencies which have been working in it for some time past—the tendencies that have undermined to-day all national efficiency and strength by bringing about disruption and disintegration among its elements. The causes that are producing great social upheavals and seething discontentment in the Western society have been in existence in another form in our own land for a long time. The heartless dominance of the classes over the masses, the water-tight compartments of social life, the hide-bound caste system that naturally produces a narrow outlook of life, and above all, the meaningless rigidity of social structures, all these are mainly responsible for the present decadence of the Hindu society. But the modern Hindu society has to face a very grave situation,—it has been put between Scylla and Charybdis, and its leaders must steer it clear of the two dangers: one section of the people is still continuing to be sticklers to the letter of the law voting for no-change in the method of living, in spite of all changes of conditions and environments; while another section is voting for a complete breaking down of the old structure and erecting a new one in its stead in imitation of the West. But the majority of

the people are quite thoughtless about their future. They take to the more easy course of life, the life of drift. So we see at present in the Hindu society no force present that can unite and combine all the straggling elements for one common good. And that is the very reason why we notice that in spite of horrible communal atrocities perpetrated by the non-Hindus upon the Hindus, they could go unchallenged and unresented. All who are conversant with current events of modern India know it very well that the supreme moment has come now for the Hindu society to check all further disruption, bring about more cohesion and re-organise itself at least for self-protection. Otherwise, a still darker day is awaiting it.

But, in the face of the existing 'disintegrating tendencies, such a union is unthinkable. It is a plain fact that unless we remodel our social life and completely uproot all these 'disintegrating elements, any kind of social cohesion is impossible. The main attack of the social reformer has been hitherto upon the caste system, and many even to-day sincerely believe that unless there is a general levelling down of caste and creed, there is no chance of getting back the social cohesion. But, to us it seems that caste is not so much responsible for this disintegration, as the fight for privilege that was engendered by the caste system, which again was brought about by the forgetting of the real basis of the system of Varnas which is principally Dharma that prescribes respective duties for each and every varna. When man forgets his 'duty created by the respective position he holds in the society, he begins to blunder, and every such blundering conduct of his paves only the path of his fall. That exactly has been the case with the Hindu society. The members of the upper classes neglecting their respective duties or Dharma simply wanted to trade upon their prestige and birth, and clamour for privileges. And naturally that produced so much cleavage between caste and caste and so much resentment and animosity between the classes and the masses. But, any way, the caste system is fast losing its rigidity and hold upon the Hindu society. Excepting perhaps Southern India and Deccan, in all other parts of the country caste system is principally maintained only in the case of marriage ; in all other respects, the lines of demarcation are fast disappearing. And that is the natural outcome of economical necessity and pressure of environment. But, although the rigidity of the lines of demarcation is vanishing and the differences fading away in practical life, yet the old

tendencies and the old narrow outlook of life are still persisting on in the mind of the average man, which forms a formidable barrier for him to be united for a common cause. So, to us the main problem appears to be not so much the breaking down of the caste system whose lines of demarcation are already vanishing, as bringing about a radical change in the mentality or the outlook of life of an average Hindu. An average Hindu has to be brought out of the poky corner of his little home and made to feel that he is one with the whole nation in its spiritual culture and heritage. This education of the average Hindu, this change of his mentality in the light of Spirit, is what Swami Vivekananda meant by his man-making religion, his root-and-branch reform. Let there be thousand and one castes, let there be as many external differences as there are faces, that would matter very little if the hearts are united in a common purpose, in a common culture, in a common ideal. And there an average modern Hindu radically differs from say a Mahomedan ; a Mahomedan, however illiterate and uneducated he may be, feels himself to be an integral part of the Kingdom of his Prophet, Mahomed, and as such it is his first duty to safeguard the interest of his Prophet's Kingdom, the interest of his Islam. And so however insignificant and poor he may be, when the call comes to him for a sacrifice of his self in the interest of that Islam and its followers, he is never found to be lagging behind ; he is ready to pour out the whole of his heart's blood for the cause of his Prophet. But quite different is the case with the Hindus, a Hindu closes the door of his house and seeks to keep himself in safety if the house of his Hindu neighbour is attacked by non-Hindus. This mental isolation of interest and a lack of that burning love for his faith are the main reasons why an average Hindu becomes an easy victim of the united attack of non-Hindus. There was a time when Hindus also felt the same animation in the name of their religion, in the name of their Dharma, and did not hesitate to lay down their lives for their God. There are ample instances of this in our ancient history, but with the efflux of time and the working of the disintegration owing to the narrow outlook of social life, the society has come to such a pass that its members have completely forgotten the larger aspect of life, the Virat Purusha, and the recokning of values is being done with an eye to the immediate concerns of an individual life. And therefore, selfishness has got itself so ingrained in his temperament that

the average Hindu finds it very difficult to take that broad national outlook of life, sacrificing his little concerns for the sake of his nation and religion. We repeat again that this mentality has to be changed by remodelling the social structure, by reshaping the educational institutions and by constant urge upon the social mind to look up to its supreme ideal of national life.

By remodelling the social structure of the Hindus, we do not mean the pulling down of the corner stones and main pillars of support of that ancient edifice, but the demolishing of the extraneous additions and side-developments that have taken place in comparatively recent time. By all means, the Dharma aspect of Varna has to be resuscitated, and classification has to be made with reference to Dharma, or according to the division of labour ; but no scope should be given for the scramble for privilege. And thus gradually the Society must emerge from the modern fossilized condition of its numerous castes, or better, sub-castes that sit to-day like a millstone on its neck. These sub-castes have neither any scriptural basis nor are they founded upon any kind of utility, nor can they be supported by any logic of commonsense. They are purely the relics of the compartment system of the village community. They might have had their utility when they were instituted, but to-day, with the change of circumstances, with the widening of the social life, with the decadence of the narrow village community, these compartments have ceased to exist. Then, why cling to the dilapidated relic of it ? Then again, many of the usages that have created broad gulfs between one community and another in the Hindu society, have become meaningless and are irrational. Originally, they might have had a purpose, but to-day they have become more a source of schisms and disintegration. These usages and customs have to be completely changed in order to bring about a unity of feature and consequent facility for inter-relation and thereby cement the straggling elements into a coherent whole.

The leaders of the Hindu society belonging to different parts of India must come to a common understanding on this point and set the ball rolling by starting a definite organisation, who will follow the scriptures in the light of commonsense, and not of *Deshacharas* and *Lokacharas*, and thereby the path for future united Hindu India will be paved. For instance, if the Brahmans of the different parts of India can come to agreement to follow certain minimum rules of conduct which would

keep up their Brahminical nature and try to establish inter-relations among themselves, through inter-marriage and other social intercourse, they will be strengthened not only socially but biologically also the blood will be more vitalised and there will come more virility and manhood to the race. Moreover, it will bring more or less a common standard of life throughout India. The same course for other castes also. Of course, we are for the line of least resistance; and society, like all other organisms, always takes the line of least resistance. Violent methods of reconstruction and reformation have produced often more disastrous results than good. So, if he lover of Hindu Society sincerely believes in the social reconstruction and social revitalisation in order that the Hindu Society may maintain its own against all onslaughts of outsiders, then the best thing for him to do is to remain within the fold of the Society itself and carry the Society along with him by educating the mind of the Society by his own example and precept. Radicalism and iconoclastic tendencies can only lead to their votaries being thrown out of the fold completely, and such methods will fail ultimately to do any constructive work for the Society, as it has been already experienced by some of the radical movements of the country.

Next comes the remodelling of educational institutions. It is in the school-room that a nation is made and as education has become a transferred subject to-day, Indians are supposed to have at least a greater control over the educational policy of the land, and a very great advantage can be gained by proper direction of this educational policy of the country. The mind of every Indian youth has to be surcharged with the love for his country, for his religion, for his Faith, and all efforts must be made to implant that ideal in his mind. And in this respect, we must say that as the education of a child begins at home, the parents have a greater responsibility in shaping the minds of the children than the schools or colleges. The seed has to be laid early even in the cradle and the parents must try to inculcate this high ideal of service and self-abnegation for a greater life into the mind of their young ones. Then, it can be safely predicted that in two generations India would be quite different from what it is to-day.

NEWS AND REPORTS

The Bengali Calendar gives the following dates as the *Janma tithis* (birthdays), for the year 1926, of :—

Swami Vivekananda..	Wednesday	6th January.
Swami Brahma Ananda..	Saturday	16th ,,
Sri Ramakrishna Dev..	Sunday	14th February.

The public celebration of Swami Vivekananda's birthday in Madras is on Sunday the 10th January, 1926.

SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA IN PORTLAND, OREGON

The Secretary, The Vedanta Society, Portland, Oregon writes :—

Much delighted, indeed, were those interested in Vedanta in Portland, to learn that the Associate at the Temple in San Francisco, Swami Prabhavananda, would visit us during September. Swami Prabhavananda arrived the evening of September 22nd and the Friday following gave his first lecture in Library Hall, Public Library, to a very appreciative and unusually attentive audience. In fact, so interested did the audience become, it seemed spellbound, quite some seconds clapping after the Swami stepped off the stage before anybody moved. The subject at this lecture was "First Principles of Spirituality," which so impressed the people that they immediately sought to know when more lectures would be given. The second lecture was given on Sunday morning, September 27th, in the Assembly Hall, of the Portland Hotel, the subjects being "Universality of Vedanta"—"Realization and Its Methods." At this time another appreciative audience greeted the Swami, which was also the case at his evening address, subject "Sub-conscious Mind and Its Control". The audience at this time was well increased, and inquiries began coming in as to whether there would be a possibility of keeping the Swami in Portland. Monday, September 28th, another large audience greeted the Swami in his address upon "Religion of Love," with the same rapt attention as had been previously manifested. Tuesday, September 29th, the subject taken under consideration was "Super-conscious Vision". Here the Swami excelled, carrying the audience beyond all expectation with his simplicity and clearness of vision. Wednesday, September 30th, with the subject of "Raja Yoga or the Mystic Path" the speaker cleared the confused conceptions of many, showing very plainly in a definite and concise fashion, the value of an understanding of Raja Yoga. So intense had the interest become, that upon this last of the series of lectures, a class was readily formed, something like 125 attending. These classes, four in number, dealing mainly with Raja Yoga, were also held in the Assembly Hall of the Portland Hotel, beginning Friday, October 2nd. More and more during these classes requests came in for a resident Swami, so names were taken of those interested and at the end of the class-work a meeting was held, when a form of organization took place, selecting a committee, who selected a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Another meeting will be held shortly when steps will be taken in detail and a place selected in which the work can be satisfactorily carried on.

entered; दिशः the deity of the quarters श्रोत्रं भूत्वा having become the hearing कर्णौ into the two ears प्राविशत् entered; ओषधि वनस्पतयः the deity of herbs and trees लोमानि भूत्वा having become hairs त्वचं into the skin प्राविशत् entered; चन्द्रमाः Chandrama मनः भूत्वा having become the mind हृदयं the heart प्राविशत् entered; मृत्युः the god of death अपानः the Apana भूत्वा having become नाभिं the navel प्राविशत् entered; आपः the god of sapidity रेतः भूत्वा having become semen शिश्रं the generative organ प्राविशत् entered.

4. Then Agni, having become speech, entered into the mouth.

Vayu, having become smell, entered into the nostrils.
Aditi, becoming sight, entered into the eyes.

The deity of the quarters, having become hearing, entered into the ears.

The deity of the herbs and trees, having become hairs, entered into the skin.

Chandrama, having become mind, entered into the heart.

The god of death, having become Apana, entered into the navel.

The god of sapidity, having become semen, entered into the generative organ.

तमश्नापिपासे अब्रूतामावाभ्यामभिप्रजानीहीति । ते अब्रवीदेतास्वेव वां देवतास्वाभजाम्येतासु भागिन्यौ करोमीति । तस्माद्यस्यै कस्यै च देवतायै हविर्गृह्यते भागिन्यावेवास्यामश्नापिपासे भवतः ॥ ५ ॥

इति द्वितीय खण्डः ।

अश्नापिपासे Hunger and thirst तं to Him अब्रूतां said आवाभ्यां for us (आयतनं place) अभिप्रजानीहि think. (सः He, the Atman) ते to them अब्रवीत् said वां to you both एतासु these देवतासु gods एव verily आभजामि assign एतासु of these भागिन्यौ co-sharer करोमि make. तस्मात् Therefore यस्यै कस्यै for whatsoever देवतायै gods हविः offerings गृह्यते is taken अस्याम् of that अश्नापिपासे hunger and thirst भागिन्यौ co-sharer एव verily भवतः become.

(Then) hunger and thirst spoke unto Him: 'Assign a place for us.' He told them: 'I allocate you to these very gods, I make you their co-sharers'. And therefore, for whatsoever gods offering is taken, hunger and thirst become verily the co-sharers of that.

[*Hunger and thirst become verily co-sharers*—since, the gods enjoy the offerings through hunger and thirst, i.e., the desire for food and drink.]

End of the Second Chapter.



Aitareya-Upanishad

CHAPTER III.

स ईक्षतेमे नु लोकाश्च लोकपालाश्चान्नमेभ्यः सृजा इति ॥ १ ॥

सः He ईक्षत thought, इमे these लोकाः the worlds च and लोकपालाः the regent gods च also (सृष्टाः आसन् have been created), एभ्यः for these अन्नं food सृजे shall create इति thus.

He thought (again) : 'The worlds and their regent gods have been created ; (now) I should create food for them.'

सोऽपोऽभ्यतपत्ताभ्योऽभितप्ताभ्यो मूर्तिरजायत । या वै सा मूर्तिरजाय-
तान्नं वै तत् ॥ २ ॥

सः He अपः over the water अभ्यतपत् brooded ताभ्यः from those अभितप्ताभ्यः thus brooded upon मूर्तिः form अजायत was born याः what वै surely साः मूर्तिः that form अजायत was created अन्नं food वै verily तत् that,

(Then) He brooded over the water, and from that thus brooded upon, came out form. And the form thus created is verily the food.

[Note—The inner significance of the mantra is that the will of the Atman for further creation made it possible for the causal and subtle matter to evolve into gross forms. The seed evolves into a tree, and what makes it possible to evolve is the same Divine Will which is called in common parlance the Law of Nature. And it is this gross form of matter which sustains the subtle as it were : we cannot understand or conceive the causal without the help of the gross, the subtle depending upon the gross for its cognition. Hence the gross or 'form' is termed here as 'Food.' Further, the gross objects have been called food as they are enjoyed by the senses and their presiding devatas.]

तदेतदभिसृष्टं पराङ्म्यजिघांसत्तद्वाचाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशकनोद्वाचा प्रहीतुम् ।
स यद्वैनद्वाचाऽग्रहैष्यद्भिव्याहृत्य हैवान्नमत्प्रस्यत् ॥ ३ ॥

तत् then अभिसृष्टं having been created एतत् this (food) पराङ् having turned away अत्यजिघांसत् attempted to run away. तत् that

वाचा by speech अजिघृक्षत् wanted to seize तत् that न not अशक्नोत् could वाचा with speech ग्रहीतुं to seize. यदि if सः he वाचा with speech एन्त् this अग्रहैष्यत् could seize अभिव्याहृत्य having uttered the name ह एन्न verily अन्नं food अन्नपस्यत् would have been satisfied.

Then this food, having been created, turned and attempted to run away. He tried to seize it by speech; but he could not get hold of it by speech. If he had seized it by speech, man would have verily been satisfied by mere utterance of food.

तत्प्राणेनाजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशकनोत्प्राणेन ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनत्प्राणेनाग्रहैष्यदभिमि-
प्राप्य हैवान्नमत्रपस्यत् ॥ ४ ॥

तच्चक्षुषाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशकनोच्चक्षुषा ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनच्चक्षुषाऽग्रहैष्यददृष्ट्वा
हैवान्नमत्रपस्यत् ॥ ५ ॥

तच्छ्रोत्रेणाजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशकनोच्छ्रोत्रेण ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनच्छ्रोत्रेणाग्रहैष्यच्छ्रु-
त्वा हैवान्नमत्रपस्यत् ॥ ६ ॥

तत्त्वचाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशकनोत्त्वचा ग्रहीतुं सयद्वैनत्त्वचाऽग्रहैष्यत्स्पृष्ट्वा हैवान्न-
मत्रपस्यत् ॥ ७ ॥

तन्मनसाऽजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशकनोन्मनसा ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनन्मनसाऽग्रहैष्यद्भयात्वा
हैवान्नमत्रपस्यत् ॥ ८ ॥

तच्छिश्नेनाजिघृक्षत्तन्नाशकनोच्छिश्नेन ग्रहीतुं स यद्वैनच्छिश्नेनाग्रहैष्य-
द्विसृज्य हैवान्नमत्रपस्यत् ॥ ९ ॥

तत् that प्राणेन with Prana अजिघृक्षत् wanted to grasp. तत् that न not अशक्नोत् was able प्राणेन with Prana ग्रहीतुं to catch. स he यदि if हि verily प्राणेन अग्रहैष्यत् could catch अभिमिप्राप्य having breathed only अन्नम् food अन्नपस्यत् would have been satisfied. 4.

चक्षुषा with the eyes. दृष्ट्वा by mere sight. 5.

श्रोत्रेण with the ear, श्रुत्वा having heard only. 6.

त्वचा with the skin, the sense of touch, स्पृष्ट्वा having touched only. 7.

मनसा with the mind, भयात्वा having thought only. 8.

शिश्नेन with the generative organ, विसृज्य by emitting only. 9.