

THE VEDANTA KESARI

“ Let the lion of Vedanta roar.”
“ Let me tell you, 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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PRAYER



एकस्सन् बहुधा विचारः ।
शतं शुक्राणि यत्कैकं भवन्ति ॥
सर्वे वेदा यत्कैकं भवन्ति ।
सर्वे होतारो यत्रैकं भवन्ति ॥
समानसीन आत्मा जनानां ।
अन्तः प्रविष्टः शास्ता जनानां सर्वात्मा ॥
सर्वाः प्रजा यत्रैकं भवन्ति ।
नमो ब्रह्मणे नमो ॥
नमो विष्णवे बृहते करोमि ॥

Salutation unto the Brahman, Who, though One, is regarded as many; in Whom all luminaries merge, and all the Vedas and Hotas are unified.

Salutation unto the Brahman, the great Pervader of the universe, the one Atman dwelling equally in the heart of all beings, the Inner-soul of all existence, the Director of all creation and in Whom all creatures become one. Our salutations unto Him.

YAJURVEDA,

SPIRITUAL TALKS OF SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

One of the outstanding advantages of holy company is that you can thereby come across the daily life of the holy men. Read or hear however much you may, nothing will leave a more profound impression in your mind and benefit you so largely and practically as the company of holy men. As an illustration I would like to relate an incident to you from the life of a devotee. Adhar Sen would always go to Sri Ramakrishna accompanied by a friend of his, an Inspector of Schools. This gentleman (Adhar Babu's friend) would at times experience a kind of inspiration and lose all outward consciousness. People called it Bhava. One day it so happened that just after their arrival, the Master fell into deep Samadhi. From his face beamed lustre divine indicating the unbounded joy that the master felt. At the sight of this Adhar Babu said to his companion: "Look here, my friend, seeing your Bhava I got disgusted with it. For, whenever you entered it, you seemed to feel a great torment within. From divine communion cannot result any torment or torture. But from what I see in the Master, this flood of divine joy, my eyes are opened."

Another man once visited Trilinga Swami. (This great saint of Benares usually kept silence). On his return he thought within himself: "I went, but he did not speak; then what is the good of going to him any more?" Yet he paid a second visit. This time no sooner had he taken his seat by the side of the Swami, than the latter suddenly began to weep most bitterly, and this was followed by a peal of wild laughter. At this he said to himself: "What I have learnt to-day a thousand books cannot teach. When I shall so yearn for God, I shall see Him; and when I shall have His grace, only then shall I enjoy such bliss."

- Q. Maharaj, many maintain that merely paying visit to holy men is enough—hearing them or observing their life is not so much a necessity. Are we to believe this?
- A. Oh, no! never! You must mix with them with an open heart. And if any doubt arises in your mind, speak it out to them frankly and get it at once solved by their help if you are not able to do it yourself. You must also observe their life in detail and model yours in the light of that. Do you follow?
- Q. Maharaj, you said that momentary enthusiasm and fuss brings no good, and that spiritual realisation is a question of time—then am I to give up my yearning for God-realization?
- A. I might have said it in connection with some other topic. By momentary enthusiasm is meant to become restless and cry and jump for a day or two from a fit of emotion: an external manifestation of the internal feeling. This disappears in no time, and then out of despair and dejection man gives up that path altogether.
- Q. As Sri Ramakrishna said that if the site for digging a well is shifted from place to place nowhere water can be had. Isn't it?
- A. Yes, such tenacity is what is required. If a man's restlessness results from the sincere love of God, he cannot live a God-less life, even though he fails to realise Him thereby. Millions of births may pass without attaining Him and yet he will persist in calling upon Him steadily and quite unmoved.

Swamiji (Swami Vivekananda) used to say that a little awakening of the Kundalini (Individualised Cosmic Energy) is very dangerous. Until She rises up, lust, anger and other lower passions become very

turbulent. So the Vaishnavite Sadhana of Madhur Bhava or Sakhi Bhava (the attitude of worshipping God as an eternal bridegroom or a friend of the devotee) is very 'dangerous.' In trying to remember constantly the story of Sri Krishna's divine amorous play with Sri Radha, they (Vaishnavites) cannot control their lust and do all sorts of lecherous acts. Therefore the restriction for the beginner in reading the *Rash-lila* (story of Sri Krishna's divine play with Sri Radha) and the like.

And meditation, it's not an easy thing at all. Eat a bit more one day and your mind will not settle that day. Thus when lust, anger, greed and the whole host of evil passions can be kept under control, then and then alone meditation becomes possible. If any of these assert itself, meditation will be impossible. It is rather easy to sit in the circle of burning fire. But to keep the passions under control and not to allow them to have their 'impression' upon the mind—that is real Tapasya. What religion for eunuchs! The control of passions and desires is the greatest penance. But then, seeing that the worldly men are constantly involved in doing various heinous acts, it is not so much an act of sin on your part, if some evil thoughts crop up in your mind. Drive them out from the mind.

Without meditation the mind cannot get tranquil, and without tranquillity religion is not possible. To think 'I shall meditate when the mind gets tranquil' is to think of the impossible. Both must go hand in hand.

We have not been able to love Sri Ramakrishna, so there's the idea of bargain in us. It is why we despair when we cannot see him by a little prayer. It is not desirable to give vent to the inner feelings, for that dwindles the intensity of love.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Vivekananda—the Apostle of Strength

Be it as a monk or a preacher, as a patriot or a reformer, as a philosopher or a social worker, Swami Vivekananda was characterised by a remarkable strength and fearlessness that always left an indelible impression on all who came under his influence in some form or other. And rightly has he been called a fighting monk, a dynamic preacher, an intrepid patriot, a fearless reformer, an incontestable philosopher and a dauntless social servant. It has been said that like a cyclone he swept away men and women by the mighty power of his eloquence ; like a thunderbolt he fell upon the ignorant critic and overpowered him completely ; like a bomb shell he threw himself upon society and pulverised the encrustations of ignorance and superstition ; like a dynamo he electrified all who came in close touch with his wonderful personality, and roused them from passivity into activity. His ideal of religion was dynamic but universal, his programme of reform was constructive but liberal, his plan of social service was active but selfless. All these were expressions of a tremendous power that comes only to one who, knowing the Highest Truth, has become fearless and invincible ; and these could be followed only by those who possessed a heart that knew no weakness or fear. Indeed, Swami Vivekananda was a veritable embodiment of strength, and it was but natural that he should become the apostle of a gospel of strength and fearlessness that is bringing about a revolution in the life and thought of many in India and abroad.

His Man-making Religion

To mankind blinded by ignorance and superstition, dehumanised by tyranny and oppression, and hypnotised

by the sense of weakness and helplessness, the Swami brought the rejuvenating message of strength and hope. With a heart melting with love and sympathy for others, he cried out—"Strength is the one thing needful. Strength is the medicine which the poor must have, when tyrannised over by the rich. Strength is the medicine that the ignorant must have when oppressed by the learned; and it is the medicine that sinners must have when tyrannised over by other sinners* * *It is man-making religion that we want. It is man-making theories that we want. Anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually and spiritually reject it as poison, there is no life in it; it cannot be true. Truth must be strengthening, must be enlightening, must be invigorating." And the source of this strength is the consciousness that the real man in us is not a mere clod of earth, nor a bundle of ideas, but is the Spirit Eternal—the eternal source of all power, purity and knowledge. In this glorious doctrine of the potential Divinity of man, did the Swami found a new spiritual power able to create a new epoch of renaissance and re-construction in human society. The rank materialist, the scoffing agnostic, the thoughtless fanatic, the jealous missionary—all attacked him with great vehemence. But in the face of all oppositions and criticisms he proclaimed his message with a boldness and strength that made itself felt by foes and friends alike. His teachings to the Westerner and to the Indian were essentially the same, though in certain respects they varied as to their details and application. He prized truth more than anything else in the world, and always spoke the truth, without trying in the least to suppress or distort it for the sake of winning the praise and support of others. He frankly admired the merits and virtues of all peoples and their cultures, and pointed out at the same time their faults and defects in unmistakable terms. And the one object he had always in view was to make man a true man, and woman a true woman.

His Message to the West

The Swami was a great admirer of the Westerner's art and science, his active temperament, his spirit of independence and his power of organization. But he could never close his eyes to the horrors of Western civilisation. Inordinate craving for material achievement, mad rush for world supremacy, reckless subjection and exploitation of weaker peoples, mutual jealousy and hatred—all these have converted the land of the Occidental nations into a vast military camp. With his clear vision the Swami saw the danger ahead, and said to his countrymen. "The whole of the Western world is on a volcano which may burst to-morrow, go to pieces to-morrow. They have searched every corner of the world and have found no respite. They have drunk deep of the cup of pleasure and found it vanity. Now is the time to work so that India's spiritual ideas may penetrate deep into the West." He also noted with great solicitude the religious intolerance, the social shams, the political hypocracies and the cruel and predatory tendency prevalent in the Western nations. He further found out that their apparent strength was a clear indication of spiritual poverty and weakness, and therefore he spoke to them of nothing but the words of strength. He boldly asked the Westerner to be true to the spirit of his religion, to give up his undue importance on the conception of sin, and to realise the ideals of universalism, potential Divinity of man, and spiritual solidarity of mankind—the three essential doctrines of the Vedanta which is both religion and philosophy. The Swami carried to the Western mind not only these, but also other new, and equally bold ideas and ideals. In place of the Christian theological doctrines of one birth, creation out of nothing and eternal damnation, he presented the Hindu ideas of re-incarnation, evolution and salvation for all. To a world accustomed to hear of Christianity as the only true religion, he

brought the astounding message that all religions were true. "Help, not fight," "Assimilation and not destruction," "Harmony and peace and not dissension"—this was the burden of his teachings to the West.

His Service to India

Great has been the good that the Swami did to the West, but greater still has been the service he rendered to his motherland. If he opened the eyes of the Westerners to new truths sure to have far-reaching effects, he brought to his countrymen, a new awakening that is calculated to influence the entire world. The force with which this spiritual giant moved the West reacted on India with a tremendous power and stirred the very depths of Indian Society. The hypnosis of political and cultural subjection made the Indians forget the glory of their ancient heritage, and look upon themselves as weak and helpless. And in frantic despair did many of them try to inoculate themselves with the lymph of Western culture cleverly placed before them by the self-seeking imperialists who devised the present educational system of the land. At such a momentous hour he appeared on the platform of the Chicago Parliament of Religions, revealed the eternal truths of Hinduism to the wondering West, and at once won thousands as true staunch followers and admirers. He thus raised the Indians not only in the estimation of the Occidentals but also in that of their own. And when he returned to his motherland, and thundered forth to his countrymen his great message, reminding them of their past greatness, pointing out to them unsparingly their evils and defects, urging them to give up their debasing feelings of weakness and impotency and manifest their manhood and power, the Indians came to realise along with the superb greatness of the Swami, also something of their own potentiality as a nation. Indeed the clarion call of the Swami has brought in India a new sense of self-respect

and self-reliance, a new national consciousness, the central theme of which is the manifestation of Indian manhood in all its manifold aspects, physical, intellectual and spiritual.

His Message to His Countrymen

The Swami asked his co-religionists and compatriots to practise the habit of "thinking backward", and also to make a passionate effort for "living forward." He held that a people that forgets its glorious past cannot hope to have any bright future. And he roused the historic consciousness of his countrymen with a view to create in them an unshakable faith in themselves, a faith that is a sure guarantee for future greatness. By greatness however, he never understood more political power or economic supremacy, but individual and collective self-realisation that finds its fulfilment in the domain of the spirit, and manifests itself in an all-round service, national as well as international. Thus the ideal he placed before his people was not a mere revival of the past, but the creation of a living present that is sure to usher in a new era of progress and glory. The source of this inspiration the Swami found in the inspiring teachings of the Upanishads. It is therefore that he thundered forth—"Back to the Upanishads. Back to the strengthening, life-giving teachings of the Upanishads....What we want is strength, strength and every time strength. And the Upanishads are the great mine of strength. Therein lies strength enough to invigorate the whole world; the whole world can be vivified, made strong, energised through them. They will call with trumpet voice upon the weak, the miserable and the down-trodden of all races, all creeds, and all sects, to stand on their feet and be free; freedom, physical freedom, mental freedom and spiritual freedom are the watch-words of the Upanishads." A practical Vedantin that he was he based his gospel of strength on the doctrine of the Atman—the infinite, omnipresent and omniscient

spirit dwelling in all. If man is the Atman, he need not eternally depend on others in his helplessness. He should, instead, stand on his own strength, and declare that he is deathless and eternal, untouched by the miseries and pains, troubles, and tribulations of the world. The ideally strong man according to the Swami is he who possesses that high spiritual mood in which he laughs at both life and death, and has along with it "muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic will which nothing can resist." And he himself stands as the perfect embodiment of the ideal he held before his country and the world. Great was the stress he laid on physical and mental strength along with the spiritual. It is not for the weakling and the coward to understand the highest truths of religion; the fearless and the heroic alone can appreciate them. And he gave expression to this startling idea in his famous Madras lecture—*Vedanta in its Application to Indian Life*. "Be strong, my young friends, that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to heaven through football than through the study of the Gita. You will understand the Gita better with your biceps, your muscles a little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and mighty strength of Sri Krishna with a little strong blood in you. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the Atman when your body stands firm upon your feet and you feel yourselves as men. Not by the help of others but by the energy of Indians themselves should India rise."

Conquering the Conqueror

Swami Vivekananda asked his countrymen to stand on their own strength, and also to further the spiritual mission of their motherland. From time immemorial, he pointed out, India, the home of religion and philosophy, has been a conqueror of conquerors. Innumerable foreign races and tribes, who invaded the land tempted by its riches and wealth, came under the influence of its religion and

culture, and were either completely assimilated into the body of Hindu Society, or were so remarkably transferred that they came to differ greatly in their thoughts and outlook from their co-religionists in their native lands. In the past the field of conquest was the soil of India itself, but now it has extended to lands beyond the seas. By Divine grace the Swami Vivekananda—the intrepid child of Mother India—went “to beard the lion in his den”, and began a new era of “the conquest of the world by the Indian thought,” of conquering the alien conqueror also in his own home. But the Swami was not a narrow and exclusive nationalist. This great preacher of “aggressive Hinduism” knew in his heart of hearts that the assertion of individuality, assimilation of new elements and expansion of the field of activity are the signs of a vigorous life. Hence when he asked his countrymen to stem the tide of the invasion by Western thoughts, and preserve their cultural integrity, he also urged them to learn from the West her arts and sciences, and to give her in return the spiritual truths so very essential for saving her soul from being overpowered by the national ideals of life. And he used the terms “aggressive” and “conquest” in their highest possible sense. The ideal he held before him and the world was one of “give and take,” of the exchange and assimilation of mutual ideals by both the East and the West. “You go to England,” he said to his countrymen, “but that is also in the garb of a beggar praying for education. Why? Have you nothing to give them? An inestimable treasure you have, which you can give,—give them your religion, give them your philosophy! From time immemorial India has been the mine of precious ideas, to human society; giving birth to high ideas herself, she has freely distributed them broadcast over the whole world. Give these valuable gems in exchange for what you receive from them.” Indeed, fearlessness, self-respect, self-help, service at home and abroad, with the Divine as the goal of life and the source

of all inspiration,—in one word, “Strength”—this has been the dominating note that permeated the life and teachings of the Swami. Fearless and intrepid as he was he delivered his message in his fearless and intrepid way. And very happily does he himself speak of it in his memorable words—“Bold has been my message to the people of the West, bolder is my message to you, my beloved countrymen. The message of ancient India to new Western nations I have tried my best to voice—ill done or well done the future is sure to show, but the mighty voice of the same future is already sending forward soft but distinct murmurs, gaining strength as the days go by, the message of India that is to be to India as she is at present.”

THE DOCTRINE OF EXPERIENCE AS THE ONE SELF

By Prof. K. Sundararama Iyer, M. A.

Chap. X—Adhyasa (Superposition)

We now take up for explanation the topic of Adhyasa, which has been called the “*Cruz*” of the Vedanta. Sankara, at the very start, clearly points out that, though it *seems* apparently impossible that two such direct contradictories as the effulgence of the self (*Svaprahasa*) and primordial ignorance (*Ajnana, Maya, Prakriti*) can be identified with one another, such a mutual identification (*parasparadhyasa*) is a matter of *universal* daily experience—the common lot of the generality of mankind. Further, it is distinctly pointed out in the Upanishads and the Gita that the Absolute Self-Effulgence is *concealed* from us by the objects of the phenomenal manifestation of Maya which are superimposed on the same,—and it will be only revealed in all its fullness *simultaneously* with the removal of the latter. In fact the vanishing of Avidya implies the self-revelation (*Avagati*) of Brahman in full. This Brahma-*Avagati* (or *Samyagdarsanam*, which is another expression with the same import) is brought to us through the teaching of the Maha-Vakya by the Guru when we have become fully qualified for it by the previous stages of preparation,—and Sankara frequently points out that it cannot arise

through a mere injunction (*Vidhi* or *Niyoga*). All ritualistic (*Karmic*) injunctions and even the methods of deep meditation and concentration (*upasana*) contained in the Vedas are only intended to bring about the fullness of preparation for Jnana which is known as *ekagra-chitta*, the purity and one-pointedness of mind which is needed in the disciple passing through the *diksha-sampradaya* (course of training for the initiated).

Sankara defines *Adhyasa* as "*Atasminstad-buddhi*,"—"the perception (or knowledge) of a thing in what it is not,"—or, again, as "*smritirupah-paratra-purvadrishhtavabhasah*,"—i. e., "the appearance,—in the form of remembrance,—of a thing previously known in another place (or thing)." There is another name given to the phenomenon,—viz., *Uparaga* (Identification) retransformation of one thing into another" (form). This name is given by Thotakacharya. In his view it is the mind—which he calls *Mati*—that is first transformed into the object sensed by it and assumes the form of the latter. Where such *sensing* takes place, the resulting transformation of the mind (*buddhi* or *mati*) is transferred to the individual soul (*Jivatman*) to which it is related, and the result is that the perceived object becomes thereby known to consciousness. If no "sensing" occurs, no impression is left behind in consciousness for the reason that the mind is not at all transformed into the form of the object before it. In fact, such sensing and the consequent transformation may—and ought to be—considered as one and the same process.

The ignorance of the exact nature (or form) of the object before a seer leads to the perception or presentation (*upalabdhi*) of something else,—as, for example, a piece of silver instead of the actual mother-of-pearl in front, or a serpent, instead of the rope before us. Let us consider this fact of perception (or presentation) in full. In front of me, there is a mother-of-pearl. If I see (or know) it correctly and in full, my knowledge will take the form, "this mother-of-pearl". Owing to a fault (*dosha*) in me, I do not know it correctly or fully. Hence my false knowledge which takes the form, "this silver". This false knowledge (or false perception) is known as *Adhyasa*. It contains clearly *two* elements,—(1) the knowledge of "this," and (2) the knowledge of silver. The former is a correct knowledge; but the latter is a false one, and is due to the ignorance (*ajnana*) of the element of mother-of-pearl which forms of the correct knowledge,—Knowledge which takes the form, "this mother-of-pearl". This *ajnana* has already been fully considered and shown to be no mere negation, but a positive fact or phenomenon. It is the cause of the superposition (*adhyasa*) of silver, and takes *two* forms of superposition.—(1) the silver falsely superposed, (2) the knowledge arising

through the sensing of the silver superposed. These two are respectively known (in the terminology of Advaitic thinkers) as *Arthadhyasa* (the superposition of the object) and *Jnanadhyasa* (the superposition of its knowledge),

Both the falsely superimposed silver and the knowledge of it have as their cause the mother-of-pearl in front, but of whose true nature the seer is ignorant. The mind of the seer has the power of lengthening itself in a chain so as to reach the objects in front. Hence, when the mind, in the instance on hand, lengthens itself out to the superimposed silver, this false knowledge (of silver) thereby gained can be said to have the same cause as the silver itself which is known. Of course, the mind (of the seer) is as much a contributing cause (of *adhyasa*) as the object sensed or superposed,—and thus the Vedantin reconciles both the Western Schools of realism and idealism by his theory of *Adhyasa*.

Both these *adhyasas* as already previously explained, have their sufficient cause in *Avidya* (Maya), and are known as (forms of) *Avidya-vrittis*, transformations of *Avidya* (ignorance) into the forms of object (previously known to us). As, however, knowledge (whether true or false) is due to the mind's power of lengthening itself out so as to reach and sense the object, we say that it (knowledge) is due to the mind's inherent and active power of transforming itself—and to this knowledge is known as *Antahkarana-vritti*. Owing to the primordial ignorance (*Ajnana*, *Maya*, or *Prakriti*), the one pure Self loses its self-effulgence, and hence there results the superposed, living, re-incarnating, personality known as the Jiva (*Ego*). Egoism (*ahankara*) is itself the evolutionary effect of the primeval ignorance (*Avidya*, or *Prakriti*), and is usually accepted as including within its range not only the mind, but also the individual's material body (*sthula sarira*) and vital principle (*prana*). All these are superposed on the Atman in turn; and even external objects are sometimes regarded as identified with the self when the attachment (*abhimana*) towards them has become hardened and strengthened to the extreme point by long association. Sankara points out that, though the interior self is entirely disconnected with, and even opposed to the non-ego (or external object), it is entirely a natural procedure (*naisargikaloka-vyavaharah*) on the part of all ordinary men not to distinguish the two entities and their attributes, and that all transmigratory existence during eternity in the universe of phenomena is due to the identification of them.

We have just spoken of the identification of the *attributes* of objects. This is a *third* distinction in *Adhyasa*, and is known as

Dharmadhyasa, as distinguished from the *Arthadhyasa* or *Dharmi-adhyasa* (already mentioned above)—the identification of objects with each other or with the self, which is the foundation of all re-incarnating existence. *Dharmadhyasa* (otherwise known also as *Samsarga-dhyasa*) consists in the transference (through association) of the attributes of one thing to another. For example, when a piece of red cotton is placed by the side of a white crystal (*sphatika*), the redness of the former is alone transferred so as to make the crystal become invested with that attribute. This false superposition of an attribute only on an object is known as *Dharmadhyasa*. In this case, only the attribute of one object is transferred to another. But in the case of the identification of the intelligent self with the non-intelligent and material mind, vital principle, or body and the consequent reference to them as I or mine, there is a *mutual identification* of the attributes of both (*paraspara-adhyasa*), along with the identification of those entities (*arthis*). For example, when a person asks another,—“Why did you beat me?”—Not only is there an identification of the body with the self, but the action of beating is transferred from the body to the self; and the feeling of pain is transferred from the intelligent individual to the body which is often spoken of as being pained. Again, when a person says, I have lost my strength, he ascribes the attribute of strength (or weakness) which really belongs to the *prana* (vital principle) to the self. When a person says, I am a man, he identifies himself with the gross body, Prana, mind, and all. Men consider themselves as rich or poor. But abundance and limitation are attributes of property, not of the owner thereof, and are simply transferred to the latter through *adhyasa* due to beginningless ignorance (*anadyavidya*).

All these various kinds and modes of *Adhyasa* arise only through the imagined (*Kalpamika*) relationship of the Self to the not-self. In and by itself, the Self (the Atman) is one only, pure, and self-effulgent, and of the essence of the innermost bliss of love. But, through the imagined relationship established between the Self and non-self having its origin in beginningless ignorance (*anadyavidya*), it has, of course, also the capacity to lighten up the non-self in all its forms, gross or fine, whether *Buddhi*, *Prana*, gross material body, and so on, when the latter are superimposed and identified with it. It is through the *Antahkarana* or *Buddhi* (mind, or internal organ) that the object to be known (*bodhdavya*) is brought into the (*Kalpita* or) *imaginary relationship of identification* with the witnessing self which we have investigated above and which is called *Adhyasa* (or *Uparaga*) in the Vedanta. When this identification takes place, and only then, the mind of the seer (or witnessing self) is enabled to

lengthen itself out towards the object outside and gets *transformed* into its form and shape,—and perception of the object takes place at the place where the object is situated for the reason that the self (which is one and therefore all-pervading) is also there to lighten it up through the Buddhi (internal organ) which as already stated, is already in a state of imaginary (Kalpita) association and identification with it. This is the Vedantic view of external perception (*upalabdhi*) in brief. It is the *fact* of *Adhyasa*—the identification of the intelligent self with non-self that enables the living self (Jivatman) through the Buddhi to perform this act of perception by his innate power of illuminating both his own self and everything with whom he is brought into the (Kalpita) relation of identity (*adhyasa*) now under consideration. The transformation (*parinama*) of the Buddhi into the shape of the object (which is accompanied by the illumination of the object and the resulting perception) is clearly to be understood as applying to the Buddhi only,—and not to the *self* which ever remains pure, and undifferentiated and which is only brought into an imaginary and assumed (Kalpita) relation with the non-self through the phenomenon and fact of *adhyasa*. The pure self becomes the perceiver, witness, (*sakshi*) only through this assumed or imagined relationship of identification of it with the object through the mind and the perception of the object by the self is due to the fact of its *appearing* to assume the form of the object, though only the Buddhi with which it is related through *adhyasa* really does so by getting itself impressed with the shape (*akara*) of such object. This impression or transformation (*parinama*) is known as *buddhi-vritti*. The Buddhi is alone a *vikari*, *parinamini*,—never is the self changed, it remains pure and undifferentiated, one and absolute. It is the identification, through primeval ignorance (*maya* or *ajnana*), of the self with the Buddhi that converts the former into the living seer (*sakshi*) or knower (*pramata*). Sankara says almost at the very commencement of his Sutra-bhashya :—“The means of right knowledge cannot operate unless there be a knowing personality, and the existence of the latter depends upon the assumption, though erroneous, that the body, the senses, and so on, are identical with, and belongs to, the self of the knowing person (*pramata*). For, without the recognition and use of the senses as one’s own, the practical exercise (or performance) of the operations of sense-perception (*pratyaksha*) and other sources or means of right knowledge cannot possibly be made to exist. Further, without the body and the senses being superposed on, and identified with, the self, no one can get engaged in any form of outgoing activity. Also, if all these (*phenomenal*) entities are not (assumed to be) existent, the pure and unrelated

self—which, in its own nature, is free from all external contact—cannot become a knower (*pramata*). Further, if there is no such knower, there can be no bringing into operation the means of right knowledge. Hence, perception and the other means of right knowledge, and also the Sastras (Vedas, etc.), are to be regarded as facts having significance only in relation to the self assumed to be affected by ignorance (*maya* or *ajnana*) and therefore related through his body and senses to the world of phenomena where he has his migrations and peregrinations.

From all that has been said so far, it will be seen that it is necessary, before concluding this part of the subject to explain another distinction in Adhyasa,—*viz.*, the distinction between *karana-adhyasa* (causal adhyasa) and *karya-adhyasa* (the Adhyasa which is an effect of the causal Adhyasa and therefore presupposes it). The identification of the Atman with *ajnana* or *avidya* (Maya) is beginningless, and hence is *karana-adhyasa*, *par excellence*. Thence arises the identification of the self with the internal organ (*antah-karana*, *buddhi*, *manas*, as it is variously called) which it is itself a transformation (or effect) of *Ajnana*. This, again, may be said to be the cause of the identification of the self with the gross body physical, and so on. It is these successive identifications (or Adhyasas) that collectively result in producing the *jiva-bhava*, the transmigrating personality for whose ultimate benefit and liberation from bondage the grace of Heaven manifests itself in all the forms familiarised to us through the history of the universe, down even to the days now passing over us.

STUDIES IN PSYCHODYNAMICS

ANÆSTHESIA

Induced by Psychological Process

By S. Sankara Menon, B.A., B.L.

Brief history—Experiments performed by the writer—The effect a psycho-physical phenomenon—Nature of the effect—Development of Psychology in India and the oriental view—The forces underlying suggestion or a mental stimulus—Construction of formulæ for inducing effects—Direction of forces and their polarity—Unity of Physical and Psychical forces probable—Practical value of studies in this subject and conclusion.

Dr. Mesmer produced this effect in his own way in his medical experiments about the latter part of the eighteenth century. In

the year 1825, a Committee of the ablest Scientists in France investigated the truth of this matter and found that purely psychological processes could produce anæsthesia. The Committee's report that was submitted to the Royal Academy of France describes it as follows : "The eyelids are closed. The eyelids yield with difficulty to the efforts made with the hand to open them. This operation which is not without pain allows one to see the eye ball convulsed and directed towards the upper and sometimes the lower part of the orbit." At the present day Hypnotism finds a place as a part of abnormal psychology in the curricula of studies in the Universities. Anæsthesia produced by Hypnotic methods (Braids' methods) is analogous to that induced by Psychological processes and Sir Samuel Wilks, M. D. F. R. S. says that "there is every reason to believe that brain and nerve centres are force producing organs, that this vis nervosa does not stand for an imaginary essence, but is real power". Hypnotism does not proceed upon the hypothesis of vital energy, but it is based upon auto-suggestion. If the same hypnotic effect could be produced by suggestion other than auto-suggestion, it goes a great deal to establish that suggestion implies a force transmissible under proper conditions. It is the theory as to the nature of this force suggested by certain experiments performed by the writer that forms the subject of this paper.

In the course of the investigations pursued by the writer, a boy of fourteen, two adults of twenty, and a grown-up man of forty-one were the subjects of experiments. These experiments were performed in large ventilated rooms and it required five minutes to thirty minutes to get them anæsthetised. What is done at the initial stage is to ask the subject to take a comfortable lying posture and then to induce the mental forces by self-suggestion in the operator's body and focus them at the ocular centre. In the case of all human beings, this force exists and it is normally dissipated all over the body, the direction being downwards. The trained operator reverses this force into an upward direction and brings this force into his ocular areas and then transmits it into the ocular centre of the subject who gradually becomes amenable to suggestion "you sleep" or "you be insensible." Mere self-induction will have no effect upon another unless it is transmitted by some means such as actual contact, or such proximity of the operator nearly amounting to contact. The effect produced upon the subject is not sudden but gradual. The time required to bring completely under effect varies in different individuals. The time during which the effect lasts depends upon 2 factors (1) the inductive capacity to induce forces by self-suggestion in the body of the operator, (2) the susceptibility or the resistive capacity of the

subject. The effect has lasted from 20 to 30 minutes in the above experiments.

When two points A, B, are taken in space and when two material objects are placed at those two respective points and when a change takes place in the objects at B due to a change in the object at A, the change at B is a case of physical phenomenon whereas if the physical changes at A and B are re-placed by psychical events, the change at B is not merely a case of a physical phenomenon, but it is a psycho-physical phenomenon because the change at B results from a corresponding change at A acting through the physical space enclosed by A and B. The causes producing the psychical events at A and B may be said to be (1) the mental stimulus or the succession of mental stimuli generated by the operator at A, (2) the resultant action of the mental stimulus or stimuli upon the sensory, respiratory and other organs and nerve centres of the subject at B. The physical part of the phenomena consists in the actual transmission of the stimuli from A to B and the changes taking place in the space between A and B are due to such transmission. The space between A and B may be called the psycho-magnetic field and it is in this field that the whole series of physical events take place and it is this field which serves as the medium for transmission of the stimuli. An important question arises here as to the possibility of any change ever taking place at all in the space between A and B. Why should the intervening Ether take a part in the transmission of the stimuli? From Newton downwards, Scientists postulate the existence of an incomprehensible, and non-condensable medium called Ether in order to explain the various physical phenomena. They discard the idea of the possibility of actions at a distance and lay down the fundamental proposition that matter can only act on that which is in contact with it. So we start with the axiom, that a sort of continuousness is necessary to explain an interaction between two particles of matter. We also know that absolute continuity of two particles of matter cannot be established because two particles of matter which, in appearance, cling together most tenaciously, are separated by infinitesimally small distances. If matter could only act upon that which is in contact with it, and if it is actually found that even the smallest particles of an apparently continuous matter are separated by infinitesimally small distances, it becomes necessary to postulate the connecting medium of Ether to explain any sort of inter-action. The Ether hypothesis is further necessitated by the fact that, when energy is transmitted through space, the intervening matter is not effected by such transmission.

Investigators like Sir William Crookes and Professor Flourney think that brain waves are possible to exist but the eminent Psychologist Meyer takes an opposite view to this theory and attributes the transmission of the magnetic influence to a kind of spiritual or unknown communication. Then there are people who believe in the existence of magnetic fluids. Whatever this be, we find that a specific mental stimulus or a series of mental stimuli pass to another point and an effect is produced upon the subject. The operator can very well be imagined to radiate his energy in his self-induced condition. At the commencement of the operation, the subject also begins to receive something which is transmitted by the operator. It is not possible to grasp as to the exact nature of the mental stimulus or suggestion which is transmitted through space. The present limited knowledge in psychology does not allow us to say whether this stimulus is something like an electron, or a corpuscle having a definite charge of energy travelling in any known particular form. It is also hazardous to put forward the theory that the mind consists of minute corpuscles and they are shot out from the operator to the subject. The only inference that we could draw from the operation is that a change travels from the operator which may or may not generate any change in space. It may be the psycho-physical changes occurring in space that account for the lasting nature of the effect in the experiments described above.

In order to understand how these forces are induced by the operator by self-suggestion using short formula (or a mantra in Sanskrit) it is necessary to consider the theory and application of the units of forces and time according to the oriental psychologists. Psychology developed in India to a very high limit, but in its development, took a different line from that of the development in Europe. In India Psychology was studied and applied only as a means of finding out the truths of religion and was never a study in itself as in Europe. Religion as current in India can be roughly divided into two portions, the abstract and the ritualistic. The end was the same in both the schools, but in their methods was difference. So there were two different branches of Psychology that grew up in India:—(1) Psychology of the ritual, (2) Psychology of the abstract religion. Both systems had the mind as the instrument to catch the unknown. In the first case mind became the object of study in its various emotional aspects and the truths arrived at were freely applied to dive into the higher depths of religion. In the second case, discarding the emotional aspects of mind, they studied it more from the subjective stand-point and applied it to find out the oneness of mind and matter. In the one case religion in India became as

art and in the other case religion assumed the aspect of a science. The one is beautiful and the other is sublime, though the ultimate background is the same. The greatest Indian Psychologists of the first School are Abhinavagupta, Bhaskara Raya, Kalikacharana, while the other school is represented by Patanjali and his followers. Sankara compromises both the Schools. He is both a ritualist as well an abstract philosopher. I am indebted to the former School for the *modus operandi* in my experiments. It is already mentioned that mind was never the end in the study of Psychology but it was studied as a means to realise the grand concepts of religion and consequently the development of psychology was unlike that of Europe which has no religious basis. The study of animal magnetism was only a stage in the study of the psychology of the mind. The oriental psychologists were adepts in this branch of practical studies and applied the science of animal magnetism in the art of healing diseases. According to the Indian Schools, mind is by itself dull and insentient and if it appears to be conscious it is only due to the existence of a soul which may be said to be the ultimate consciousness, i. e, the mind only sheds the reflected light of the soul. The mind has a function which consists in the process of mentation or thought which is ultimately realised in the consciousness. The relation of thought to language is of an inseparable kind. The thing signified and that which signifies are inseparable so far as the subjective consciousness is concerned. The sounds that are used to signify ideas are divided into vowels and consonants. The same idea may be expressed by simple sounds or a combination of different sounds. It may also be noted that the same idea may be expressed by either the combination of a long or short number of sound-syllables and that for practical experiments we use short combinations. Further research work may throw light on the laws that govern the time required for the translation of the idea into the language and also the relation between the sound combinations and the efforts required for their production. In using a short combination of sounds we use the least effort. There are various Sanskrit works on this branch of the subject which would help us in understanding the science of sounds.

A suggestion may be said to consist of a mental stimulus or a series of mental stimuli; for example "you sleep" or "you be insensible" are depressive mental stimuli signifying a complete idea. In order to understand the nature of the mental stimuli or suggestion, it is necessary to grasp the variety of stages at which an idea can exist. The condition in which an idea is fully expressed is one where there is a perfect arrangement of sounds signifying the idea. Before its expression too, this arrangement must exist, because unless the sound

combination is formed it can hardly be expressed. We may call the idea at this stage the potential idea. There is a peculiar physiological condition in the bodily system when a particular idea exists in a particular potential condition. All the muscles of the vocal organs are charged with that particular idea. The question arises how this idea is magnetised. By an effort of the will, we energise these ideas resulting in a change of the polarity of the forces underlying the idea and this energised idea is taken into the ocular centre of the operator. After energising the potential idea, the operator still keeps the forces up in order to produce the psychic interaction in the brain of the subject. So we find the force induced by the operator is spent (1) in supplying energy to the potential idea and this energised idea is the mental suggestion (2) indirectly in generating the psychomagnetic field by the transmission of the mental stimulus through space (3) in the production of the psychic tension in the body of the subject. An idea, as it is, cannot do physical work, unless it is magnetised as in the case of a magnetic operation or it is resolved into a nervous impulse capable of being transmitted through a nerve. The exact time when the psycho-physical transformation of the potential idea takes place in the former case is the time at which it begins to receive the energy raised up by self-induction.

The Indian Psychologists fix the time in which forces could be magnetised and made capable of transmission. It is already mentioned that, in normal conditions, the function of consciousness is to cognize only such thoughts as are brought into its plane by the faculty of mind. The sound forms begin to develop when the mind begins to function. Sounds are divided into two classes—into vowels and consonants. The vowels are again divided into short and long vowels. The force that is required to magnetise one short vowel is taken as one unit and the consonant as half-a-unit. They knew very early the connection between respiration and sound production. They consider correctly that an operator could ordinarily magnetise 20 short vowels in the course of one full inspiration. According to them a person under normal condition respire 21600 times a day consisting of 24 hours. When this is arithmetically reduced, we get that for one inspiration a person takes 4 seconds. (According to the latest measurements by Stetheograph it is 15 to 20 per minute; Clarkson and Farquharson. Rhythm of Respiration). For the purposes of magnetisation, the Indian psychologists fixed formulae, though arbitrary, upon certain principles derived from experience. They said that 20 units of force could be produced by a combination of 20 short vowels or its sound equivalents in 4 seconds. This is not an absolute rule but this is rule derived from the unifor-

mity of cases that came under their observation. When we look into the classical authors of oriental psychology it is found that the tendency in the construction of the formula is to use the shortest number of syllables. They recognise two important laws in the magnetisation of sounds.

(1) The shorter the number of the syllables, the greater the concentration of a single mental stimulus upon that syllable.

(2) The effect also varies the number of times the formula could be made the subject of repetition per unit of time.

Putting these laws together we can form the general rule that the inductive capacity of the operator varies inversely as the number of syllables used in the Formula and directly as the number of times of concentrating upon it per unit of time. It is difficult to understand the exact relation of the sound combinations to the idea represented by them. The languages are so numerous that it is not easy to master all of them so as to arrive at definite conclusions regarding these relations. The exact relation of sound to sense is a matter which future scholars ought to take up for study and research. On psychological grounds, I am seriously led to think, that certain relations, though at present cannot be exactly said what they are, exist between various sets of sound combination representing the same idea and the time during which these ideas transform into these sound combinations and the effort with which these combinations are formed in mind, which result from highly complex psychophysical processes. But this has no connection with the magnetisation of sounds. The psychologists only manipulate sound formations and combinations in a particular way to produce the magnetic effect upon an idea, though the relation existing between the idea and the sound combination is not known.

The mental stimuli or suggestion transmitted through space in a particular manner and their action upon the nervous system of man, must explain the rationale of the hypothesis that normally the direction of the forces in the human system is in a downward direction and the change in the directivity of these lines of force must account for the various psychic conditions under observation. We know that sleep is a condition in which the consciousness disconnects entirely from external activity and consequently the psycho-motor action is completely set at a standstill. Hypnosis is a condition which resembles sleep, but differs from it in as much as it is an induced one. Death is a condition where there is a permanent cessation of the transmission of regular impulses from the central system, to appropriate muscles, The central nervous system

is the starting centre of all impulses and we also know that this centre is not situated in the centre of the bodily system, but at one particular end of the body and also the direction of the impulses is regulated from that end. In certain cases, the central system, especially when sensory phenomena is concerned, acts as a receiving station, where impulses are received and new impulses are started. Where motor impulses are concerned, it is undoubtedly the starting place and impulses must start from that end initially and traverse through the motor nerves to other ends in the body. When man is in his erect position, it is obvious, that the motor impulses should start from up in a downward direction. The motor nerves have the special property of directing these impulses in this particular direction in the normal consciousness and this is due to the inherent property of the cellular force existing in the motor nerves. Since the impulses travel down along the motor nerves, the directivity of the cellular force must be in a downward direction. Now we know that pushes, pulls, are the results of muscular contraction under the action of will. In a push or pull, we find that muscular force is transformed into mechanical energy which becomes physically measurable. If force could be supposed to be represented by lines of force, it may reasonably be supposed that when a muscle normally contracts, the lines of force undergo also an appropriate change. The only thing that must be remembered is that the lines of force undergo their changes with their direction in a downward direction. The polarity of forces exist actively during normal consciousness and during sleep none of the magnetic phenomena could take place under the action of the will. So it can be rightly inferred that sleep is a condition where there is a change in the directivity of force and consciousness is a condition, where the reverse state of thing exist.

It is an admitted fact that heat, light, sound, electricity are different forms of the same energy which are different kinds of molecular motion in varying degrees. A magnetic operation closely shows that Energy can appear itself in another form as in the shape of a mental stimulus capable of being transmitted through space in a particular direction and doing work at the point of destination. If once it is conceded that mind is something like dull and insentient matter and is separate from the noumenal consciousness of man and has only a phenomenal sentiency due to the existence of an ultimate conscious entity, then we may arrive at the possibility of explaining more on a physical basis all the phenomena generally considered a vital motion, thereby making an attempt to sound the very depths of the unfathomable. One or the other of the conclusions must be

arrived at from the magnetic experiments that either mentation is a series of highly complex physical processes taking place apart from the consciousness or that all the physical events taking place in nature are in a way connected with psychical processes which evade the human observation and scrutiny. Light is an electro-magnetic phenomenon and electric radiation obeys the laws of light. We also faintly see, that in the case of the transference of a mental stimulus, there is the possibility of electric changes taking place at the points of origination and destination and further research work may prove to the psychologist, that the psycho-physical radiation of the mental stimulus is also intimately connected with the electro-magnetic phenomena of the physicist. There is every chance of our coming to a common region where the physicist and the psychologist will have to step into each other's place, though unwillingly.

Psychological Anaesthesia has its own importance, in the hands of the psychologist especially to probe into the mystery of the nature of self-suggestion. It gives a clue to understand the analogous sub-conscious states. To the physician and surgeon it may not be of much use owing to the existence of chemical anaesthetics. The practical value of research work upon the study of this phenomenon cannot be better stated than in the words of Sir Oliver Lodge who says " why should not psychical investigation lead to practical results? Are we satisfied with our treatment of criminals? As civilized people are we content to grow a perennial class of habitual criminals and to keep them in check only by devices appropriate to savages; hunting them, flogging them, locking them up, exterminating them? Any savage race in the history of the world could do as much as that; and if they know no better they are bound to do it for their own protection. Society cannot let its malefactors run wild, any more than it can release its lunatics. Till it understands these things it must lock them up, but the sooner it understands them the better; an attempt at comprehension is being made by criminologists in Italy, France, and elsewhere. Force is no remedy: Intelligent treatment is. Who can doubt but that a study of obscure mental facts will lead to a theory of the habitual criminal to the tracing of his malady as surely as malaria has been traced to the mosquito? And once we understand the evil the remedy will follow. Already hypnotic treatment or treatment by suggestion, occurs to one; and quite normal measures of moral improvement can also be tried. The fact of imprisonment ought to lend itself to brilliant efforts at reform: Such efforts are the only real justification for destruction of

liberty. The essence of manhood is to be free for better or for worse, free—and coercion is only justified if it is salutary. It is a great advantage to doctors to have their patients collected compactly in a hospital—and without it medical practice would languish; it ought to be a similar advantage—a similar opportunity—to have criminals herded together in gaols, and lunatics in asylums. It is unwise and unscientific to leave prisoners merely to the discipline of warders, and the preaching of chaplains. That is not the way to attack a disease of the body politic. I have no full blown treatment to suggest, but I foresee that there will be one in the future. Experiments are already being made in America, in the prisons of Elmira and Concord—experiments of hope, if not yet of achievement. Society will not be content always to employ methods of barbarism; the resources of civilization are not really exhausted, though for centuries they have appeared to be. The criminal demands careful study on the physical side and remedy or palliation will be a direct outcome of one aspect of our researches. The influence of the unconscious or subliminal self, the power of suggestion, the influence of one mind over another, the phenomena of so-called “possession”—these are not academic or scientific facts alone; they have a deep practical bearing and sooner or later it must be put to the proof.” The study of animal magnetism is sure to throw light on the inherent tendencies of man because it is only by the use of magnetic methods that it is possible to bring the innate tendencies into action, thereby making them capable of observation and comprehensive examination.*

STORY OF SRI SANKARACHARYA'S LIFE (YOUTH)

(Continued from Page 374)

By Swami Atulananda

Gradually, Sankara's reputation spread far and wide. He was held to be the greatest intellect of his time. Rumours of his fame, it is written, reached even Siva-loka. There the ancient sage Vyasa (who, when he was on earth, had classified the Vedas and had himself written many Puranas) heard about it. It was told him that at last a perfect commentary had been written on the Vedanta scriptures, and that the Vedas were being expounded according to the highest interpretation ever vouchsafed to man, and all this was being done

* Read at the last Science Congress, Calcutta,

by a boy, for Sankaracharya (Sankara the teacher, as he was now called), was then only sixteen years old.

Vyasa had the desire to see and test that wonderful boy. He therefore, came to earth, and disguised as an old Brahmin, one day, entered Sankaracharya's Ashrama. He saw the young preceptor seated under a shady tree, surrounded by his eager disciples, all dressed in the fire-coloured robes of Sannyasins. It was a pleasing sight. Sankara's face glowed with enthusiasm, and his voice rang clear as he explained the subtle meaning of one of the most difficult Upanishads.

Vyasa drew near, Sankara rising from his seat received him with great kindness and courtesy. Out of respect for his old age, he offered the venerable visitor his own seat. Vyasa, however, declined the honour. He preferred to take his place amongst the disciples, and he begged Sankara to continue his discourse.

Now, as Sankara proceeded, the old Brahmin began to ply him with puzzling questions. So subtle were these questions, that Sankara realized that he was pitched against an intellect in no way inferior to his own. It put him on his mettle, all his arguments were disputed. It turned into a hot debate. The Brahmin did not give in, neither did Sankara. It seemed they would never arrive at any conclusion. Bath, food, even time itself, were forgotten. The day passed, the night passed. Still the arguments went on, Sankara was amazed, who was this old man with such a prodigious intellect? Would he, or Sankara himself be defeated in the dispute? It was a great strain on his intellect. But the Brahmin seemed as fresh as when they began.

Sankara's disciples exhausted physically and mentally, one after the other slipped away. Only Sanandan remained. Though the discussions often went beyond his intellect he would not desert his beloved master. Silently he prayed that Sankara might come out victorious in the end.

Then, through the strength of his Guru-bhakti, the truth was revealed to him. He understood that the old Brahmin was no other than Vyasa himself, come in disguise to test his preceptor. It was God's play—God in the person of the Brahmin; God in the person of his Guru. "Revered Sir," he addressed Sankara, "these discussions will not lead anywhere. You are Hari, and the Brahmin is Hara (both names of God). Your disputes will never come to an end."

This opened Sankara's eyes. In a flash he now also understood which it all meant. Overjoyed, he bowed low before the Brahmin, and humbly took the dust of his feet,

Vyasa also was transported with delight. He was convinced that Sankara could never be defeated in argument, that he would be a great reformer, that he would preach religion in its purest form. "My son," he said, "you have upheld the glory of Vedanta. I bless you. When you were born, the life allotted you was only eight years. When you took Sannyasa, eight years were added to it. Now another sixteen years I allot to you. In these years you will establish your doctrine over the whole of India. You will proclaim the highest truth, and thousands of men will profit by your preaching. As the lion conquers all other animals, even so let the lion of Vedanta conquer all inferior beliefs. Gird your loins, and rest not till your task is finished." Then Vyasa vanished from sight.

This miraculous incident inspired Sankara with new enthusiasm; and Vyasa's parting words filled his heart with confidence and hope for the future. He felt that the time had come to extend his work. The country, he thought, was ready to hear him, and accept his new dispensation. But he also realized that only with the greatest effort would he succeed, for mighty spiritual leaders, preaching their own doctrines, stood in his way. These he had to win over to his side before he could hope to influence the masses. He, therefore, called his disciples together, and in consultation with them, decided on his plan of campaign.

Thus far, Sankara had preached only in Benares. Now he would travel to the four corners of India, challenging all comers to meet him in debate, that they might decide which of the contending parties held the truer interpretation of the scriptures. He would, however, make the condition that the one who lost in the contest should attach himself to the victorious party.

Sankara would present his own firm conviction that God is the only reality in existence, that all else is Maya, or relative—a passing and ever-changing state of consciousness; and that self-realization, or Atma Jnanam, is the supreme means to Mukti, or freedom of the soul.

This being decided, Sankara and his disciples made ready for the journey, a long journey that—as we shall see—occupied the rest of Sankara's life, and was crowned with overwhelming success. For in the end all Sankara's opponents had to bow down before his gigantic intellect and spiritual insight,

During their travels, Sankara and his party met with wonderful experiences. So one day they came to the Ashrama of one Kumarilla Bhatta, a man of vast erudition and impeccable character. He was

an advocate of the Karma Kanda, the belief that sacrificial offerings performed according to strict scriptural rules, and with a pure heart, leads man to liberation.

Kumarilla had done much to put down the nefarious practices of his time. He was a preceptor of wide influence, honoured and respected by all. He had a very large following, and had established many Ashramas that were in charge of competent disciples. Kumārilla was a blessing for his time, for we must remember that the degraded Buddhists were then almost all-powerful. The priests and monks wielded an enormous power over the ignorant masses who feared them. Through the exercise of black magic they could perform strange deeds that frightened the people. Their Ashramas were places of vice. Even human life was not respected, for the priests believed that by drinking the blood of healthy, strong boys, they could prolong their lives. Young girls were taken from their homes, and unless they submitted to the lustfull demands of the beastly monks, were cruelly tortured. Kumarilla had done a great and noble work in stamping out these wicked practices.

Thus the way had been prepared. It was now left to Sankara to build on the foundations laid by Kumarilla, and to introduce a higher interpretation of the Vedic scriptures.

Sankara was, therefore, very anxious to meet this great scholar and reformer, and to convince him of the superiority of Advaita Vedanta over the Karma Kanda. For should Kumarilla accept Sankara's view, his numerous followers would easily fall in line. The victory would give Sankara prestige, and would greatly advance his cause.

Now a very strange thing happened. It was only in the nick of time that Sankara met Kumarilla. When he reached his Ashrama a most astonishing scene met Sankara's sight. A terrible human drama was being enacted. Let us see what took place.

Kumarilla to accomplish his life's mission had found it necessary to learn the secrets by which the Buddhist leaders kept the masses under their control. As already mentioned, they practised black magic, and they justified their criminal deeds by subtle and sophisticated arguments. Now, Kumarilla in his youth had joined their ranks that he might learn their secret ways and their arguments. Afterwards he left them and defeated them with their own weapons. It was not a strictly honourable act, even though his motive was pure. Kumarilla being a man of conscience and integrity was not blind to this fact. Therefore, when he had firmly established a better

religious state of affairs, and he had made able disciples to carry on his work, he felt it his duty to atone for this fault in his conduct. He had acted like a hypocrite.

The atonement he planned was radical. Horrifying as it was, it certainly proved the sincerity and courage of the man. He reasoned that there was only one way to pay the debt of Karma he had incurred. He had to sacrifice his body at the altar of Truth.

In the body he had committed the sin of deceiving the Buddhists; the destruction of the body was the price he had to pay. And that not in the quickest and easiest manner, but by a slow and painful process.

Gathering around him his most intimate disciples, Kumarilla in solemn conclave revealed his secret intention. The disciples were dumfounded. They could hardly believe their ears. In confusion they looked at each other. They looked at their beloved master. His face was serene; he was in dead earnest.

When the first shock of the sad news had somewhat subsided, the disciples recovered their speech. They protested that such a slight offence, for a good cause, by no means merited the severe punishment their master had planned for himself. They argued that the master was stretching a point of honour beyond all reasonable measure. Their pleading was of no avail. They implored, they wept.

Kumarilla listened patiently to all they had to say, but he could not be shaken in his firm determination. At last he said, "My children, I know it is out of love that you try to put obstacles in my way. You have always trusted me, trust in me now. Long have I considered this act, a power greater than my own prompts me. Learn from me that truth must triumph; not falsehood. I have sinned against truth. I must pay the debt. Do no longer oppose me. Help me to be true, even unto the end."

Then the day was selected, the hour appointed. It was an auspicious day according to Hindu calculation, a day when the conjunction of heavenly bodies loomed propitious. It was the hour boding success in all undertakings. With sad hearts the disciples carried out their master's last instructions. There were rites to be observed, and sanctifying ceremonies to be performed. The scriptures had been consulted, and now all was complete, in readiness for the morrow.

Came early dawn. A crimson eastern sky announced the coming of day—the day of reparation. Kumarilla had kept vigil all night. He

had prayed and meditated. Now he rose for his early ablutions. A blood-red sun appeared on the horizon. With folded hands, for the last time, Kumarilla saluted the messenger of day, "O Pushan, O Sun, sole Traveller of the heavens, controller of all, collect thy golden rays and gather up by the burning effulgence, that I may behold thy true form. I am what Thou art. I am He."

The hour was drawing near. Kumarilla bade his disciples light a fire, a slow-burning fire. "Use the dry dung of the sacred cow," he said, "use no other fuel." Thus the ordeal was to be prolonged. The disciples obeyed, with trembling hands. All was ready.

"My sons," Kumarilla spoke to his disciples, "long have we lived together. Day and night you have been with me. If, perchance, we have ever offended each other, forgive me, as I forgive you. Faithfully you have served me. Remember my words, and live the Truth. My blessings I leave with you." The disciples wept.

Kumarilla invoked the God of fire, "Agni, Lord of Fire, lead us to beatitude. O Lord, thou knowest all things. Keep us in the path of righteousness. The body ends in ashes. Mind, remember thy deeds. Prana (life breath) to Prana. The soul to the Immortal. Om! Praise, O Lord, unto Thee. Om! Peace, peace, peace."

Kumarilla circumambulated the fire, seven times, chanting the name of God. A last obeisance, and with firm step he mounted the pyre. There was dead silence, broken only now and then by sobs escaping from the afflicted disciples.

Kumarilla had seated himself in the midst of the smouldering fire, in Yoga posture. His mind withdrawn from the body, was fixed on God. Like a statue he sat, erect, motionless, his eyes closed.

The disciples chanted softly, with fear-choked voices, hymns in praise of the Guru: "Salutation to the most excellent Guru who, by removing the darkness of ignorance, leads us to Knowledge and Truth. Salutation to the most excellent Guru who reveals to us the Almighty, the soul of our souls, the one who pervades all creation."

Then, there was a sudden commotion. A young Sannyasin with his following of disciples came hastening towards the spot. It was Sankara. Arrived at the Ashrama, the stench of burning flesh had guided him to the scene. The news of the great sacrifice had reached him. Now he took in the situation at a glance. Horrified he called to Kumarilla, "I have come to debate with you. Come from the fire. Together we shall preach the glorious truth of Vedānta."

Sankara approached the pyre. But Kumarilla, roused from his meditation, motioned him back. "My days are over," he spoke unmoved. "I know who you are. Go to Mandan Misra and convince him. He is my foremost disciple. Take to him my blessings."

Kumarilla withdrew again within himself.

A sizzling sound came from the fire. Volumes of smoke enveloped Kumarilla's frame.

Sankara realized that it was too late. Silently he bowed his head to the earth, a last act of homage to the great teacher and reformer.

Slowly the flames crept up, licking the living flesh, consuming the body, charring the bones. When the vital parts were reached, Kumarilla collapsed. The body fell backwards. The soul severing its connection with the mortal had entered into eternal Bliss.

Sankara rose to his feet, and with vibrant voice sang the great Hymn of Liberation :

I am neither the body, nor the mind, nor the senses.

I am beyond sin and virtue, beyond pleasure and pain.

I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute.

I am He, I am He.

For me there is neither death, nor the fear of death.

Never was I born. I am all-pervading.

I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute.

I am He, I am He.

I am without form or limit, beyond time and space.

I am the foundation of the universe.

I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute.

I am He, I am He. * * *

The disciples were heart-stricken. Sankara consoled them, and assisted them in the performance of the last rites for the departed. When the fire had cooled down, the master's ashes were carefully collected, and with impressive ceremonies were consigned to the bosom of the sacred stream—the same stream in which Kumarilla had so long performed his daily ablutions.

Leaving the bereaved disciples in charge of the Ashrama, Sankara and his followers continued their journey.

(To be continued)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

ROMAIN ROLLAND ON SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND VIVEKANANDA

The February issue of the *Prabuddha Bharata* gives us an interesting piece of conversation between Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy and the renowned thinker and writer of France Romain Rolland, while they were in Switzerland. As our readers might be aware Monsieur Romain Rolland is well familiar with the thought currents of our land and has a genuine love and affection for our motherland. Sometime back he brought out a biography of Mahatma Gandhi. Pursuing his study of the philosophic thought of India he came across the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda. He was so much fascinated by these two personalities that he sent for all the available literature on the subject and even wrote to His Holiness Swami Shivanandji, the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission for some personal touches of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

Addressing Dilip Kumar Roy Romain Rolland said that he was writing a book about Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. "I wonder, Monsieur Rolland," said Dilip Kumar Roy in reply, "how you could grow enthusiastic about them (Ramakrishna and Vivekananda) even from this vast distance across the seas and in spite of your lack of knowledge of English!"

Romain Rolland :—"How could I be anything but enthusiastic about such great souls? The radiant strength, the glowing self-respect, nay the fortifying confidence in the innate Divinity of Man,—are they nothing? They are assets to mankind, the value of whose inspiration can hardly be overrated;—but about Sri Ramakrishna, well, one must write a little cautiously about him. For he can never be entirely acceptable to Europe, you know. A good deal has to be presented in a new light—in a new interpretation that is."

Dilip Kumar Roy :—"But why?"

R. R. :—"For a variety of reasons, one of the chief of which is the bad atmosphere that has been created by Theosophy."

D. K. R. :—"What do you mean?"

R. R. :—"Well, you see, Theosophy has served to vulgarise Hinduism. Thanks to it, a good many of your loftiest teachings sound like cheap common places, odd, fantastic and bizarre. It has

besides rendered it easy for people to scoff at Asia,—a past time which affords unqualified delight to so many chauvinists in our country.”

D. K. R. :—“ Aurobindo has written in one of his books that the birth of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda is to be looked upon as an event in India, of which but few of us have realised the full import so far.”

R. R. :—“ I fully agree, and I cannot but feel that we shall respond to the utterances of Vivekananda ; if he is properly presented in Europe. You will be surprised to learn, Dilip, that Tolstoy was deeply impressed by Vivekananda towards the end of his life. Not only that. There are many people in Russia, like Tolstoy’s great friend, Paul Birukoff, who treasure the messages of Vivekananda.”

D. K. R. :—“ I am so glad to hear it, Monsieur Rolland:”

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“ What is exactly that you admire especially on Vivekananda? ”

R. R. :—“ O, so many things ; for one thing the wonderful directness of his appeal, that serves as a sort of tonic. His words pierces the heart like arrows. And then his iridescent confidence in man, to say nothing of his marvellous power of achieving things—once he sets his heart upon them. He strikes me as a Napoleonic character in the spiritual realm. And I marvel at the vision of Ramakrishna when he discerned greatness in the youthful stripling at the very first sight.

“ Only I wonder why the great men of modern India do not feel a similar impulse in the direction of social service, I mean the sort of uplifting work for the masses, the task which Vivekananda had set his heart upon latterly and which he left unaccomplished due to his premature death. Why do not your great leaders, like Gandhi for instance, take more seriously to this urgent work that is before you all? ”

“ What a soul ! What deep compassion for the lowly ! What pervading sympathy for the down-trodden ! Above all, what reverence for the meanest of the mean, looking upon the dispossessed as God incognito ! To me the dramatic aspect of Vivekananda’s life seems elevating indeed,—the struggle, that is, between the individual thirsting after personal salvation and the altruist craving for self-dedication for the suffering humanity !

Mademoiselle Rolland (His sister):—" True, only it often seems to me that Ramakrishna never suffered from this sort of struggle."

R. R.:—" The reason is not far to seek, for Ramakrishna, though grand in the realm of the spirit was a far less complex personality comparatively speaking."

D. K. R.:—" Do you think that Vivekananda would appeal to Europeans in the near future ? "

R. R.:—" I do; but only to those who have feeling and imagination. His inspiring confidence in the ultimate Divinity of Man is bound to evoke a response in such people all the world over. His appeal is so direct and vibrant, don't you see? That is why I have decided upon writing a book about Ramakrishna and Vivekananda. Only the difficulty is that the material that has accumulated is terrifying. To sort things out of such a voluminous collection is a task indeed."

D. K. R.:—" What is it in the messages of Ramakrishna that appeal to you most, if I am not inquisitive ? "

R. R.:—" His breadth and catholicity, the universality of his doctrines, which crosses all geographical limits. This is what I call real religion, real vision. A man who hardly knew how to read and write, a man who was by no means extraordinary in his analysis of matters secular, a man who was born provincial,—how could such a man have such a marvellous vision and comprehension of things universal? Here he seems to me not only great but towering."

D. K. R.:—" You will be glad to know, Monsieur Rolland that Aurobindo fully endorsed this view of yours. He says that a Yogi of such calibre is a rarity even among the elect of the mystics."

R. R.:—" I agree whole-heartedly."

CAN PROPAGANDISTS SUPPRESS INDIA'S CULTURE ?

" The East is East, the West is West and the twain never can meet," so sang Britain's famous noble prize winner, Rudyard Kipling. And of this poet writes a notable American in one of his recent books ; ' This man is one of the tragedies of our literature because he has so many of the great qualities, energy, story-telling power, singing fervour. But his mind stopped growing, and he stayed a boy—a hateful dangerous, and bloody minded boy, dreaming of killing the people whose minds persist in growing beyond his own. He called it the ' white man's burden,' the task of making all colored men into his servants.' Many such people endowed with great qualities are there in the West to-day who inspite of the favourable opportunities present to them could

not outgrow their colour, race or religious prejudices of the people amongst whom they were born, and these 'cultured' people have contributed not a little in the fostering of hatred and discord amongst the different peoples that inhabit this earth. One of these 'cultured' people spread broadcast sometime back that Christianity was the only basis of all civilization and when they came to nations where Christianity had not penetrated there was no civilization at all. If Christian civilization meant the machine gun and the submarine the writer was quite right. If Christian civilization meant Mammon worship then this writer was not to blame. It is this glamour of power and the glamour of wealth that make these writers sing 'Hallelujahs' on Christ and not because he taught them to love one's neighbour as oneself or live in the spirit and walk in the spirit or worship God, not Mammon. The spirit of Christ one hardly finds in their boasted culture and civilization which the West wants the East to adopt. True Christ spirit is not a stranger to the East; for the Christ too was an Easterner; and to-day the West is dinning into her ears that she should adopt Europe's 'kultur' for pulling down the haughtiness of the West. Japan took to it and brought Europe to her knees. Turkey adopted it and Europe stands to-day in reverence before her. China has taken it and the European battalions that threatened her with eternal subjection are getting withdrawn and the laws of the Chinese are getting respected. These Westerners are dinning into India's ears for centuries past that Western 'kultur' should be recognised in this land as well. That she may take her sword and perish by the sword. One of these well-wishers of India Colonel Holditch declared sometime back in his book on 'India' that Modern Hinduism is the most contemptible religion in existence while a bishop told us that the "Sacred Books of the East" was nothing 'sacred' but 'gibberish.' Such criticisms are getting repeated year after year. The literary and dramatic critic of note Mr. Williams Archer writing only a few years back in his '*India of the future*' said that India was "barbarian," that Indian civilization was 'barbarism' miscalled and the people of that land was 'barbaric' and that "they are not a civilized people." And the latest arrival into this field of unjust criticism is Miss Mayo who despising everything Indian thinks that she has done her part by her '*Mother India*' to perpetuate the glory of the Occident. A careful study of these books will show their readers how dishonest, misleading and provocative such books have been. In fact these writers have been carried away by Western imperialistic notions and not anything Christian; and they have been the devout apostles of white domination. Even

brilliant English writers like a Chesterton or a Bernard Shaw who having had the opportunity to study and understand the East have refused to study the East is what astonishes us and makes us declare that 'something is rotten in the West.' William James was an American, Schopenhauer a German, Materlinck a Belgian, Tolstoy a Russian, some of the world's admittedly greatest thinkers. William James could tell us of Vivekananda as a paragon of Vedantists while only an American woman could dismiss him as a 'modern teacher of the spiritual sense of the Phallic cult'. A Schopenhauer could declare that the Upanishads gave him the solace of his life, only an Englishman speak of the same as 'crude' 'contemptible.' In the oft criticised doctrine of Karma only a Materlinck could see "the only satisfactory solution of life's injustices." Nationalism, Chauvinism, Imperialism have been the background for this belittling wholesale of all that is great elsewhere. And that is why Romain Rolland the great thinker and writer of France says that Europe is losing all interest in things Asiatic. This regrettable feature had affected even the elite of Europe. Declared this great thinker that even the society bearing Schopenhauer's name had been affected by the narrow prejudices of the West. M. Romain Rolland in the course of a conversation with Mr. Dilip Kumar Roy said that he was taken back when a 'big gun of the Schopenhauer society did not know who Vivekananda was.' To such a pass has Europe fallen. But in Romain Rolland we have the picture of one whom the same Europe looks upon with love and reverence and who has taken upon himself the task of disabusing the West of her foolish notions and of bringing peace and good will amongst mankind. Our consolation is that Truth ultimately prevails and that some of Europe's greatest philosophers and thinkers have understood the East and, to that class belonged Schopenhauer, Materlinck and Tolstoy. And we hope that these attacks on everything Indian will lead only to its defence and appreciation.

THE HINDU VIEW OF CONVERSION

"Born aliens have been converted in the past by crowds and the process is still going on," so Swami Vivekananda is reported to have said in the course of a conversation. How this proselytization of the various aboriginal tribes such as the Ahir, Dom, Dosadh of the United Provinces, the Guzar, Jat of the Punjab and many other tribes in this country was brought about, the *Hindu Mission Bulletin* for February has rightly pointed out in its article on the aborigines of India. It was, it correctly says by, "a process of peaceful penetration by slow cultural intercourse." The journal adds, "They did

not solve the social, religious, and language problem to create a united nation by a policy of extermination of the conquered but preserved them, gave them the liberty of speech, faith and worship and assigned to them a suitable place in the social whole, to live and work side by side in peace and order and by obliterating the differences absorbed them by friendly intercourse." Unlike the Western races the Hindu never practised the policy of social, moral or religious conquest of tribes differing in culture from their own. The peculiar genius of the Hindu has always been in the direction of gradually assimilating and even absorbing into their all-embracing fold. Due to changing fortunes this peaceful movement towards unification ceased, it would appear, two centuries back and to day therefore we find in the census that about sixteen millions of these aboriginal tribes spread out in all India and especially in Assam, Bihar, Orissa, Central India and Burma, are termed Animists. The largest population of the so-called Animists belong to Central India with a population of over a million and are known as the Bhils. Assam has over a million of these 'Animists.' The Bulletin points out that the only difference between them and an Orthodox Hindu is that the Hindu Samskaras have not been able to strike deep roots in their minds. This fact is also attested by the workers of the Ramakrishna Mission amongst the hill tribes of Assam. That the Swami Vivekananda held strong views as regards this subject is obvious from his speeches and writings. But to him conversion did not merely mean an outside conversion—but a conversion of the heart though he recognised formal Samskaras as when he said, "go and found schools among them and invest them with the 'sacred thread.'" Men imbued with the true spirit of Vedanta working amongst these people, ministering to their material and spiritual welfare alone can bring about the desired change. This alone can check the meaningless and even harmful conversion to Christianity conducted under the aegis of organised Missions of the West.

NEWS AND REPORTS

BIRTH-DAY CELEBRATION OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT MADRAS

In connection with the Sixty-sixth Birthday Anniversary of the great Swami Vivekananda the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Brodies Road, Mylapore, Madras performed a double function—the *Tithipuja* and the Public Celebration. The *Tithipuja* which fell this year on the 14th January was duly observed with special Pujas, Bhajana and offerings. On the Public Celebration day, the 22nd January, a big

portrait of Swami Vivekananda was tastefully decorated with flowers, garlands and ferns on a raised platform in the spacious Hall of the Math. As usual Bhajana in Marhathi, Tamil, Hindustani and Sanskrit, Harikatha, feeding of the devotees and the poor Narayanas, discourses on the life and teachings of the Swami, distribution of Prasadam and lectures formed the main items of the programme. In the noon about three thousand poor were given the pleasure of one full meal. In the evening after a lecture in Tamil on the life and mission of Swami Vivekananda by Swami Avinashananda, Mr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, the Editor of *the Justice* delivered an eloquent address on the spiritual message of the illustrious Swami with the Hon. Mr. Justice V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar in the Chair.

In the course of his prefatory remarks the President said that Swami Vivekananda was the incarnation of the spirit of Vedanta. He brought the experience of his life and knowledge to bear upon the exposition of the Upanishads. He was the fore-runner of the unity of India. In the Parliament of religions he stood for India. The various problems facing India to-day were bound to be solved only by the application of the central principles of Vedanta for which India stood. He taught India national self-respect; and the study of his life and teachings were very profitable indeed.

Mr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliar explaining some principles of Swami Vivekananda's teachings said that transcendent love was the characteristic of the Swami. He was the Avatar of the Vedantic spirit and to him the Vedas were everything. All the lessons he needed were in the Vedas. He felt that the religion of the Vedas was not a religion of India, but a universal religion. Every man was entitled to his religion and Swami Vivekananda carried it to the outer world.

The message of Swami Vivekananda was unity. There was that atom of the same God-head in every living being and by looking down upon any one they looked down upon themselves. If they understood this basic principle, there was no room for disunity or dissensions. Swami Vivekananda looked forward to the day when the Hindu thought would spread all over the world. That had partly happened. They could see in the latter day culture and philosophy of the West the touch of Hinduism and Hindu Philosophy.

AT OTHER PLACES

The Anniversary was celebrated at many places in India and abroad. We have received information from the following Maths, Ashramas, Societies, etc. :—

The Sri Ramakrishna Math and Mission Head quarters, Belur, Howrah ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Basavangudi, Bangalore City ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mysore ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Gandhipet, Guntur ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama 'Jaffna, Ceylon ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Khar, Bombay ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Rajkot ; Sri Ramakrishna Math, Delhi ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Patna ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Cawnpore ; The Ramakrishna Mission, Barisal ; Sri Ramakrishna Math, Baliati, Dacca ; The Ramakrishna Sevashram, Chittagong. The devotees of Ranchi in Behar and of Cambay, Tarapur and Godhra in Gujarat also celebrated the thrice-holy day.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE R. K. MISSION RETURNS

Srimat Swami Shivanandaji Maharaj, President, the Ramakrishna Mission who went out on a tour to the north last September, returned to the Head quarters on the 19th February last. The Swamiji was received at the Howrah station by a large number of Sadhus and devotees, including the Secretary of the R. K. Mission. During this long tour, the Swamiji visited, Madhupur, Patna and Benares.

SWAMI PARAMANANDA'S ARRIVAL

Swami Paramananda, the head of the Vedanta Society of Boston, U. S. A. arrived at Belur, the R. K. Mission Head quarters on the 14th February last. On his way the Swami halted at Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Rangoon. Some Western friends of the Swami have also accompanied him.

THE R. K. MISSION GUJARAT FLOOD RELIEF

Having carried on the flood relief for full six months the Ramakrishna Mission has closed the work of all the five centres—Cambay, Sayama, Tarapur, Indernej and Golana in Gujarat on the last 5th February. The total number of houses constructed and repaired in British, Baroda and particularly in Cambay State villages amounts to 916. The Relief party arrived at Bombay on the 7th February.

AN APPRECIATION OF R. K. MISSION'S WORK

The citizens of Cambay presented a public farewell address to the Ramakrishna Mission on the 5th February at the Jugaldas Jagannath Gymkhana in appreciation of the splendid service rendered by the Mission in Cambay, Baroda and British territories in connection with the fateful devastation brought about by the last Gujarat Flood. V. K. Namjoshi, Esquire, B. A., C. S., Administrator, Cambay State presided over the function,