

# PRABUDDHA BHARATA

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“उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।”

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

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## THE MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH & MISSION

*(At the inauguration of the Ramakrishna birth centenary celebrations  
on 24th February last)*

The dawn of the New Age is breaking over the world—the blessed day that will illumine our hearts with the glory of its effulgence is at hand.

Knowingly or unknowingly man is moving forward along the path of salvation inspired by the Master's message of the harmony of all religions and by his unique realization of the essential oneness of Karma (action), Jnâna (knowledge), Bhakti (supreme devotion) and Yoga (psychic control). The day is not far off when all lands and seas shall witness the establishment of a universal kingdom of peace, and when in loving response to the call of the Master, all nations and peoples, in one glorious confederation joining, shall sing with jubilant acclaim, yea, with no heat of strife and no passion of controversy, the Master's message—“As many faiths, so many paths.” Then the full meridian light of the Master's advent will light up this world of ours and that song will ring from end to end, and the sons and daughters of men will stand side by side under the banner of the New Age in spiritual comradeship.

May the citizens of the world on this blessed day understand the meaning of the Master's coming and be hallowed. This and this alone is my fervent prayer.

*Peace, peace, peace unto all.*

# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

(From 'The Oakland Enquirer')

Friday, February 23, 1900

## A DISTINGUISHED HINDOO

*Swami Vivekananda, Teacher of the Vedânta Philosophy, to Speak Here Sunday Night*

Swami Vivekananda, a distinguished Hindoo lecturer and teacher of the Vedânta philosophy, arrived in San Francisco last evening from Los Angeles. He expects to remain here several weeks teaching and lecturing, and will occupy the pulpit of the First Unitarian Church next Sunday evening, in the parliament of religions which is being held there. He represents the order of Sannyâsins, a travelling priesthood, which inculcates its philosophy, after the Hindoo fashion, to learners wherever found, whether at the plough, the bench or in pilgrimage. The Swami is a man of profound learning in the line of psychology and the philosophy of Eastern religions.

Saturday, February 24, 1900

## A MAN OF MARK

*Swami Vivekananda, A Remarkable Oriental*

*An Eloquent Expounder of the Faith of Brahminism*

When the Congress of Religions was held in Chicago in connection with the World's Fair in 1893 several remarkable men from the Orient appeared, including H. Dharmapala of Ceylon, Rev. Zitsuza Ashitzu, Narasima Charia, and Professor C. N. Chakravarti. But the most remarkable exemplar of orientalism was the Swami Vivekananda, a Hindoo who stands for the Brahmin

religion, or Vedantism as he prefers to call it.

Those who heard Vivekananda at Chicago have been enthusiastic in praise of his power as an orator. He is a large, fine looking man who has an excellent command of English and is a master of elocutionary effects. After the Chicago parliament Vivekananda lectured to thronged houses in the large cities of this country and then returned to India, where he was received with extraordinary honours. It seems the simple-minded people of India had heard of Vivekananda's success in America and had exaggerated it so much that they believed he had converted the whole American Continent and in particular had rescued the United States from the errors of Christianity, as they considered them.

So when he reappeared among his friends they hailed him as the deliverer of the Western world and, being wrought up with excess of enthusiasm they took Vivekananda in their arms and it is said that he was passed from village to village and city to city until he had been transported seventeen miles without his feet having once touched the ground.

Vivekananda is now in the United States a second time for a tour of some of the large cities. Swami means monk of the order of Sannyâsins. Viveka means "discrimination" and ananda means "bliss". The Swami comes to Oakland tomorrow to deliver his address at the local congress of religions in the evening at the Unitarian Church but Rev. B. F. Mills hopes to arrange with him to deliver a course of lectures here.



The Swami claims to belong to "the most ancient order of monks in the world" and his faith he characterizes as "the mother of religion". Vedantism is the religion of the Vedas, or the ancient Hindoo books. In one of his Chicago addresses Vivekananda said: "Hindoos have received their religion from the revelation of the Vedas. They hold that the Vedas are without beginning and without end. It may sound ludicrous to this audience—how a book can be without beginning or end; but by the Vedas no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times."

In another address at the same place the Swami said: "I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal tolerance, but we accept all religions to be true. I am proud to tell you that I belong to a religion into whose sacred language, the Sanskrit, the word exclusion is untranslatable."

The following brief extract from one of the Swami's speeches gives an idea of his style as well as of his doctrine:

"So, then, the Hindoo believes that he is a spirit. Him the sword cannot pierce, him the fire cannot burn, him the water cannot melt, him the air cannot dry. He believes every soul is a circle whose circumference is nowhere, but whose centre is located in a body and death means the change of this centre from body to body. In its very essence it is free, unbound, holy and pure, and perfect. But somehow or other it has got itself bound down by matter, and thinks of itself as matter.

"We are the children of God. The sharers of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye divinities on earth, sinners! It is a sin to call a man so. It is a standing libel on human nature.

Come up, live, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep—you are souls immortal, spirits free and blest and eternal, ye are not matter, ye are not bodies. Matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter."

Monday, February 26, 1900

#### THE PHILOSOPHY OF VEDANTISM

*As Expounded by Swami Vivekananda  
Last Evening*

*A Vast Throng Attended His Address  
at The Unitarian Church*

*Will Speak Again Wednesday Evening  
at Wendte Hall on Vedântism and  
Christianity*

The announcement that Swami Vivekananda, a distinguished savant of the East would expound the philosophy of Vedântism in the Parliament of Religions at the Unitarian Church last evening, attracted an immense throng. The main auditorium and ante-rooms were packed, the annexed auditorium of Wendte Hall was thrown open and this was also filled to overflowing and it is estimated that fully 500 persons who could not obtain seats or standing room where they could hear conveniently, were turned away.

The Swami created a marked impression. Frequently he received applause during the lecture, and upon concluding held a levee of enthusiastic admirers. He said in part, under the subject of "The Claims of Vedântism on the Modern World":

"Vedântism demands the consideration of the modern world. The largest number of the human race are under its influence. Again and again, millions upon millions have swept down on its adherents in India, crushing them with their great force, and yet the religion lives.

"In all the nations of the world can such a system be found? Others have



risen to come under its shadow. Born like mushrooms, today they are alive and flourishing and tomorrow they are gone. Is this not the survival of the fittest?

"It is a system not yet complete. It has been growing for thousands of years and is still growing. So I can give you but an idea of all I would say in one brief hour.

"First, to tell you of the history of the rise of Vedântism. When it arose India had already perfected a religion. Its crystallization had been going on many years. Already there were elaborate ceremonies; already there had been perfected a system of morals for the different stages of life. But there came a rebellion against the mummeries and mockeries that enter into many religions in time, and great men came forth to proclaim through the Vedas the true religion. Hindoos received their religion from the revelation of these Vedas. They were told that the Vedas were without beginning and without end. It may sound ludicrous to this audience—how a book can be without beginning or end; but by the Vedas no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times.

"Before these men came, the popular ideas of a God ruling the universe, and that man was immortal were in existence. But there they stopped. It was thought that nothing more could be known. Here came the daring of the expounders of Vedântism. They knew that religion meant for children is not good for thinking men; that there is something more to man and God.

"The moral agnostic knows only the external dead nature. From that he would form the law of the Universe. He might as well cut off my nose and

claim to form an idea of my whole body as argue thus.

"He must look within. The stars that sweep through the heavens, even the universe is but a drop in the bucket. Your agnostic sees not the greatest and he is frightened at the universe.

"The world of spirit is greater than all. The God of universe who rules—our Father, our Mother. What is this heathen mummory we call the world? There is misery everywhere. The child is born with a cry upon its lips; it is its first utterance. This child becomes a man, and so well used to misery that the pang of the heart is hidden by a smile on the lips.

"Where is the solution of this world? Those who look outside will never find it; they must turn their eyes inward and find truth. Religion lives inside.

"One man preaches if you chop your head off you get salvation. But does he get anyone to follow him? Your own Jesus says, 'Give all to the poor and follow me.' How many of you have done this? You have not followed out this command, and yet Jesus was the great teacher of your religion. Every one of you are practical in your own life and you find this would be impracticable.

"But Vedântism offers you nothing that is impracticable. Every science must have its own matter to work upon. Everyone needs certain conditions and much of training and learning; but any Jack in the street can tell you all about religion. You may want to follow religion and follow an expert, but you may only care to converse with Jack, for he can talk it.

"You must do with religion as with science, come in direct contact with facts and on that foundation build a marvellous structure.

"To have a true religion you must have instruments. Belief is not in the

question ; of faith you can make nothing, for you can believe anything.

“We know that in science as we increase the velocity the mass decreases ; and as we increase the mass the velocity decreases. Thus we have matter and force. The matter we do not know disappears into force, and force into matter. Therefore there is something which is neither force nor matter, as these two may disappear into each other. This is what we call mind—the universal mind.

“Your body and my body are separate, you say. I am but a little whirlpool in the universal ocean of mankind. A whirlpool, it is true, but a part of the great ocean.

“You stand by moving water where every particle is changing, and yet you call it a stream. The water is changing, it is true, but the banks remain the same. The mind is not changing, but the body—how quick its growth ! I was a baby, a boy, a man, and soon I will be an old man, stooped and aged. The body is changing, and you say is the mind not changing also ? When I was a child I was thinking, I have become larger because my mind is a sea of impressions.

“There is behind nature a universal

mind. The spirit is simply a unit and it is not matter. For man is a spirit. The question, ‘Where does the soul go after death?’ should be answered like the boy when he asked, ‘Why does not the earth fall down?’ The questions are alike, and their solutions alike, for where could the soul go to ?

“To you who talk of immortality I would ask when you go home to endeavour to imagine you are dead. Stand by and touch your dead body. You cannot, for you cannot get out of yourself. The question is not concerning immortality, but as to whether Jack will meet his Jenny after death.

“The one great secret of religion is to know for yourself that you are a spirit. Do not cry out, ‘I am a worm, I am nobody !’ As the poet says, ‘I am existence, knowledge and truth.’ No man can do any good in the world by crying out, ‘I am one of its evils.’ The more perfect the less imperfections you see.”

At the conclusion of the address Rev. Mills announced that Swami Vivekananda would speak again on Wednesday evening instead of Tuesday as had been announced. His subject would be Points of Resemblance between Vedântism and Christianity.

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## UNITY IN HUMANITY

BY THE EDITOR

### I

The most pressing question that has engaged the attention of great thinkers of the world since the end of the Great War is how to promote a better understanding among nations, how to create conditions that may give rise to the morality that would accompany scientific achievements of the day, how to

increase the material comfort of the teeming millions, and also how to prevent the means of slaughtering men. When the War came to a close with the loss of millions of souls, the unemployment of millions of men and women, the crippling of trade, commerce, and industries the world over, and the piling up of crushing debts of billions of pounds by



suffering nations, serious-minded people supposed that men would regard it as a warning and honestly carry on propaganda for a better state of things. Two decades have passed, and one may now feel the pulse of the dominant nations of today and see if their malevolent passions have lessened or increased, if the modern world drifts towards a benevolent construction or an abysmal destruction. The current events of the world show ample proofs for the facts that national rivalries are smouldering, the less warlike races are being forced into the arena of war, and the more warlike races are being trained for more dangerous wars. It appears that sooner or later nations will taste the extremity of passions that make for universal ruin and the suicide of the modern civilization. Therefore, the right-thinking men in all civilized countries are trying in various ways to promote human brotherhood, in the face of absurd rivalries, cruel oppressions, and ridiculous ambitions. They are endeavouring to discern the living bonds of common history and culture which can unite the whole of mankind.

## II

Different thinkers have traced the chaos and unrest prevailing in the modern world to different causes. Almost all of them agree to the fact that civilization is in the melting pot and that thinking men and women in every part of the world are revolting against the established forms of national, social, and industrial life. All are crying for a new social order, a new culture, and a new philosophy of life.

There are people who say that the scientific knowledge of the present age is not accompanied by the moral vision and the breadth of outlook, so necessary for the progress of mankind as a whole. In this connection, we

may have a clear idea of the position of science in the words of Bertrand Russell: "Science has shown us how to achieve our immediate purposes far more successfully than former ages would have deemed possible. We can manufacture commodities with a hundredth of the labour required in pre-industrial times; we can move on the surface of the earth with ten times the velocity of a hundred years ago; we can fly better than birds, and move under water faster than fishes. Unfortunately the intellectual powers which have led to these achievements are not accompanied by corresponding moral powers. Our aims have not advanced *pari passu* with our capacity to realize them. The dominant nations of the world have used their scientific knowledge for two purposes: to increase the material comfort of the wealthy minority, and to perfect the means of slaughtering each other." People who hold such a view rightly suggest that the powers that science has given to man can be used not merely to afford pleasure to those who govern, but also to those who are governed. It should be the duty of the people who cultivate science or apply the scientific knowledge for their own purposes, to acquire "some reverence for human feelings and some tenderness towards the emotions that give colour to the daily existence of men and women". It is undoubtedly the gift of science that man has been able to a great extent to emancipate himself from his subjection to nature. But civilized man is now behaving like a "slave-turned-master". In order to save the situation, there is no better way than to substitute passions that make for co-operation and mutual happiness in the place of the passions that make for the exploitation of the weak. Various movements have been set on foot in India and abroad to deepen the



passions that work for the greater interests of humanity. Western science needs to be wedded to Eastern spirituality so that new ideals of life may bring about great improvements in the cultural life of modern nations. "In the East", says Bertrand Russell, "there is more hope. All the great religions have come from the East; the West has ignored them in practice even while it paid homage to them in its professions. In industrialism the West has at last found something which it could worship without insincerity; through being worshipped as divine, industrialism has become a demonic power. The East will be compelled to use industrialism, but may avoid worshipping it. If so, it may give birth to the new outlook that the world requires." Thus it appears that men are at the portals of a promising era which can be born, only when the best fruits of Western energy and Eastern idealism will combine into a new science of morals. It will cause a spiritual revolution and effect a re-valuation and re-interpretation of life. In that case, men have to create and inhabit a new world by outgrowing their present environment. It will not then be making blind sallies into the unknown, but looking abroad for a richer experience in life. Men of the East and the West need not altogether give up their old principles but have to strive for a fuller consciousness and a wider experience. Hence there is no risk of losing what they have individually, rather there is the chance of gaining the opportunity they need and the satisfaction that humanity seeks. The world requires a venture like this—a new relationship between the East and the West.

### III

Some people argue that so long as nations are held down by the sword, there can be no peace on earth that

will last. They insist that in the interest of humanity justice and freedom must reign in the world of man. They echo the famous words of the great American, Abraham Lincoln: "No man is good enough to rule another man, and no nation is good enough to rule another nation. For a man to rule himself is liberty; for a nation to rule itself is liberty. But for either to rule another is tyranny. If any nation robs another nation of its freedom it does not deserve freedom for itself, and under a just God it will not long retain it." People who support such idealism consider that in spirit of various differences in race, colour, creed, and language men belong to one world and one human family and that no nation without loss and injury to itself can be indifferent to the interests of any other nation. It means that the great family of individuals, races, and nations must learn to live together in peace and goodwill. The people who are cosmopolitan in their outlook and believe in God as the Maker of all nations ask all men point-blank: To whom does the Earth belong? Does it belong to the strong in muscles and to the shrewd in intellect? Does it belong to those who can exploit and conquer their neighbours? The *Bible* answers: "The Earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." and "God hath made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon the face of the Earth." Buddha taught human brotherhood and preached against slavery in any form to any class of human beings. Jesus exhorted his disciples in the same strain to cherish and cultivate friendliness towards their neighbours. But in spite of these teachings of the prophet-souls, the modern idea of nationality is extremely narrow and antagonistic to other nations. Because certain people love their own nation is no reason why they should hate



or encroach upon other nations. People indignantly ask: What is there in nationality that should destroy the larger interests of humanity? There can be no justification for a man taking pride in his patriotism, when he engages himself in a war, without considering its character, however unjust or inhuman. This is why men should no longer vindicate the virtue of patriotism when it is based on untruth, greed, and hatred. In the case of an individual man, it is sinful and criminal to take possession of others' property by unjust and illegitimate means. In the case of a nation then, how can those means be justified? If nations desire peace, they must neither antagonize one another nor depend only upon armies and navies for safety. Safety can hardly be won by filling the world with armaments. As there is no greater wisdom for a man than to live with a keen sense of justice, so there is no greater policy for a nation than to live with a lofty standard of equity. Justice gives an invincible power, not only to individuals but to nations also. Men seem to be too civilized now to believe in the ways of Justice. "In this, God's world," said Thomas Carlyle, "with its wild, whirling eddies, and its mad foam oceans, where men and nations perish as without law, and judgment for an unjust thing is sternly delayed, dost thou think that there is therefore no justice? That is what the fool hath said in his heart. I tell thee again there is nothing else but justice. One strong thing I find here below: the just thing, the true thing." All scriptures of the world declare that there is an Intelligent Power that has made this world. If it be so, that Power cannot rest indifferent to the workings of the machine that He has constructed. He must be a person of infinite knowledge and capacity, as

such He must have vigilant eyes upon the destiny of not only individual men but upon that of nations also. If He be the Invisible King, His Kingdom must rest on nothing else but justice, since He has no selfish desire to be fulfilled through agencies of the world. If justice be the law in the Kingdom of God, it must have its sway in the world of man too, as His Kingdom extends all over the universe. If the Kingdom of God be a myth, individuals and nations governing this world must be a far greater myth than could ever be invented by human intellect. People may think that it is a device meant only for leading fools, but those who live in the light of God discern the hand of God in the affairs of nations as truly as in those of individual men. It is often argued that if God rules over all, why does He not set things right and interfere in the actions of tyrants, oppressors, and exploiters? Longfellow meets this argument and sings:

"The mills of God grind slowly but they grind exceeding small;

Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all." Man expects God to behave and act according to his own code of conduct and his own standard. He wishes that God might come down to the level of human judgment and understanding. This is the reason why many men have no belief in His existence, far more in His rule over humanity. It must be remembered that God is not God, if He behaves like man and decides things with the finite knowledge of man. Even when God works through any man, not in the wide sense as He dwells in all and acts through all, but in the restricted sense of a Divine Incarnation, He acts with unlimited wisdom and power.

So it is obvious that right belief in the existence of God and righteous con-



duct of individual men and nations under His Kingship are no mean factor that can contribute to peace and harmony among mankind, and that to such an extent as could be hardly measured by man. In this age of science and reason, it may seem an insignificant argument and a mere prattling, but one can hardly deny the effectiveness of morals that are inspired by actual belief in Divine Justice. But for it, the face of the Earth and the destinies of men and nations would have been far worse than what we see today.

#### IV

It is contended that human brotherhood is broken up in a serious way by want of harmony that prevails among the religions of the world. Wherever any religion appears in an organized manner, it tends to create a difference with other religions, it makes an artificial, religious aristocracy, the existence of which is a menace to the fellowship of man in general. This is a fact so glaring in the pages of history and even now in the modern world that one has to admit emphatically the futility of religions preached with motives of worldly gain and irreligious persuasion. Religions with tyrannical and oppressive propaganda, with lifeless forms and superstitions have proved a stumbling block against the progress of humanity. They have ruined races and nations and have been enslavers of men, rather than their liberators. Hence, established religions have lost their sway over the world, but the founders of those religions have and shall continue to have homage from all sincere souls the world over. When an organized religion tries to conquer sister religions which are less organized and less powerful, it creates disorder in the religious world and destroys human brotherhood. Instead of keeping the

windows of the heart wide open to the truths and excellences in historic faiths, it carries on its ruthless propaganda against them through missionary zeal and tactics and thereby fails to cooperate with them in the moral and spiritual uplift of people. The time has come when every religion should find grounds of unity in other religions and should learn to appreciate them on their distinctive merits. Days of bigotry and dogmatism have been numbered, the propagation of faiths by means of the sword can hardly be tolerated by the modern world. So, if any religion has to exist as a potent force in society, it must do so not by antagonism or controversy, but by its breadth of outlook and its intrinsic beauty and purity. Then alone can it bring peace to the distracted world of warring creeds.

The church as it stands now in the world is responsible to a great extent for the scepticism and materialism that are rampant among the majority of educated men and women of all lands. People do not find a scientific outlook and a genuine touch of spirituality in the company of most churchmen. Over and above this, the promoters of churches are dabbling in the wars between the classes and the masses, between capital and labour, between imperialism and socialism. This is one of the main causes why the church has degenerated and impaired its own dignity. The modern world cries for a better interpretation of religious life and its utility. It seeks for a rapid deliverance from the evils that civilization has carried in its train. Is the church bold enough to encounter the problems of modern life? A modern churchman is required to bring into relief the real utility of religion that he describes on the pulpit, and at the same time he must be a firm promoter of all that sheds a lustre upon religion.



His private and public life must be a living testimony to what he preaches for his own good and for the good of humanity. He has to proclaim to the world that God has no special race or nation favourite to Himself, He is not confined to any books or doctrines, He is not manifest in any single prophet, and that all men are equal in His eyes as they are all His children. If religion is preached in a universal spirit and toleration is maintained, so far as different faiths are concerned, it is sure to bring forth brotherhood among religions through which men will find the common bonds of unity and amity.

Human brotherhood, again, is limited by social privileges and restrictions. In the name of religion and social custom, people claim special rights and tyrannize over other people who are considered inferior to them. Differences in physical characteristics, languages, and in manners and customs are non-essential matters to be overlooked, but these have been made too prominent by men of little learning, racial vanity, and mean outlook. People do not understand that variety is the plan of nature, but not its law. Unity is the law, the only principle that man has to learn by a steady pursuit of knowledge with an open and all-embracing heart. One may remain an Indian and another a European without losing each other's sympathy; similarly the capitalist and the labourer, the professor and the fool, the white and the coloured, the Brahmin and the Pariah may live in society without hating each other and may cultivate mutual goodwill. Men feel themselves foreign to one another due to want of culture and wide vision. Some time ago Prof. Gilbert Murray wrote an interesting letter to Dr. Rabindranath Tagore in which he observed : "There are touchy

and vain people in all parts of the world, just as there are criminals in all parts; just as there are thinkers, artists, poets, men of learning; just as there are saints and sages. And it is valuable to remember that, as Plato pointed out long ago, while criminals tend to cheat and fight one another, and stupid people to misunderstand one another, there is a certain germ of mutual sympathy between people of good will or good intelligence. An artist cannot help liking good art, a poet good poetry, a man of science good scientific work, from whatever country it may spring. And that common love of beauty or truth, a spirit indifferent to races and frontiers, ought, among all the political discords and antagonisms of the world, to be a steady well-spring of good understanding, a permanent agency of union and brotherhood."

## V

The Vedânta preaches the unity of God and the divinity of man, at the same time it holds out the hope of highest manifestation of the divinity to every man, nay to every being, however small, in the scheme of the physical universe. Swami Vivekananda used to say : "When a man has reached the highest, when he sees neither man nor woman, neither sex nor creed, nor colour, nor birth, nor any of these differentiations, but goes beyond and finds that divinity which is the real man behind every human being,—then alone he has reached the universal brotherhood, and that man alone is a Vedântist." This is the ideal towards which every man either consciously or unconsciously has to proceed in his gradual march to Truth and herein lies the secret of human brotherhood which races, creeds, and nations need to discover and practise more in matters political, social, economic, and religious.



# THE HINDU IDEAL OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION

BY PROF. AKSHAYA KUMAR BANERJEA, M.A.

## MAN'S PARADOXICAL POSITION IN THE WORLD

Man is a rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual being with the inherent consciousness of freedom of thought, feeling and will, and also of some ideals to be realized by the exercise of this freedom; and at the same time he is a sensuous being embodied in a psycho-physical organism living and moving in a phenomenal world of changes and diversities governed by immutable laws of nature. He is consequently placed in a unique and puzzling situation. When he looks upon himself as identified with this psycho-physical organism, he finds himself to be one of the innumerable creatures of nature, a slave of the forces and laws operating in its various departments. It is the diversities of this world that supply materials for his self-preservation and self-development,—that nourish his body with food, drink, clothing, and shelter, that provide his mind with objects of perception and thought, desire and aversion, enjoyment and sufferings, that produce various kinds of agreeable and disagreeable impression upon him and compel him to put forth energy from within to react upon and adjust himself to them. He appears to be one of the products of nature. His existence appears to be originated from, sustained by, and at the end of its career merged in this material world. Some schools of thinkers have found nothing in the body and the mind of man, which he does not owe to this world of physical phenomena. Like the phenomena of all other departments of nature, human thoughts, feelings and actions also appear to be governed by

the laws of necessity. He is a part and parcel of nature, and as such he has got no real freedom, no ideal which he can truly realize by dint of his own free efforts. His apparent freedom of thought, feeling and will is illusory, for these also are governed by natural laws. The world is constituted of diverse kinds of objects and facts related to and dependent upon one another in various ways, and man is only one of them. This is the position of man as a sensuous being.

Had man been principally a sensuous being, distinguished from other animals only by the presence of some additional faculties and functions, his relation to the phenomenal world would not be so much complicated and puzzling. He would be what nature would make him. He would live and move, grow and decay, enjoy and suffer, act and be acted upon, according to the laws of nature, under pressure of the circumstances in which he would be placed. He would know the phenomena purely as they would appear to him and produce impressions upon his senses and modifications in his mental states. There would be evolution in the human species in the same way as in the other species of plants and animals.

But man has a consciousness of freedom inherent in his essential nature which he can in no way shake off. This has made his position in the phenomenal world unique and complicated and is the source of a good deal of perplexities in the determination of his course of development. He feels in his heart of hearts that he is not a slave of the forces and laws of the phenomenal world, but



that he has the inherent right to determine freely the course of his own self-development and self-enjoyment. He is inwardly conscious not only of the power to control his own affairs, but also to exercise at least some amount of control over the forces of external nature. His moral consciousness assures him that he is, if not wholly, at least partially the master of himself, and is himself responsible for his knowledge and ignorance, enjoyment and suffering, self-development and self-degradation. He feels that the circumstances in which he is situated, instead of compulsorily moving him on in any definite particular direction, keep open before him a large number of courses, any of which he has the liberty and power to adopt in accordance with his own choice.

Thus in one aspect of his nature he finds himself a creation of the world of phenomena governed by its laws and forces, and in another aspect he finds himself not only a free builder of his own destiny, but also to some extent a master of the forces and circumstances that constitute his environments. In one aspect he is of the world, but in another aspect the world partly belongs to him. The world, with its apparently bewildering diversities of phenomena, with the various kinds of conflicting and co-operating forces—physical, chemical, magnetic, electrical, biological, psychical, etc.—operating in it, with the universal and immutable laws governing their operations, supplies the self-conscious and self-determining man with the field of his free activities and materials for his self-exertion and self-fulfilment. He has the freedom of taking as much advantage as possible of his existence in this world and making the best possible use of the materials and circumstances offered to him by it, in order to satisfy the demands of his self,

to fulfil his chosen desires and aspirations, and to attain peace and happiness. The power of his intellect and will appears to be of a higher order and greater efficiency than the powers of external nature. With the development of his intellect and will, with the awakening of the powers latent in him and with the widening of the field of their manifestation, he learns to think of himself as a progressive conqueror of nature, with the right and capacity even to rebuild his world according to his own ideal.

Man is thus in the most paradoxical position in the universe. He is born in this phenomenal world as one of its innumerable species of creatures, subject to its laws and forces and having therefore no independence or power to have his own way, and at the same time he is the master of his self, free to determine the course of his activities and to build up his character and destiny, and even endowed with the power of conquering the forces of nature and exercising influence upon the courses of events in the world. The phenomena and forces of the world are found to be regulated by its own universal and inviolable laws, and in course of the process of its evolution it appears to give birth to man and to determine the nature of his existence and development in accordance with those all-governing laws; and at the same time those phenomena and forces are at least partially dominated by the power of the thought and will of man, and those immutable laws leave sufficient room for his free self-exertion, self-development, and self-fulfilment.

#### REASON'S SEARCH FOR A WAY OUT OF THE PARADOX

Feeling the apparent absurdity of this two-fold relation between himself and the phenomenal world and to get



rid of the perplexity of this paradoxical situation, man sometimes tried to shake off one of these aspects of his consciousness and experience as illusory. Sometimes he tried to regard the consciousness of freedom as deceptive arising out of the ignorance of his real relation to the world, and accordingly he attempted to surrender his individuality entirely to the forces and laws of nature. At other times he tried to ignore the existence of this world of necessity, and to regard himself as completely free from its determining influence. Both these attempts have necessarily been futile. These very attempts implied the reality of this paradoxical situation.

The human reason has in all ages employed itself to find out the underlying ground of this puzzling situation and to bring about a reconciliation between the consciousness of freedom in his internal nature and the experience of necessity in the external world. It has been in search of a consistent and comprehensive conception of this world of experience, in which man with his freedom of thought, feeling, and action may have a proper place and function. This search has moved the human reason from the lower and narrower planes of thought to the gradually higher and wider planes in order to get hold of some absolute Reality, in terms of which all his experiences, external as well as internal—the world of diversities governed by inviolable laws together with the domain of self-conscious and self-governing men within it—may be consistently and adequately accounted for. This Sâdhanâ of the human reason has found expression in philosophical speculations. At some stages of its development it has arrived at some solutions and expounded some doctrines; at other stages and from other standpoints they have been found to be inadequate and inconsistent; fresh attempts have

been made and new theories framed. In this way the philosophical Sâdhanâ of man has been moving onwards.

#### MAN'S ACTUAL SELF-EXERTION NOT WAITING FOR PHILOSOPHICAL SOLUTION

Whatever may be the ultimate explanation of the world and his relation to it, man must face the facts as they are and exert himself for the satisfaction of the demands of his nature. His life is a life of conflict and struggle. He is goaded on by the demands of his body and mind, finds materials for their satisfaction in the external world, moves forward to utilize them, and is sometimes helped and sometimes obstructed in his attempts by the forces of this world. Within himself also he experiences conflicts among the different kinds of demands in his nature. The powers latent in him are aroused by these conflicts and come out to overcome all kinds of resistance. He becomes more and more conscious of the powers inherent in him and of his right to fulfil himself in this world in spite of all kinds of difficulties and obstacles, within as well as outside himself. He gradually feels that he is born to lord it over all the circumstances, internal and external, that may stand in the way of his self-fulfilment.

#### MAN'S SADHANA AS A FREE SENSUOUS BEING

In the earlier stages of the development of man's thought and will, the demands of his sensuous nature are experienced to be predominant. His thought and will follow the impulses as they appear. His actions are then really governed by the forces of physical and psychical nature. But soon his reason realizes that these impulses and their demands are so very conflicting with one another, that all of them cannot be satisfied together. Nay, it is



realized that the fulfilment of the requirements of his sensuous nature as a whole demands the restraint and regulation of these impulses. Thus an inhibition of and judgment upon the impulses and desires and the choice of the best ones become necessary for the development of the sensuous nature itself and the enjoyment of the most intense and durable sensuous pleasure. Reason and will then exercise control over the impulses and seek out the best and most effective way for the happiness and perfection of the sensuous life. This is the prudent pursuit of Kâma.

When the human reason idealizes Kâma or the prudent satisfaction of the demands of sensuous nature and accepts it as the principal end of all human endeavours, it directs the powers of thought and will,—knowledge and action—mainly towards the realization of this end. It deliberates upon the best way to make the sensuous self great and happy, it tries to bring about a suitable adjustment between the self and the physical and social environments so as to achieve this object, and with that end in view it attempts to make a thorough and accurate study of the forces and phenomena with which human life is related and employs its own powers to control, regulate and utilize them to the best advantage of the sensuous life.

It is this urge of Kâma which has prompted the human reason to investigate into many natural forces and phenomena and to discover their causes and the laws governing them. Many notable scientific discoveries and inventions owe their origin to the systematic endeavours of the human reason for the fulfilment of the demands of man's sensuous life. The reason of man, by the proper regulation of the powers of his senses, thought, and will, has moved on and on for penetration into the

truths of nature, for conquest of its forces and modification of the courses of its events, in order that all of them may be in the service of his sensuous life. The freedom of thought, feeling and will has been exercised in the well-regulated and devoted worship of Kâma,—for the realization of the possibilities of man's sensuous nature.

All political and social organizations, all industrial and commercial adventures, all economic and financial speculations, all naval and military fortifications, and even many moral conventions and religious practices have, at this stage of the development of human reason, the aggrandizement of man's sensuous nature, and the fulfilment of man's sensuous demands as their primary end. They all offer worship to the god of Kâma.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF MANHOOD THROUGH THE WORSHIP OF KAMA

This devoted worship of Kâma, this systematic and organized effort of the human reason for making man great and happy by satisfying his sensuous needs, awakens considerably the powers inherent in him, widens and deepens his knowledge of the phenomena, the forces, and the laws of the world and the mind, and enables him to invent various instruments and materials for increasing the powers of his senses, body and mind, for fighting against the hostile powers and circumstances that offer resistance to the realization of his end and for bringing under control those that may be helpful for the achievement of his purpose. This development of the powers of thought, feeling, and will, in course of his pursuit of Kâma as the ideal, makes him gradually more and more conscious of the other aspects of his nature as well. His moral and religious consciousness also is awakened. He



learns to value the moral and spiritual resources of human nature. He finds that obedience to the dictates of his moral and spiritual nature is of great value for adding to the happiness, prosperity, and grandeur of the human society, and tries to utilize it for the realization of his chosen ideal. Thus even while engaged principally in the pursuit of Kâma, he pays some amount of attention to the building up of his moral and religious character. Accordingly, the cultivation of truthfulness and non-violence, justice and benevolence, temperance and self-restraint, respect for the life, property, and freedom of others, and reverence to and worship of God, becomes a part of the plan of his life. Morality and religion are of course given in practical life a position subordinate to that of Kâma—the fulfilment of the demands of sensuous life—which is pursued as the central regulative ideal of human Sâdhanâ.

This is the guiding principle of the individual and social life of man in the lower stages of the development of human character, and this seems to be still the regulative principle underlying the present Western civilization. It glorifies man's sensuous nature, places man as the highest sensuous being on the throne of the universe, exploits all the material resources of the world and the intellectual, moral, and spiritual resources of man for serving man's sensuous needs. However magnificent the achievements of the modern Western nations within the past few centuries may have been in the glorification and aggrandizement of man and the conquest and exploitation of the forces and resources of the material world, it cannot be denied that the moving spirit has been the earnest devotion to and the adoring service of the sensuous aspect of human nature. From the

standpoint of the essential demands of the true self of man, this cannot be regarded as a high order of human civilization. For the true glorification of man as a moral and spiritual being, the central regulative principle of this civilization must be changed; the powers aroused in and acquired by man must be directed towards the realization of a higher spiritual ideal, and the society must be reconstructed on a truly moral and spiritual foundation.

#### AWAKENING OF MAN'S ESSENTIAL NATURE

As man becomes more and more deeply conscious of himself as an essentially rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual being,—as the rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual aspects of his nature develop and assert themselves,—he is gradually convinced that these elements of his nature do not exist merely or chiefly for contributing to the satisfaction of the demands of his sensuous self, that they have their own ideals to realize for which they have a legitimate right to demand the co-operation and even subordination of his sensuous nature. He becomes progressively conscious of the inherent supremacy of the rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual aspects in his nature. He feels that the gratification of the demands of his sensuous nature cannot give real and permanent satisfaction to the essential demands of his life as a whole,—that he can never enjoy true peace and happiness within himself and attain a consciousness of self-fulfilment and absolute freedom from the sense of want and imperfection by the pursuit of Kâma. He realizes that he occupies a unique position in this world, not because he has a higher order of sensuousness and a greater capacity for sensuous enjoy-



ment than any other being, but because he has a rational, moral, æsthetic, and spiritual character, which has given him the right and power to rise above the domination of the sensuous demands and the natural propensities and to establish control over them, and which has endowed him with the competency to attain some supreme ideal, which is beyond the reach of any other creature within the universe of his experience.

At this higher stage of the awakening of the self-consciousness of man, the question arises in his reason as to what is the true ideal for the realization of which his essential nature has an inherent demand and till the realization of which the sense of imperfection and disquietude is sure to be present in his consciousness.

#### DEMAND FOR TRUTH

An insight into the inner urge of his rational nature makes him conscious that it has an inherent demand for Truth (Satyam). As a knowing and thinking being, man is urged from within to seek Truth for its own sake. At the lower planes of his consciousness he searched for Truth with a view to the advantage it offered to his sensuous nature. But now he feels that Truth itself has got its intrinsic value, and that from the standpoint of his rational character it is by itself of much higher value than what power, prosperity, and happiness it can bestow upon his sensuous self. He gradually realizes that it is his supreme duty to exercise his freedom and employ his powers of observation and thought for the attainment of Truth in the world of his external and internal experience, and that it is the attainment of the highest and most comprehensive Truth that can give ultimate satisfaction to his rational nature.

Here again he finds himself in a very perplexing situation. As a thinking and observing sensuous creature, he experiences bewildering diversities in the physical as well as in the mental world. He cannot but accept them as realities. They are the data conveyed by his senses to his reason. The preservation and development of all the aspects of his life depend upon these diversities. His very existence seems to be constituted of the diversities of physical and mental phenomena. But man's rational nature refuses to accept these diversities of actual experience as the ultimate truths. It is inwardly conscious that the senses—internal as well as external—do not give true information about the ultimate character of these apparently various kinds of phenomena. In spite of their actual presence before the senses, their true nature does not appear to be clear and distinct to reason. It employs itself to explain them—to make their true nature clear to itself—by means of deeper investigation and thought.

#### DEMAND FOR CAUSE AND DEMAND FOR UNITY

Thus to the human reason, knowing and seeing things *truly* does not consist in knowing and seeing them *as they appear to the senses*, but in being acquainted with the underlying *reality* of which they are the appearances. The search for this reality assumes chiefly two forms, which, however, are essentially related to each other. The human reason has the fundamental conviction that all the facts and objects of sensuous experience are of the nature of effects and that the true knowledge of these effects must consist in the knowledge of their causes. It is thus always on the look-out for the causes of all facts and objects of external and internal sense-experience, and when these



causes also are of the same nature with these facts and objects, it seeks for their causes also, and so on. Its demand is not satisfied and it finds no permanent rest, till it discovers and comes in direct touch with the ultimate and absolute cause of all phenomena of experience. To know the absolute and ultimate cause of the phenomenal universe is to know the absolute and ultimate Truth about it, for all the diverse orders of causally related phenomena of this universe are the self-manifestations of that Cause. That absolute and ultimate Cause must necessarily be above time and space, and therefore eternal and infinite, self-existent and all-pervading, for whatever is produced in time and occupies any portion of space must be of the nature

of an effect and must be traced to its cause to satisfy the demand of reason.

Reason has an equally inherent demand for unity. In its quest of Truth, it seeks for the unification of all its experiences. It inwardly feels that the diversities of experience are the appearances of unity. Whatever facts and objects of experience it fails to unify with the totality of its unified experience, it either regards as not truly known or abandons as false and illusory. In order to unify all orders of facts and objects, it moves upward to higher and higher principles of unity, and it cannot stop moving till it attains, the absolute principle of unity, in terms of which the entire phenomenal universe may be conceived as one organic whole.

*(To be continued)*

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## SYNTHESIS AND HARMONY IN ANCIENT HINDU THOUGHT

BY SWAMI GHANANANDA

A religion may be indifferent or neutral to other religions, and yet when an opportunity presents itself, rise against them with all the bitterness of long-standing enmity. It may also live in peace and harmony with them, and even positively help them by promoting the fellowship of faiths without losing its own individuality. If any good feeling is to be created through the relationship between religions, they must not only cease to be indifferent or neutral, but also avoid all clashes and conflicts: they must not merely reconcile among themselves, but also establish a living harmony and synthesis in which each religion will find a place ministering to the spiritual needs of men. What country is most fitted to lead us in this great and noble task?

Students of history know that the voice of Asia has been the voice of religion. India has been the heart of Asia for centuries, strengthening, enriching and stimulating that voice. She has been the cradle-land of religion and philosophy. For scores of centuries in the past, this land of religious liberty and tolerance allowed her people to worship God in the way that suited them best. Spiritual thought and life grew and flourished in an unparalleled manner under such liberty. Numerous conceptions of the Divine and methods of worship as well as several systems of spiritual disciplines and schools of philosophy came into existence, culminating in the sublime heights of the Advaita (Non-dualism), from which all the various other systems and



schools could be viewed from a perspective not afforded by the non-Advaitic schools and systems, and from which all they could be judged rightly in their relationship to one another and to the supremest goal of all religion and philosophy, viz., the unity or non-duality beyond the Personal God and the individuality of the worshipper. From the lofty peak of the Advaita of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, to the lowest ideas of idolatry and fetishism with their multifarious mythology, embracing the agnosticism of the Buddhists and atheism of the Jains, each and every system of religious thought in all its shades and all its depths, has a place in the eternal Religion of the Hindu. Aptly has it been likened to a mighty river that has shallows that a child may play in with safety and depths which the strongest diver may not dare to fathom.

When numerous ways and means of realizing the Divine came into vogue, it was but natural that they all claimed to be important. Thinkers and philosophers began to consider and critically examine them with a view to institute a comparison and arrive at their fundamental unity. Such an enquiry is as old as the *Vedas*; for as early as the days of the *Rig-Veda*, there arose a Rishi who found himself face to face with the conflict between the various *Ishta Devatâs* (Chosen Ideals for worship) and the different methods of worship (*Sâdhanâ*), dived deep into the recesses of his own soul and discovered the great spiritual fact of the unity of all paths and creeds, expressed in the words, "Truth is One; sages call It variously".

Such a synthesis resulting in the harmony of the various conflicting creeds was the outcome, not merely of the spirit of enquiry that animated the ancient Aryan mind, but also of the

capacity for generalization that had its origin in a recognition and realization of unity. What made the ancient Aryans greater than any other people in the world was the blending of the gifts of bright intelligence and warm emotion with the gift of the gods—the gift of introspective intuition. It was this divine faculty that gave them the power to march sweeping past the masses of details and particulars and arrive at generalizations—to penetrate through the forest of facts and ideas to the sun that illumined them all and brought it to their vision.

Though they were not faced with a war of religions, as we know it today, the ancient Aryans were the true founders of comparative religion and philosophy. Centuries before the modern era, they compared the different systems of worship that arose in the country, like the worship of Indra, Mitra, Varuna, and other gods. They also compared the various doctrines, especially the doctrines of Karma (Action) and Jnâna (Meditation), the one enjoining on man the performance of rituals and ceremonials according to the Karma Kânda (Ritualistic portion) of the *Vedas*, the other preaching the life of peace and contemplation in the solitude of the *Aranya* (forest).

As a result of wide comparison, they discovered that religion and philosophy might be studied from one of the three standpoints, viz., the individual,<sup>1</sup> the eclectic<sup>2</sup>, and the synthetic.<sup>3</sup> According to the first of these standpoints, the votary of any religion or path believes only in his own religion or path, and disbelieves in that of another. This often leads to the individualism of the religious enthusiast whose faith is characterized by depth and intensity,

1. Siddhânta
2. Samuchchaya
3. Samanvaya.



but lacks in width and charity. In normal times, the narrowness and crudity of his conceptions of religions and sects other than his own may not become manifest. Most men may be said to be individualists. They study their own religion and practise it. They are honest and sincere. So far so good. But at times they become fiercely fanatical and blindly bigoted, because the strong convictions regarding their religions and sects being the only paths to salvation, and regarding other religions and sects as being heretical, inadequate, and unsuited, carry with them potential rupture and dissension which may break out at the slightest friction.

Secondly, there is the eclectic standpoint. The danger of narrowness is avoided in the eclectic view. The eclectic studies and appreciates the teachings of all religions, and is ready to accept the precepts of any religion that have a spiritual value. Nay, he is ready to garland them together like flowers of the garden for the benefit of humanity. He is far more broad-minded and generous than the individualist.

The eclectic, however, has to face a two-fold difficulty. The first difficulty is felt when he tries to choose a suitable spiritual discipline for his individual spiritual practice. He can seek it either under his own religion or sect, or under another. Though numerous systems of spiritual practices have been taught by the different religions of the world, his birth, traditions, and environments have produced in him certain impressions or innate spiritual tendencies (Samskâras), which naturally draw him to the disciplines of his own religion or sect. Through them his spiritual nature can grow more easily and develop more rapidly. To reject them and choose the practices of any other religion would mean spiritual stagnation and even spiritual suicide in most

cases. The way of thinking of the eclectic usually leads to a cheap cosmopolitanism which is devoid of strength and intensity. The eclectic realizes also a second difficulty: when he takes different elements from different religions that appeal to him and puts them together, excluding those elements that are not to his personal liking, he either forms or tends to form a new sect with a new scripture of his own making, thus adding to the already existing sects and scriptures of the world, and giving his sect and scripture the stamp of his own individuality. Such an anthology bringing out the valuable truths and teachings of many religions would be welcome in comparative study, but cannot take the place of a scripture proper. For every scripture contains specific methods of spiritual discipline and a definite system of philosophic thought in more or less developed form, and besides, derives its sanction from the spiritual realizations of some great Teacher or Prophet, which form the bed-rock upon which its authority rests.

Thirdly, we have the standpoint of synthesis or harmony of religions, which has supplanted eclecticism. It combines the ardour and intensity of the individualist with the depth and generosity of the eclectic. It affirms that all religions are true, they being paths to the same goal of God-consciousness. It recognizes that diversity is a law of nature, and that therefore various religions with various sects are bound to exist under the present conditions of humanity. Its aim is to see unity in this diversity, and not to effect uniformity through standardization.

All the three types of religions and philosophical outlook, the individualistic, eclectic, and synthetic, have been known in India from very ancient times. In the days of the *Rig-Veda* the devotees exclusively chose some Devatâ or



deity as his Ideal, and in this manner was worshipped Indra, Mitra, Varuna, or some other god. Some votaries worshipped one deity after another, looking upon each for the time being as the Supreme Deity, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, and Omniscient. This system of worship was characterized by Max Müller as Kathenotheism, 'that is a worship of one god after another', or Henotheism, 'the worship of single gods'. The worship that was prevalent was that of Brahman or the Supreme Spirit as manifested in some deity or other. Such worship was quite common among the Hindus and they perform it even today with an ease and freedom which comes to them out of their conviction that every Deity or chosen Ideal is a manifestation of Brahman.

It is a well-known fact that the Vaidikas followed either the ritualistic portion (Karma Kânda) of the *Vedas* or the Knowledge portion (Jnâna Kânda). After a time there were others who followed these paths conjointly and advocated the combination of ritualism with knowledge. Thus came into existence Jnâna-Karma-Samuchchaya (combination of knowledge with work). In a similar manner there also came into existence Jnâna-Bhakti-Samuchchaya (combination of knowledge with devotion), Bhakti-Karma-Samuchchaya (combination of devotion with action), and so on, according to the temperamental needs and spiritual necessities of men; such schools of thought becoming the bone of contention of later scholars and Sâdhakas (aspirants).

It is one of the brightest and most refreshing features of the history of ancient Hindu thought that even as early as the days of the *Rig-Veda*, a Rishi proclaimed, "Truth is One, sages call It variously,—they call It Agni, Yama, Mâtariswan." Another Rishi

sang, "The wise Ones paint by words Him who is one with beautiful wings, in many ways". A seer praises the Hiranyagarbha in the following words, and asks: "In the beginning there arose Hiranyagarbha; He was the one born Lord of all this. He established the earth and this sky. Who is the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice?" That Hiranyagarbha, the seer says, "is alone God above all gods", and herein we have an assertion of the unity of the Divine. Vedic seers like Yâjnavalkya and Dirghatamas also preached the synthetic point of view and harmonized the various paths of worship and schools of thought.

The most outstanding personality who preached synthesis in the post-Vedic period was Sri Krishna, the Divine author of the *Bhagavad-Gitâ*. He appeared at a time when there was a terrible conflict in the Hindu fold—conflict between Karma (action), Jnâna (Knowledge), Bhakti (Devotion), and Yoga (Concentration), which form the main paths of spiritual disciplines (Sâdhanâ Mârgas) of Hinduism, conflict between the duties of the various Varnas (Castes) and Âsramas (Divisions of life), and conflict between the rights and privileges of the higher and lower sections of society. He had therefore to face a religious and philosophical as well as a social conflict. His teachings as given out in the *Bhagavad-Gitâ* form the most magnificent and most comprehensive synthesis of spiritual thought and life known to man in the whole range of religious literature. He harmonized all the paths and all the creeds. He harmonized all the conflicting systems of philosophy. He harmonized the duties of the Varnas and Âsramas. He also threw broadcast the treasures of spiritual thought and wisdom enshrined in the Vedic Religion to one and all, and removed the prohibition of the



study of the scriptures and practice of spiritual disciplines by women, Vaisyas and Sudras as well as "those of sinful birth", that evidently existed at his time.

Centuries after Sri Krishna, sectarianism asserted itself again, and the synthetic character of Hindu thought was almost forgotten in the days of the over-elaboration of ritualism of the three schools of Âgama, viz., the Saiva Âgama, the Sâkta Âgama, and the Vaishnava Âgama, or the Pancharâtra, and the over-elaboration of the six famous systems of philosophy, viz., Nyâya and Vaisheshika, Sânkhya and Yoga, Purva Mimâmsa and Vedânta, which dealt with the Reality and interpreted the scriptures from different standpoints and in different ways. To this conflict between the various schools of Âgama with their respective chosen Ideals or Ishta Devatâs and the conflict between the various systems of philosophy were added in the Sankarite and post-Sankarite periods the conflicts between the three well-known schools of Vedânta, viz., the Advaita, Visishtâdvaita and Dvaita, expounding the truth in different ways. But out of the din and turmoil there slowly emerged in time the voice of peace through synthesis and harmony : for the various Ishta Devatâs of the Tantras came to be looked upon as manifestations of the One Supreme Brahman ; the six systems of philosophy were taken as studies of the One Reality from various points of view ; and the three schools of the Vedânta were treated as differing approaches to God in His Personal and Impersonal aspects from differing perspectives. When Sri Râmachandra asked Hanumân in what way he regarded Him and meditated on Him, Hanumân replied : "O Rama, at times I worship Thee as Purna, the One undivided. Then I look upon myself

as Amsa, a part, a fragment as it were of that Divinity. At other times I meditate upon Thee as my Divine Master, and think of myself as Thy servant only." The same genuine catholicity, arising from the synthetic outlook characterizes also the Siva Mahimna Stotra which says : "The Vedas, Sânkhya, Yoga, Pâsupata, and Vaishnava creeds are each encouraged in one place or another. Some think that this or that is better owing to differences of taste, but all men reach unto Thee, the Supreme, as all rivers, straight or crooked, reach the sea". A well-known Hindu hymn says, "May Hari, the Ruler of the three worlds worshipped by the Saivites as Siva, the Vedântins as Brahman, the Buddhists as the Buddha, the followers of Nyâya as the Chief Agent, the Jains as the Liberated, the Karma-Kândins as the Principle of Law, grant our prayers". As the *Prasthâna Bheda* of Madhusudan Saraswati puts it, "In reality, all the Munis who have put forward these theories agree in wishing the existence of the One Supreme Lord without a second. . . . These Munis cannot be in error, considering that they are omniscient, and these different views have only been propounded by them in order to keep off all nihilistic theories, and because they were afraid that human beings, with their inclinations towards the objects of the world, cannot be expected at once to know the true goal of man". (Quoted in Max Müller's "Six Systems".) It is no wonder, therefore, that at the conclusion of his morning and evening prayers, the Hindu boy utters : "All adoration leads to God, just as all water that descends from the heavens wends its way to the sea". Not only the higher scriptures of the Hindus, but even their popular folk-songs, express the self-



same sentiment of catholicity and harmony. Here is a South-Indian folk-song, rendered into English verse by Gover, which shows that the idea of unity in diversity has filtered down to the lowest strata of the race :

“Into the bosom of the one great sea

Flow streams that come from hills on every side,

Their names are various as the springs,  
And thus in every land do men bow down

To the great God, though known by many names”.

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## SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

### INAUGURATION AT BELUR

The inauguration of the celebrations which are to last for one year in connection with the Birthday Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna took place at Belur, the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, on Monday, February 24, and lasted till Sunday, March 1. Throughout the week there were huge crowds pouring in at Belur to be sanctified by the presence of the Master and the monks had a hard time all through the week in entertaining their guests. One is perplexed to account for this huge concourse. The answer is to be sought in the irresistible attraction and inspiring influence of the Master's life. It was a life which was lived best for oneself but which has nevertheless been lived entirely for others, a life of asceticism, unworldliness, all-embracing love and a burning passion to serve mankind. However private might have been his life, his thoughts today are irresistible. He stands for a great ideal. The quest of happiness in the external world has brought in endless complications in society. Life has become artificial and misery, envy and despair are today appalling. The life and teachings of the great saint has come like a soothing balm to this world scorched by this hatred and misery. He was nothing if not an embodiment of the scorn for gold and lust and love

for man. He has shown to the world that true happiness lies not in environment but with oneself. He has given the world a larger vision which reaches beyond the fleeting glory of this world by showing that the true destiny of man lies in attaining immortality through the realization of the divinity within him. No wonder then that his birthday, wherever celebrated, attracts such large crowds and is an occasion for a religious upheaval and great rejoicing.

The 24th of February was the actual Tithi of the birth of the Master. It was observed with elaborate worship and prayer and perpetual adoration was maintained before the sacred presence of the Master in the shrine of the monastery. An atmosphere of ecstasy prevailed and all felt a spiritual uplift for the time being. Devotees were seen talking in groups recounting the reminiscences of the Master, while others even in the midst of these festivities and rejoicings were seen wrapt in silent meditation and telling beads in the various shrines or retired corners of the extensive monastery grounds sanctified by the disciples of the great Master. The worship of the day was marked by an all-embracing spirit. Every manifestation of that one all-pervading Spirit, known by different names in different climes, was worshipped before the worship of the Master was begun, and Incarnations and prophets like Rama,



Krishna, Buddha, Christ, Mohammed, Sankara, Chaitanya and others were devoutly worshipped by the monks of the Order.

A unique feature of the celebration was the performance of a 'Homa' in a specially constructed altar on the riverside with the chanting of the sacred Mantras from the Vedas by Brâhmanas specially requisitioned from religious institutions of Benares. There was devotional music as also rendering of classical music. After the worship, there was distribution of Prasâd. About 8,000 devotees partook of the sacred offering.

In the afternoon there was also a public meeting in the monastery grounds. As the health of Swami Akhandananda, President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, did not allow him to preside over the meeting, his place was taken by Swami Suddhananda and the message of the President was read out in Bengali and English by two members of the Order. Many members of the Order and noted men of Calcutta addressed the audience. Their addresses proved to be brilliant expositions of the Master's ideals and message and were heard with wrapt attention by the audience.

Swami Nirvedananda addressing the audience said :

The celebrations of the birthday centenary of Sri Ramakrishna is bringing about a better understanding between different races, religions and civilizations all over the world. This birth centenary is being observed all over the world. What is the reason at the back of this? What was there in the Master's life that makes the world worship him today? There must have been something extraordinary in his life that has touched the inner cords of every man and woman of all races, nations and climes.

Sri Ramakrishna was born in a subject nation; his parents were poor and he had no academic learning. He was an ordinary priest. But in spite of all these shortcomings,

he has given the world something invaluable for which the world today is prepared, to worship him as its redeemer. To realize God was the one aim of his life. Purity, self-sacrifice, love, humility, etc. were found in him to an extraordinary degree and these he has bequeathed to the world at large through his spiritual realizations. He has taught the world that God is One and that the different religions, nations and men and women have but described Him from different points of view and that this universe with all its diversity is but a manifestation of that One, Eternal Being. That is why sincere souls all over the world today have accepted him as the latest Incarnation of the Supreme Spirit.

Doctor Kalidas Nag observed :

Hundred years ago Sri Ramakrishna was not known to this world, nor was any temple built for him. On the opposite bank of the river Ganges, at Dakshineswar, this superman had manifested his real nature which baffles all description. Then no one imagined that that place, would become a pilgrimage hundred years later and that millions of men and women would come to worship him year after year. He lived the life and gave no discourses or lectures nor did he preach, but the life he lived has made him famous today.

Sj. Satyendra Nath Mazumdar addressing the audience said :

It is not possible to go into the details of the life of the one whose birth centenary we are here today to celebrate. He has repeatedly told us and shown to us by his life that the one aim of human existence is to realize God. But though he was absorbed in God-consciousness most of the time, he was not blind to the misery and sufferings of man. That is why he used to say, "Religion cannot be practised with an empty stomach."

This nation has lost sight of its ideal today, and is crippled by blindly adhering to certain dogmas and rituals which have no life in them. Sri Ramakrishna by his life has revitalized the religious life of the nation. He has hit hard on the hypocritical and lazy life that we have been leading, and has ushered in a new epoch in the life of the nation by establishing harmony and a better understanding between the different religions, castes, classes and races in the country.



The message of the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission and Swami Vivekananda on Sri Ramakrishna were broadcasted all over the world between 7-30 and 8-15 P.M. from the Calcutta broadcasting station. At night there was illumination of the monastery precincts and in the shrine there was an all-night worship of the Divine Mother Kâli at the close of which many novitiates of the Order were initiated into Brahmacharya and Sannyâsa by the President of the Order.

PUBLIC MEETING AT THE TOWN HALL,  
CALCUTTA

A largely attended public meeting was held on Wednesday, the 26th February, in the evening, at the Town Hall under the presidency of Maharaja Sir Manmatha Nath Ray Chaudhury of Santosh.

Among those present were Swami Abhedananda, Justice Sir Manmatha Nath Mukherjee, Sir Hari Sankar Pal, Justice Dwarkanath Mitter, Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Mr. S. N. Mullick, Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee, Prof. J. R. Bannerjee, Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarcar, Swami Virajananda and Swami Suddhananda.

Paying his tribute Mr. Ramananda Chatterjee remarked :

In 'Bhakti', for which there is no exact English word and which can be approximately explained as fervent reverential love of the Supreme Spirit, he was unsurpassed. But he was not a mere 'Bhakta'. His spiritual knowledge and wisdom was marvellous. And what a teacher he was! By means of simple parables and homely illustrations, he could convey to even the most unlettered the deepest spiritual truths of most universal application. It was no common faith, no ordinary knowledge, no mediocre personality which could convert the sceptically inclined and keenly critical Narendranath into the unquestioning disciple Vivekananda and inspire him and others like him but less gifted than he to carry the Master's message and gospel all over India and abroad, and

carry out particularly his gospel of service.

Considering that no school, no college, no university, no library contributed to his mental and spiritual equipment and that all that he owed to other human beings for such equipment was due to contact and conversations with some Sannyâsis and other religious-minded persons and the guidance of a 'Bhairavi' in the earlier stage of his preparation for his life's work, the conclusion becomes irresistible that his spiritual genius was extraordinary and marvellous.

What is known as religious tolerance or toleration but what would probably be better called mutual appreciation and respect among the followers of different faiths, has been traditional in India for ages. Within historical times Asoka set an example in this religious attitude for all ages and countries to follow. Other princely names, in medieval times, which one recalls in this connection are Akbar and Dara Shukoh. In modern times in India the earliest name which may be mentioned as that of a person who appreciated and assimilated all faiths which he had studied was that of Rammohun Roy. Keshub Chunder Sen, whose spiritual attitude towards all religions is well known, was a contemporary and loving friend of Ramakrishna. These names are mentioned not to minimise in the least the worth of the Paramahansa's message of appreciation and harmonization of all faiths and their assimilation in his spiritual constitution. My object is only to point out that the mental and spiritual attitude of which I am speaking has been in the atmosphere of India, as it were, from time immemorial and that the appearance of a great harmonizer in our midst is evolutionary—not sudden and revolutionary. That Ramakrishna was such a harmonizer in spite of his not having read the scriptures of even the principal historical religions in the original or in translation, gives him a distinct, a unique place in the long line of teachers of harmony of many a clime and age.

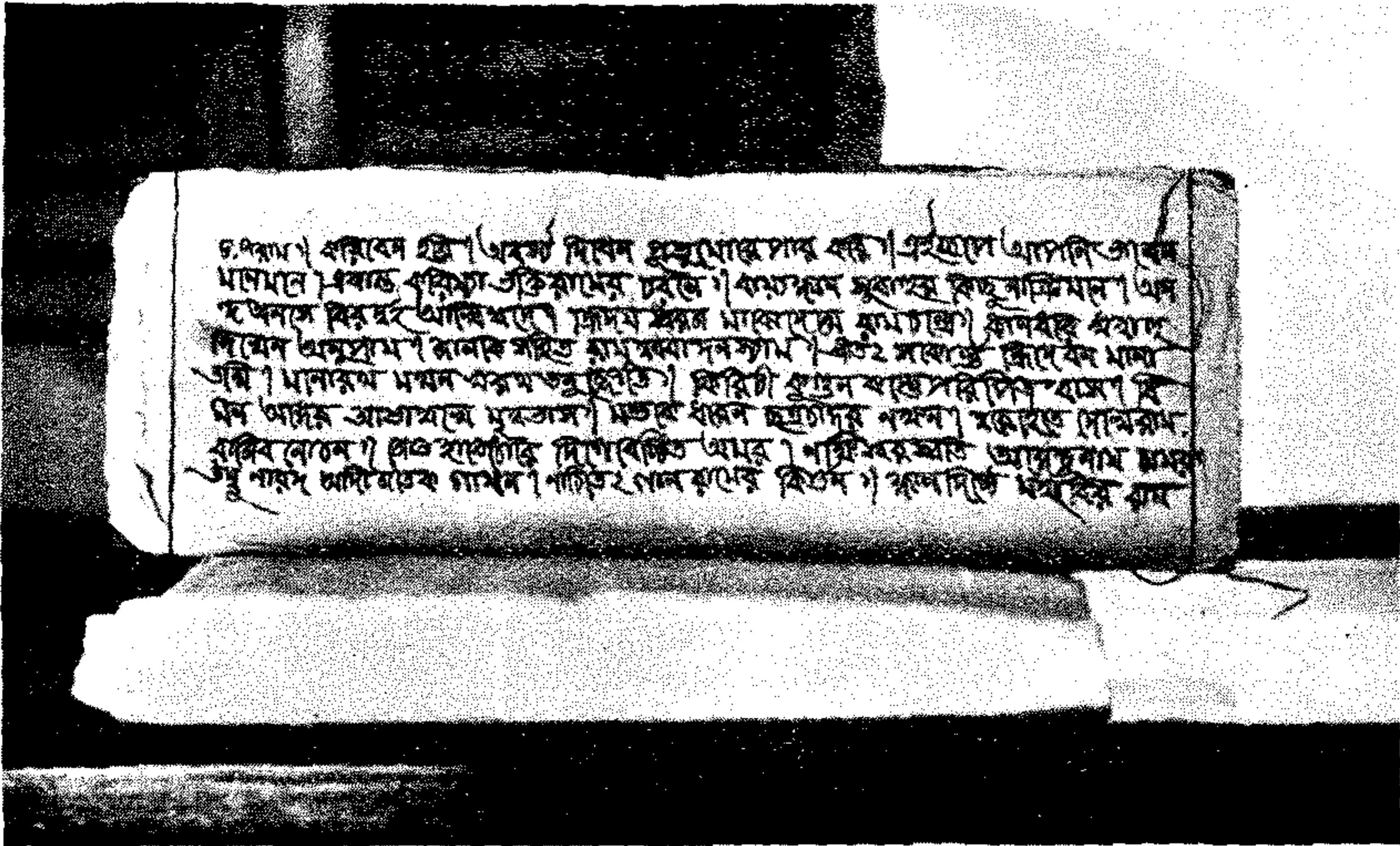
Whatever may be the case in other countries, in India the religious and the secular spheres of life were not considered and kept separate and distinct in times past. But if one has to speak of spiritual and secular achievements as distinct, it cannot be said that India has had through the ages only spiritual achievements to her credit: her children were noted, just like the inhabitants of other lands in former ages, for their secular achievements also. They had litera-





SRI RAMAKRISHNA





FACSIMILE OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S HANDWRITING IN BENGALI FROM A MANUSCRIPT PRESERVED AT THE BELUR MONASTERY

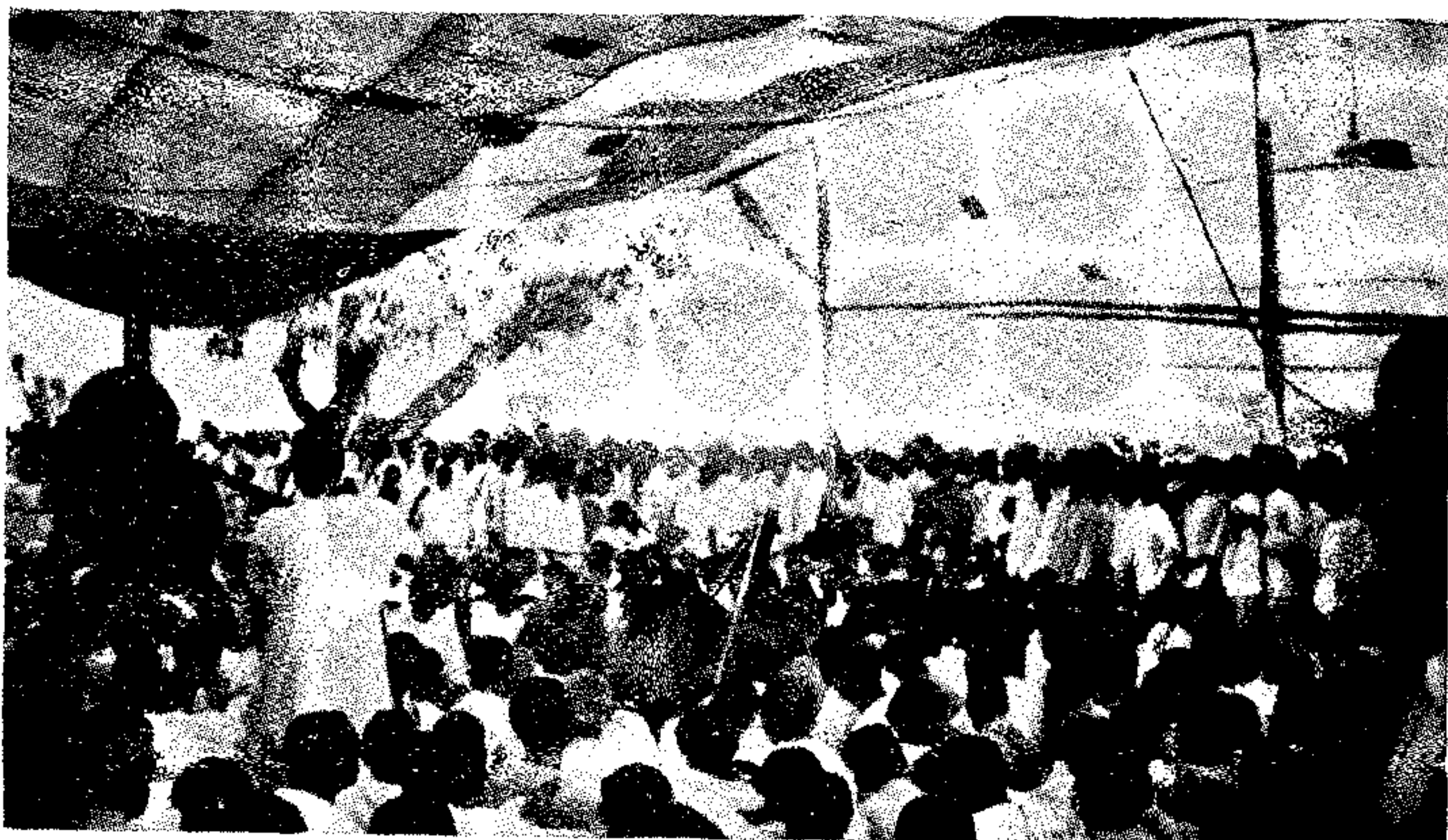


A GATHERING OF LADIES AT THE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS, BELUR



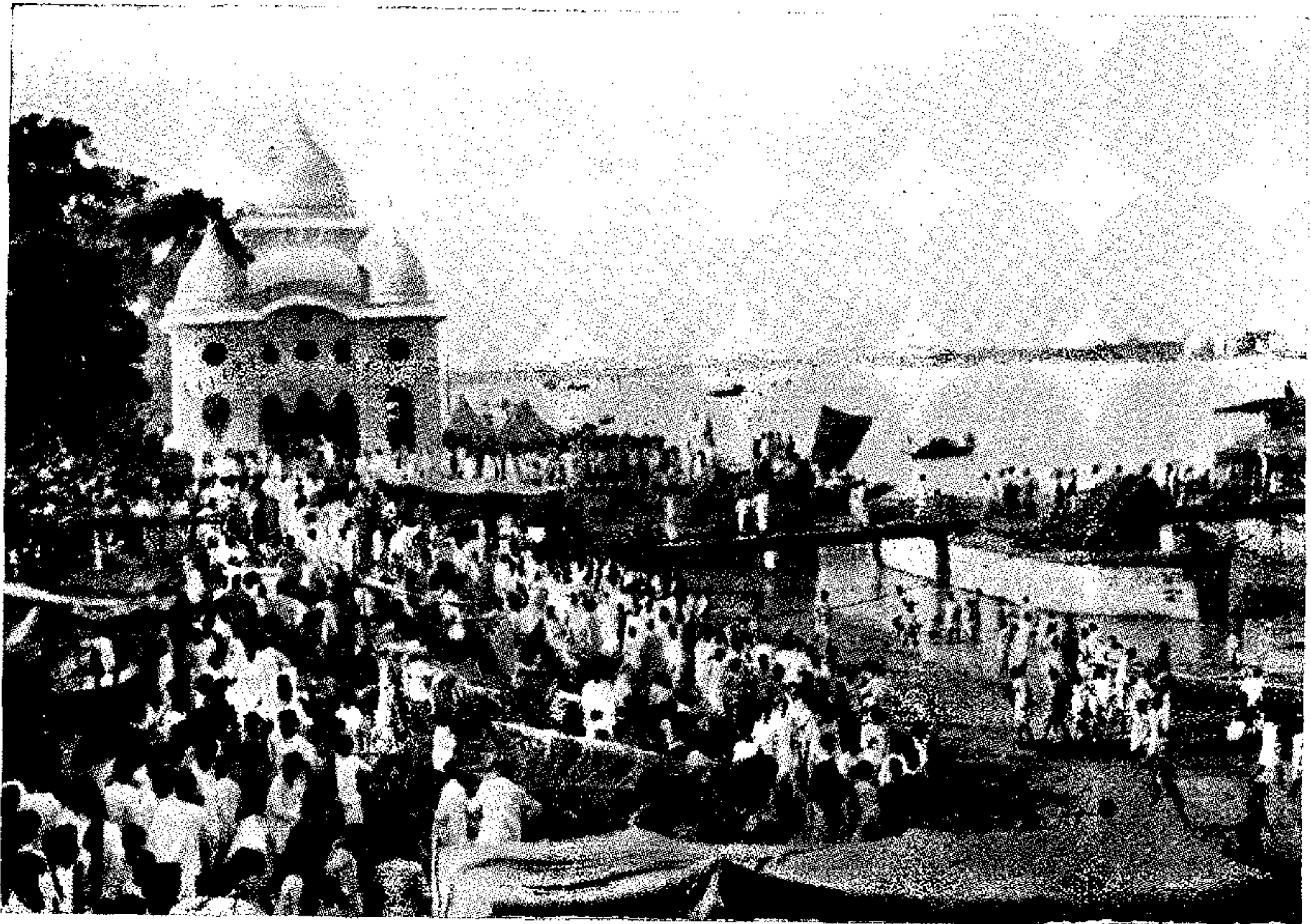


A RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE DURING THE WEEK, BELUR



KALIKIRTAN





DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE LANDING GHATS, BELUR



tures and arts and crafts, philosophies, sciences, politics, empires at home and abroad, republics of various kinds, internal and overseas commerce, colonizing activities, adventures in distant oceans and cultural enterprise in far-off regions. But India's supreme note has always been spiritual. Keeping that fact in view, one may say that the Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Centenary is this year's most noteworthy contemporary event in India.

May the Supreme Spirit save us from lip-homage to the great saint, sage, teacher and inspirer!

Swami Abhedananda said in the course of his speech :

Sri Ramakrishna is the greatest man of modern India. He had come to establish the unity and harmony of religions. Five hundred years before Christ, Buddha was born. He preached Ahimsâ and peace. After him came Christ in Palestine. Five hundred years after Christ came Mohammed in Arabia and after Mohammed came Sankara to establish once more the Sanâtana Dharma in India. After another five hundred years came Râmânuja, Chaitanya and Guru Nanak—all for one purpose, viz. to re-establish religion. Five hundred years had elapsed since Chaitanya was born and the time had come for another great soul to be born for putting religion once more on a firm basis and the Lord was born in the form of an illiterate priest. No other great soul till now has conquered in so short a time the hearts of men and women all over the world. He established the harmony of religions and preached the truth, "As many faiths so many paths", to mankind. Another great fact in his life was that he looked upon all women including his wife as the living representatives of the Divine Mother. He did not renounce wife and home like other great prophets of the past, but living in the world, he was, at the same time, the best of Sannyâsins. He has once more set woman on the altar of motherhood and had even accepted a woman as his Guru, to start with.

Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar in the course of his speech said :

Though Bengal has every reason to be proud of the fact that the Paramahansa and his foremost disciple Vivekananda were born in Bengal, yet it should not forget that these great souls belong not

merely to Bengal, not even to India but to humanity itself. What is it that makes us venerate these as Godmen? What is the message which they gave to the world and which their disciples and those who follow their teachings are asked to broadcast to the world? Neither Paramahansa nor Swami Vivekananda tried to preach a new religion. They did not put forward a novel Hindu faith. In fact the eternal verities of the Hindu faith existed thousands of years back and were contained in its sacred books. It was true that commentators had tortured texts in a vain attempt to justify those excrescences which had grown round their ancestral faith and had tried to mar its beauty and hide its pristine purity. The message of Ramakrishna which his disciples so eloquently broadcasted in the West was the message of peace, of tolerance and of understanding. Sri Ramakrishna with none of the amenities of modern education vouchsafed to him was still great enough to understand the basic factors of all religions. He learnt the doctrines of the Islamic faith from Mullahs and the Christian faith from missionaries and he reiterated with emphasis the great truth that had been preached centuries ago by Hinduism and given expression to by the Lord Himself in His talks to Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra. "Like the many rivers that ultimately flow into the same ocean, so by any faith sincerely practised, the good soul reaches the eternal." This is the great message of Ramakrishna. There is no need for conflict of creeds and of religions if this fact is understood and borne home in practical life. Basically and in essence, all faiths preach the same truth. '*Ekam sat viprâ bahudâ vadanti*'—"Truth is One, sages call it by different names." I am glad that one of the tangible results of the Centenary Celebrations will be the inauguration of a Cultural Institute where people of different faiths will try to understand one another and thereby enrich their knowledge of their own particular faith. That will prove a great blessing not merely in reconciling religious differences, but in making it possible for peace to prevail in the world. The great Swami Vivekananda has emphasized the Vedântic truth that man whether born high or low, whatever his caste or creed, has the same divine spark in him. It is suggested sometimes by people who are unable to understand the fundamentals of the Hindu faith that Hinduism is not



a democratic religion. If this Vedântic truth is properly appreciated, one will find that in Hinduism there can be no talk of 'I and my brother'. Hinduism is more than democratic, because according to it 'I and my neighbour are not only brothers but are identical. I am my neighbour!' If instead of merely believing in these statements or expressing them in fine language on platforms, each one of us apply in practical life this great truth, there is no problem, social or political in India which cannot find an early solution.

The President in his concluding speech spoke as follows :

"Sri Ramakrishna Centenary" is a name which has been given to a great national idea so that it may be hallowed by the lustre of the sacred memory of one who was verily the soul of the age he lived in. The idea is to inspire our people to fix their gaze upon the beacon-light of one of the greatest apostles of truth and spirituality who consecrated the Indian humanity and not only lightened its soul but thrilled it through and through with divine joy. The idea is to rouse our people from morbid stupor and take the fullest possible advantage of that flood-light which is capable of removing the veil of darkness from the obscurest corners of human knowledge. That idea, I take it, must denote in this scientific age not peaceful rest but motion which is the symbol of life as it is and as it should be today—motion in our thought and action in every out-look of life. The sublime idea of the past must remain sublime by rushing forth on sublime motion. The present is an epoch of expansion, the essence of which is movement of ideas, rushing forth with dynamic energy. Our world-wide celebrations are meant to remove stagnations of every description and point towards a great whirlpool of action in which the East is to be epitomized, its total knowledge codified. Our celebrations should give a root-shock to those soldiers of fortune who have come to power by sheer accidents and talk of India, light-heartedly. Intoxicated by their sudden and abnormal rise by gross materialism, they forget that India is the home of the priest-people of humanity. They visualize India as a rickety child which has recently learnt to walk with the help of the leading string. Let me quote for their benefit what Thornton, in his history of the British Empire, has said of our ancient land: Ere

yet the Pyramids look down upon the valley of the Nile, when Greece and Italy—those cradles of European civilization nursed only the tenants of the wilderness, India was a seat of wealth and grandeur.

Professor Hearen in his historical researches writes: India is a source from which not only the rest of Asia but the whole of Western world derive knowledge and religion.

It may be that at times we have behaved like a self-forgotten nation, but we had and have enough vitality in us never to go to sleep for ever. Any way, these glorious remarks will give lie direct to such irresponsible utterances as are calculated to bring India and her peoples into contempt in lands far away from our great country, where ignorance of India's culture and civilization still reign supreme. I want those who take delight to make India their target to realize that the ancient Indians, free as they were from any social convention, or any religious prejudice, or political colouring, believed in perfect balance of human nature. They believed in a harmonious perfection, developing all sides of humanity and all parts of society. Compartmentalism is a narrow maxim of modern age, it is only a by-product of extreme form of nationalism. They had no rivals who could successfully oppose them and their world, though physically limited, had no space for expansion in imagination. Their social customs were dynamic, their religious thoughts were high and sublime, no tinge of narrow nationalism, far less provincialism or communalism were visible in their words and actions. In one word India first heralded to the sleeping humanity to awake and arise and serve their common Lord. I trust that the Sri Ramakrishna centenary celebrations will open the eyes of those who delight to cast aspersions on India's fair name to the real state of affairs. As an antidote for superiority complex, which is chiefly responsible for such aspersions, I should seriously ask them to assimilate into their everyday existence the noble lessons which the enthralling parables, noble teachings and soul captivating preachings of Sri Ramakrishna so eloquently inculcate. The reason why I believe in such an antidote is the deep reverence and the undiluted form of absolute faith which I have in the Saint of Dakshineswar. It is he, who like the miracle man of the twentieth century, shaped thinkers and organizers, that is men,





RUSH AT THE STAIRCASE LEADING TO THE CHAPEL, BELUR

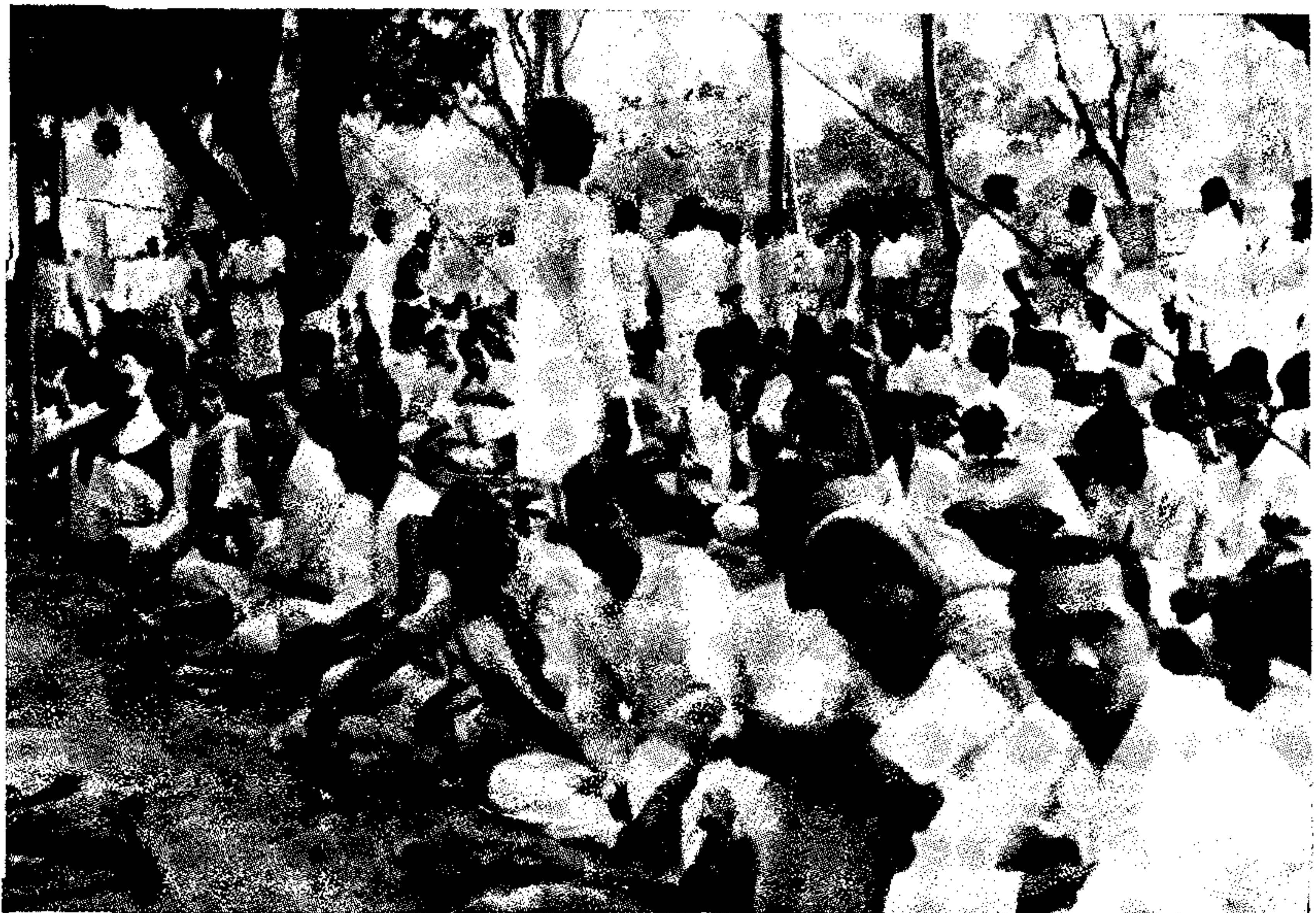


STAIRCASE LEADING TO THE CHAPEL, BELUR



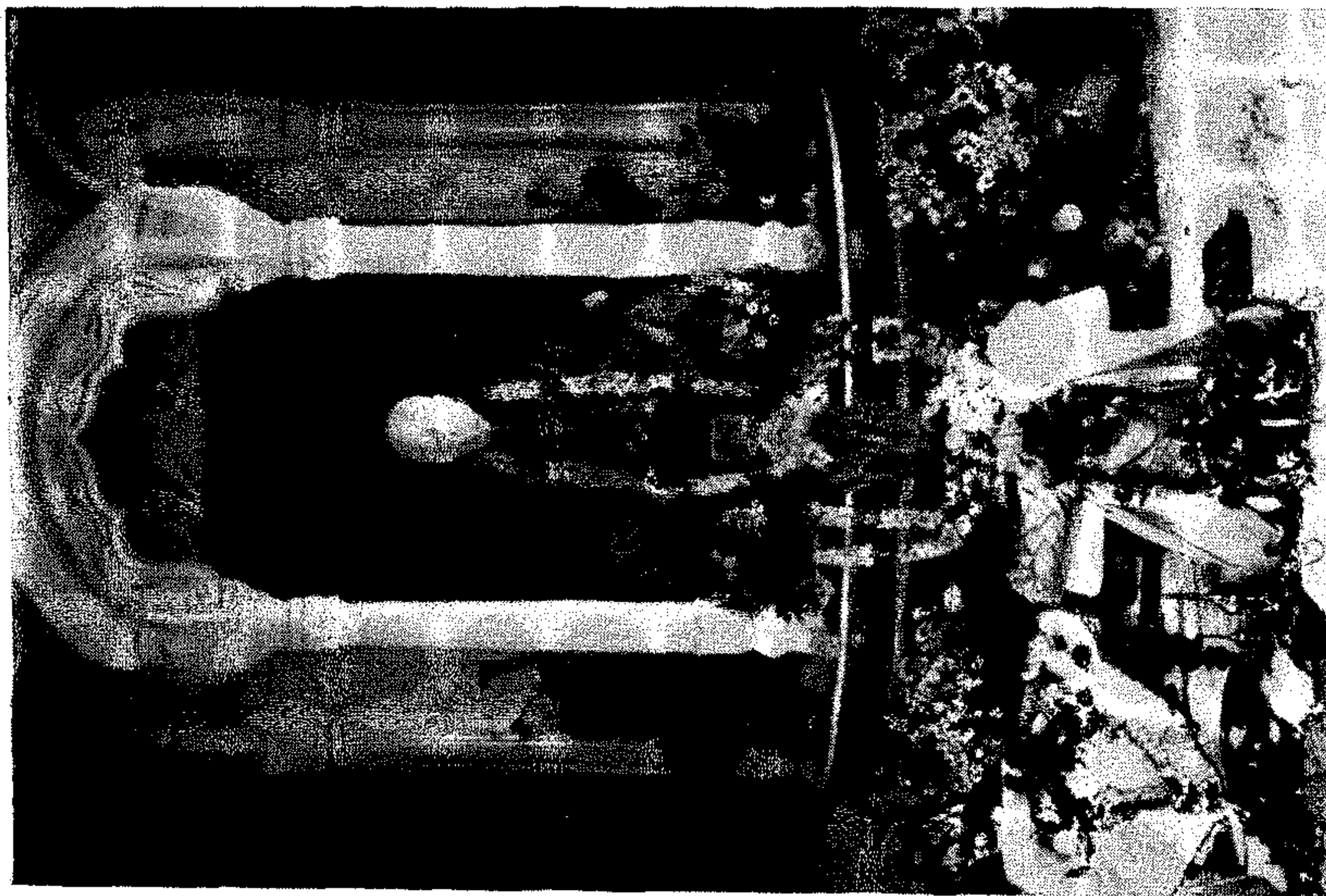


THE CROWD NEAR THE MAIN BUILDING OF THE MONASTERY, BELUR

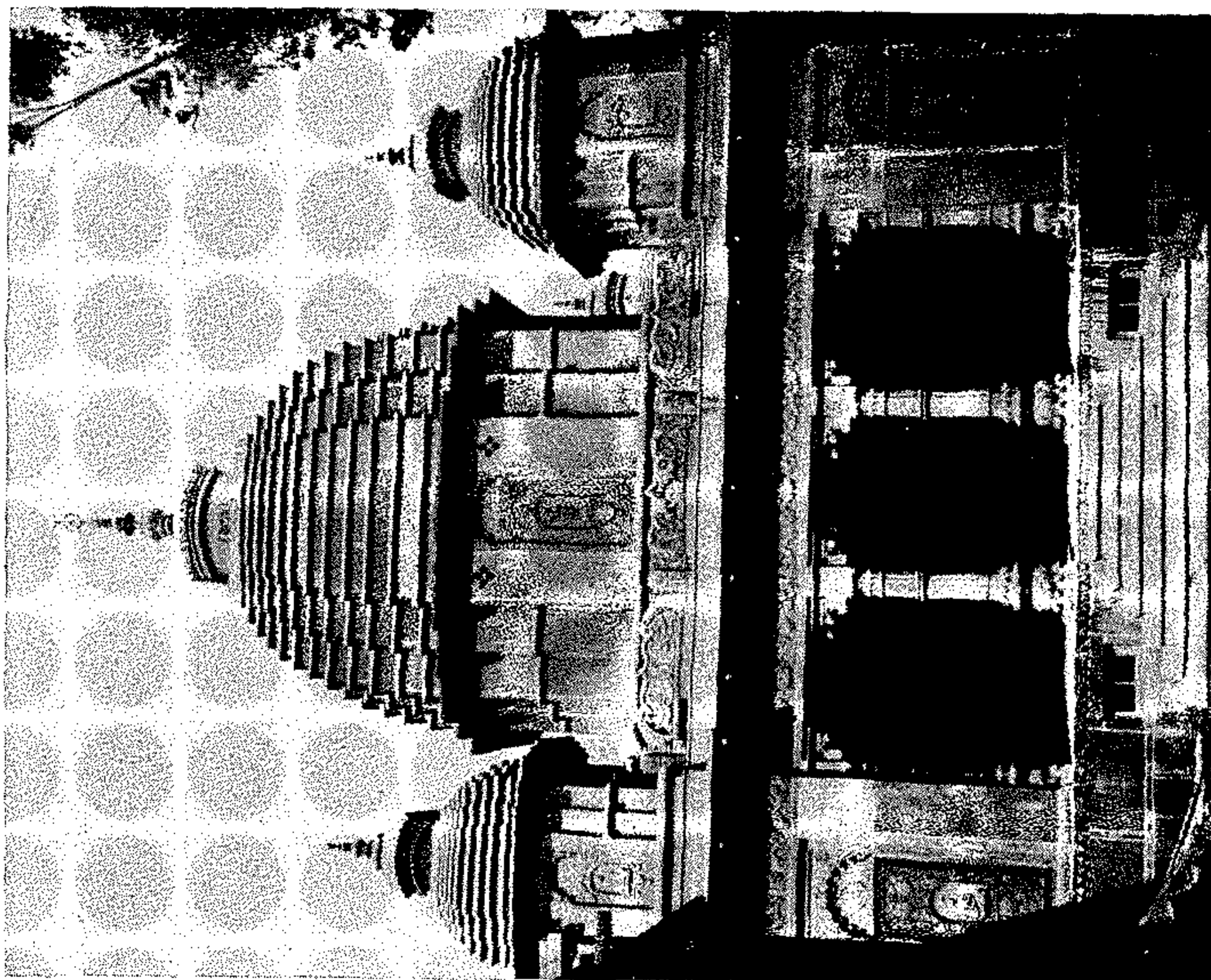


PILGRIMS PARTAKING OF THE SACRAMENTAL FOOD, BELUR



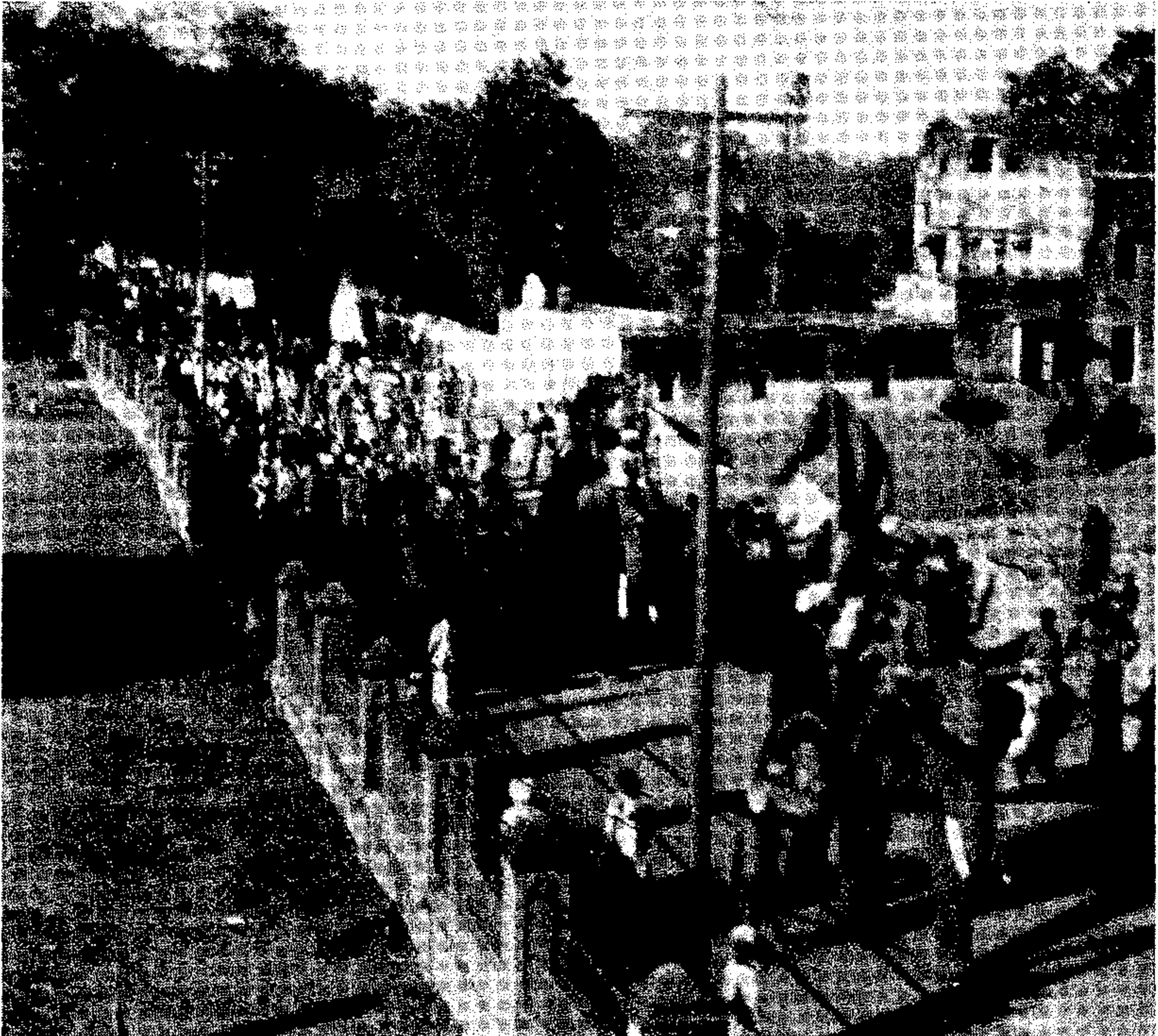


ALTAR INSIDE THE TEMPLE, BENARES



SRI RAMAKRISHNA TEMPLE, BENARES.  
OPENED ON THE 24TH OF FEBRUARY LAST  
BY SWAMI VIJNANANANDA





A PORTION OF A HUGE PROCESSION, CARRYING A PORTRAIT OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA  
ON AN ELEPHANT, ORGANIZED ON THE OCCASION OF THE CENTENARY  
CELEBRATIONS AT BENARES IN WHICH MONKS OF ALL  
DENOMINATIONS AND FAITHS JOINED FOR  
THE FIRST TIME IN A  
COMMON CAUSE



great in essence and fit to lead in their own sphere of action.

The greatness of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa consists in the fact that he lays the broad foundation of perfect understanding of the universal spirit in a materialistic and nationalistic age which is torn asunder by diversity of races and interests. It is he who preached from the lofty pinnacle of great knowledge that the sweetness and light of the few must be imperfect until the raw and unkindled masses of humanity are touched with sweetness and light. It is he who set aside the hitherto existing customs of all religions of the world to indoctrinate the masses with a set of ideas and judgments. He stands above all scruples, pitfalls, and shortcomings because, he conceived the long lost tenets of the Upanishads and taught the warring Nations to their utter astonishment the oneness of the universe and divine belief in perfection. In fact, he was not a Provincial preacher of religion, no dogmatism marred his tenets, no compartmentalism shortened his outlook—he was sublime and he could soar high and look upon the universe as one plane. It was this specially which made the name of Vivekananda almost a house-hold word in the States of America. It is this teaching which enables the Swami of our Belur Math to find listening ears in America and Europe. To the Prophet of Dakshineswar the whole world owes a symbol of Internationalism, a perfect figure of perfection and these are the new messages which are to be preached to the whole world.

Posterity, an enlightened and cultured posterity bordering upon perfection, will be too eager to have a thorough understanding of the personality of the sage of Dakshineswar who illuminated obscure and hitherto undiscovered regions of human intelligence and knowledge. I like to draw a portrait of him before you as I take him, to be surely not as a saint whom the mankind will remember as a stern religious leader, disrupter of social organizations, but as a saint, full of sprightliness, humour, and handsome courtesy; a saint of kindly countenance and fascinating conversation with the magical power to beguile you into being informed beyond your worth and wise beyond your birth-right.

With the Poet, let me say—

“Constant as the northern star of whose true fixed and lasting equality,  
There is no fellow in the firmament.”

With Mathew Arnold I may say:—

“The worth of what a man thinks about God and the objects of religion depends on what the man is; and what the man is, depends upon his having more or less reached the measure of a Perfect and Total man.”

It is Perfection, absolute in details which was worshipped by Sri Ramakrishna. His nature was dynamic. He was catholic in spirit, strong in organization and believed in a religion which is universal in nature. He made no distinction at all between his experiences in every day life and his experiences in dreams. That is why he looked upon dreams as realities. As a child of Nature, fired with imagination, he was carried on the high wings of fancy and he conceived in vividly fanciful colours of the impossibilities which are still lying beyond the ken to be focused. His spirituality thus became mixed up with Realities. His Masterpieces, the total growth and universal movements of his soul are incalculable. The world owes to him more than the world can pay. One hundred years constitute a pretty long span of time and although he shuffled off his mortal coil long, long ago, his spirit still resides with us.

#### THE PUBLIC CELEBRATION AT BELUR ON MARCH 1

The public celebration at Belur came off on the 1st of March. The monastery grounds and buildings were tastefully decorated with flags, evergreens, pictures and Durbar tents. Crowds began to pour in from Calcutta and the surrounding places using all sorts of conveyances and even on foot. There was special steamer service and even special local trains were running to bring people to the place. By noon the extensive grounds of the monastery presented a soul-stirring sight filled, as it were, by one seething mass of rejoicing people in which one could find all classes of people—Brâhmanas and low castes, the rich and the poor, Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians and Europeans mixed in a sweet democracy of the soul and it was rightly so, for in the retired gardens of Dakshineswar



the Master through his spiritual practices and realizations had brought about a social and religious cosmopolitanism in the country.

A bazar had transported itself from the city to the Math grounds and one could get all kinds of things—books, pictures, curios, refreshments, cool drinks, flowers, incense and other offerings for the shrine. The monastery in fact was converted into a village.

The crowd was thickest in the afternoon at about 4 P.M. when more than a lakh of people had congregated and it was an effort to move from one place to another even on the spacious grounds. The hugeness of the preparation for the entertainment of such vast numbers could easily be imagined than described and the monks on whom rested the whole responsibility were indefatigable in their eagerness to serve those who had come there as their guests. They had taken every precaution and were scattered all over the grounds sparing no pains for the comfort of the pilgrims and had even organized an ambulance corps to render first aid in case of mishaps. There was free distribution of cool drinks and tea in the afternoon by a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna.

Under a large Durbar tent in the

open fields a life-size portrait of the Master in Yoga posture, lost in Samâdhi, was placed. It was tastefully decorated with flowers etc., and all day long Kirtan parties sang before it and crowds of people worshipped and prayed. On the open grounds of the monastery under tents the Kalikirtan party was pouring forth soul-stirring music creating an atmosphere of ecstasy. In other places also there were continuous chantings of the Lord's name.

After worship in the morning great quantities of food were offered to the Master which was later served to the visitors. Nearly twenty-five thousand had their full meal and many more had at least a small quantity of it. It was really inspiring to see the rush to receive even a morsel of this sacred offering for it was food offered to the Lord and as such had a spiritual influence upon him who took it. Such indeed was the faith of the people that had come there to pay their homage to the Master.

From 5 P.M. the crowd began to disperse and the function came to a close at about 8 P.M. after display of fire works. And as the last of the multitude left the grounds of the monastery, one could not but feel that one was standing on holy ground, nay in the very presence of the Lord.

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## HAIL HARIJANS!

BY PROF. ERNEST P. HORRWITZ

Aggressive nationalism is rampant and ruthless in 1936, the birth-centenary of our patron-saint, "le surpatriote Ramakrishna" whose universal mind re-echoes the infinite moods and emotions, not only of his native India, but of humanity. His thousand-voiced

organ-soul richly blended the world's discords and diversities in a sonorous unison of vision and viewpoint (Darsanam). The self-effaced world-teacher of Dakshineswar merged individual and national endeavour in cosmic breadth and all-embracing love, boundless as



Mother Gangâ, after losing her name and form in the Sea of Bengal. Japan, Italy, and Germany need territorial expansion; predominance in the Pacific, the Mediterranean, the Baltic and, if possible, the Black Sea is the height of their ambition. But to antagonists of Kâmakâchanam like Ramakrishna a strip of land or a lump of gold has no more value than a handful of mud. Theirs is the discrimination (Viveka) between appearance and reality (Asat and Âtman) rather than between the rich and poor, the race-proud and abandoned, inaccessibles and untouchables, (Dwija and Harijan). Self-realization (Âtmabodhi) had uplifted Ramakrishna to supernational or international altitudes; his attitude toward all life was divine, since it was humane. This true cosmopolitan unwittingly helped to universalize nationalism which reasserts itself with irrepressible force on the political arena. The fires of nationalist insurgency have by no means burned themselves out.

About 1875 the national movement in India was started with the object of winning complete self-determination, and removing the humiliating stigma of foreign domination from the sacred mother-soil, once ruled by the proud Gupta dynasty. Hindu home life and society, law and literature, art and religion, are impregnated with Sanskrit culture which, in the opinion of Indian nationalists, is rapidly disintegrated by western influences. The political revolt against British coercion is merely an incident, overshadowed by the wider issue of a cultural conflict between East and West. An anglicized India means national dissolution and death!

Gokhale and Tilak, the early champions of the national cause, were Maratha Brahmins and learned Sanskritists. Both were rigidly orthodox and passionately polemic. Gokhale

condemned social abuses resulting from Varna or race-pride. Tilak who assumed national leadership in 1902 was not so much concerned with social reforms. He staunchly upheld the ancestral caste system, and was opposed to Christian missions, since they undermine Smriti or tradition. But fearless Tilak was far more than a political propagandist and agitator; deep and broad was his knowledge of national antiquities, based on sound Vedic research and astronomical computations. His scientific theory, far-reaching and compelling, that the homeland or nest of the Aryan race *must* have been the Arctis (Swetadwipa), and that the Indo-European exodus from the circumpolar zone commenced soon after the Interglacial Age, is still made light of by Hindu literalists, but eagerly taken up and elaborated by German pundits. Some years ago, a party of Brahmins voyaged to the Hyperborean nest (Swetadwipa) of the sweet Bhakta-bees. At the North Pole (Mount Meru) the pilgrims offered prayer and puja to the Aurora Borealis (Ushas). They greeted Vishnu-Nârâyana and the dawning of the Northern Light, and fervently chanted the radiant Aurora-hymn: "Thy light has come, of all the lights the fairest!" (Rig-Veda 1, 118). Tilak, like Plato, was intoxicated with the harmony of spheres and had an implicit trust in the eternity of Vedic rhythm. His religion or Dharma rested on Varna; he professed Varnâsrama Dharma like all Sanâtani Hindus.

Caste is a Dravid or pre-Aryan usage. The Vrâtyas, of Dravid origin, abhor intermarriage with aliens; mixed marriages are abominated as a race-taint, and are prohibited by law. Blood pollution and racial purification have hardened into Varna; as time went on, castes multiplied along occupational lines. Far back in the Rig-Vedic age



when the Hindus occupied N. W. India, Vrâtyas dwelt and dominated east of them. Brahmins civilized and converted the Vrâtyas, but at the same time adopted Dravid Varna which, with a Vedic veneer, developed into Varnâsrama Dharma, the rockbed of Hinduism. Magical incantations, a most popular feature of the Vrâtya faith, were recast in Sanskrit spells and charms, known as the Atharva-Veda. Vrâtyastoma, part of the Veda, is a historic repercussion of Vrâtya conversions to Brâhmanism.

Gandhi on whom Tilak's mantle has fallen, identifies Western civilization, loathed by him, with economic exploitation and ever-growing armaments. That modern dragon-slayer or St. George, with his ardent passion for social justice, is bent on crushing the blood-sucking giant of capitalistic industrialism. Gandhi pleads and urges to have international disputes settled, not by a grim appeal to arms, but by a world-court of sane and impartial arbiters. Tilak's aggressive nationalism alienated the Moslems; Gandhi deftly espouses the cause of Islam for the purpose of wresting Purna Swaraj or full self-government from reluctant Britain. His special protégés are the untouchables; these age-long victims of pitiless Varna belong to God's household, he calls them Hari-jans. They have implicit faith in Gandhi, but utterly distrust the bulk of his orthodox supporters, that "satanic" brood; with a pariah pun on Sanâtani. The "constitutional antipathy", felt by the well-bred and high-browed, and their cruel division between Dwija and Harijan, that is, high-caste and social outcast, saddens Gandhi, and touches him to the quick. He is ready to lay down his life, if necessary, for Indian unity. Gandhi defines totalitarianism as a free state based on justice; such a con-

ception is incompatible with race riots and mob-inciting speeches against caste desecration and blood defilement. On grounds of social justice Gandhi heroically defends non-co-operation and civil disobedience; jail or death cannot change a particle of the impregnable convictions of this Indian Socrates. The landed aristocracy, blindly submissive and blindly loyal to the British Raj, sides with the powerful Sanâtanists whose all-India press, in vernaculars as well as the English tongue, scores and slashes Gandhi as an arch-enemy of true Hinduism. His quick repartee is that the materialistic commercialism of the declining West infects and slowly destroys the soul of India. Sanâtanists retort sharply: "It's not the West, but you who work spiritual destruction on our Rishi-blest fatherland. You, the great Gandhi, won a cheap feather for your cap; you misled millions, but eternal Dharma can never die." Gandhi mildly: "Untouchability is a gross abuse of Manu's ancient laws." Sanâtanists angrily: "You are a Hindu only in name, may be you are a Christian. Don't mention Manu, you detestable iconoclast! you dare deny that the Deity dwells in our holy temples; you shamelessly declare that Lord Krishna is no saviour or Avatâr. You lightly reject Nârâyana, the personified "path of heroes", voyaging in the dawn of time from Swetadwipa to Âryavarta. You malign the glorious Mahâ-Bhârata, as though our superb hero-sagas were a mass of mythological rubbish! You prefer unclean scavengers to holy Brahmins! You impudently rebuke India's slave-mentality, but are a miserable time-server yourself. You petty soul, call yourself big-souled, a Mahatma! You never tire of appealing to soul-force, but are utterly deficient in Sakti yourself. You discredit Dharma, the eternal law of soul-evolution, you



gigantic disillusioner of religious romance and the heroic life!"

Sanâtani laws of spiritual unfoldment classify Hindu society into the four upper strata and a "Panchama" or fifth caste, viz. Gandhi's beloved Harijans. Sanâtanists uphold untouchability as a basic virtue found in every shade and grade of organic nature, even in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms. Well-groomed gardens must be constantly trimmed and weeded. Leaf-eating grubs and noxious insects have to be removed; fungi and other parasites have to be torn out of the cultivated soil. There is ingrained poison in certain minerals, herbs and snakes. The same natural law holds good of certain individuals and sections of society. Sanâtanists stretch the point so far as to assert "tribal venom". Certain elements in every race and nation, they say, are poisonous and perilous; they cannot be "touched" or approached without impunity. Sanâtanists subtly argue that birth is no mere chance or accident, but a Karmic necessity in the unbreakable link of wanton cause and stern effect. Every thought, act, word leaves an indelible imprint on our subconsciousness; these Samskâras or fine impressions, accumulated during lifetime, survive after death, in the Hindu belief, and involve Karmic obligations which no mortal can dodge. All of us have to discharge them to the last ounce and penny before we can possibly attain "complete salvation" (Purna Moksha). Therefore, Sanâtanists reason, Harijans must not be touched; they were born unclean on account of their depraved past lives. No secular legislation or external agency, such as Gandhi's campaign, can turn them from their pre-ordained course, beset with thorns and nettles, sin and sorrow. Sanâtanists cry shame on Gandhi, a Unitarian in disguise! That detestable

deist and mere humanitarian defies Sruti or revelation, and submits the gravest and greatest problems of existence to his arbitrary private judgment, is the bitter outcry of the eternalists to whom Varnâsrama Dharma is an infallible and incontestable authority. Gandhi, thus taken to task, offers apology for down-trodden Mother India: "Untouchability is a monstrous iniquity. India suffers agonies because of Varna, and is justly chastised." Sanâtanists: "No, untouchability is eternal Ritam, the immutable law of God, and is essential to Hinduism!" Gandhi: "Then let Hinduism perish on its sickbed; the sooner the better!"

The Hindu mind is fundamentally conservative. Sanâtanists are shrewd politicians, command a wide social influence and ample funds. Yet time and progress work against them; they no longer swim with the popular current. Gandhi's grip and hold on the masses, especially on Indian youth, remain unshaken; selflessness and love of truth defy and defeat hardened Dharma or dogma in the end. Millions of young Hindus yearn for a religious reformation, free from superstitious extravagances and social outrages. Ever more the educated wage war against Varna, since caste fosters national discord and division. Modern India turns realistic and scientific, and feels in an ugly mood toward any form of petrified creed. Sanâtani orthodoxy fades and decays. Gandhi's Harijan campaign has almost severed nationalism from Hinduism. Of course, uncompromising Tories thunder and rage against the very suggestion of Indian home-rule which will "let in the jungle, and undo the uphill work of 150 years of English education." Brahmin-intriguers, as the die-hards see them, will ultimately run and ruin a reactionary commonwealth! Temporarily Gandhi



has lost some of his prestige and power. But his cause is indefatigable. National socialism, if true to its name, is a force that can no more die than liberty herself! Gandhism, in some form or other, will resurge and triumph! Britain with her keen trading instinct and sane common sense, when confronted with the issue, as she must be sooner or later, will agree, ere it is too late, to an active or even "silent" partnership in her vast and valuable Eastern concern. Statesmanship follows economics which generally determines the political trail. Once the national-socialists and their industrial policy gain popular control, India will certainly not be dominated by the Brahminic hierarchy, despite all sinister predictions to the contrary. The breakdown of caste will unify rather than split the Hindu colossus, and restore race-consciousness

without the pitfalls of Varna. Moslems will enjoy full civic equalities, and Harijans will never be segregated in Pariah-pens or compounds, but be recognized as a vital part of the body social and politic. A few years ago, the writer of these lines attended in Ahmedabad a Harijan School, conducted by an altruistic Hindu lady with signal success. A new era dawns in Bengal, and sheds light over the whole Aryan East. "Master Eckart" came before Kant, the predecessor of Schiller and Goethe; the Upanishad sages culminated in Ramakrishna and Vivekananda who were forerunners of Tagore and his dynamic University. Seers and sages, modern Kâlidâsas and Sankaras, arise. Sanskrit culture is witnessing a real renaissance such as the static priests, preachers and professors of yesterday never dreamt of.

## ATMABODHA

BY SWAMI SIDDHATMANANDA

तावत् सत्यं जगद्भाति शुक्तिकारजतं यथा ।

यावन्न ज्ञायते ब्रह्म सर्वाधिष्ठानमद्वयम् ॥ ७ ॥

यावत् As long as सर्वाधिष्ठानम् all-supporting ँद्वयम् non-dual (without a second) ब्रह्म Brahman (the Supreme Reality) न not ज्ञायते is known तावत् so long जगत् world सत्यं भाति appears real यथा शुक्तिकारजतं as silver in mother of pearl.

7. As long as the all-supporting and non-dual Brahman is not known, so long the world appears real, even as silver appears real in mother of pearl (so long as the illusion lasts)

According to Vedânta, Brahman is the only existence and ultimate reality on which the world phenomenon is superimposed through ignorance. When Brahman is known the world vanishes, even as the snake vanishes when the rope is known or the silver when the mother of pearl is known. Vide *Vivekachudâmani*, verses 235—238.

उपादानेऽखिलाधारे जगन्ति परमेश्वरे ।

सर्गस्थितिलयान् यान्ति बुद्बुदानीव वारिणि ॥ ८ ॥

वारिणि बुद्बुदानीव As the bubbles (rise from, exist and dissolve) in water (तथा so) ँखिलाधारे in the support of all उपादाने in the material cause परमेश्वरे in the Supreme Being जगन्ति the worlds सर्गस्थितिलयान् यान्ति arise from, exist and dissolve in.



8. Even as the bubbles (rise out of, exist and get dissolved) in water, so the worlds originate from, exist and get dissolved in the Supreme Brahman, the support and the material cause of everything.

“That out of which all these creatures are born, being born by which they live and having departed into which they enter, seek to know That. That is Brahman” (Taitt. 3.1).

सच्चिदात्मन्यनुस्यूते नित्ये विष्णौ प्रकल्पिताः ।

व्यक्तयो विविधाः सर्वा हाटके कटकादिवत् ॥ ६ ॥

हाटके कटकादिवत् Even as bracelets etc. are imagined in the same gold सर्वाः all विविधाः various व्यक्तयः manifestations अनुस्यूते in the immanent सच्चिदात्मनि in the Atman which is existence and knowledge नित्ये eternal विष्णौ in the all-pervading प्रकल्पिताः imagined.

9. Even as bracelets etc are imagined in the same gold, similarly, all the different manifestations<sup>1</sup> (in this universe) are imagined in the all-pervading, eternal, and immanent Atman which is existence and knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> *All the different . . . manifestations etc.*—As manifested beings they are different but in their fundamental nature, as Brahman, they are identical. Brahman is the gold or substance out of which an infinite variety of ornaments are fashioned. As gold, they are all one, but form or manifestation differentiates them. So long as the form remains they are different, for form alone makes them what they are, a ring or a bracelet. “Just as, my dear, by a single clod of clay all that is made of clay becomes known,—all modification being only a name based upon words ; the truth being that all is *clay*” (Chh. 6.1.4).

यथाऽकाशो हृषीकेशो नानोपाधिगतो विभुः ।

तद्भेदाद्भिन्नवद्भाति तन्नाशे केवलो भवेत् ॥ १० ॥

यथा आकाशः Even as space नानोपाधिगतो subject to various limiting adjuncts विभुः all-pervading हृषीकेशः the lord of the senses (the Atman) तद्भेदात् भिन्नवत् भाति appears as divided owing to the limitations of the conditioning adjuncts तत् नाशे those (limiting adjuncts) being destroyed केवलः one without a second भवेत् becomes.

10. Like space, the all-pervading Lord of the senses being subject to various limiting adjuncts,<sup>1</sup> appears to be differentiated and when the adjuncts are destroyed, He shines as the one without a second.

<sup>1</sup> *Limiting adjuncts*—The limiting adjunct or Upâdhi is not an essential quality of any object. It means an apparent limitation of, or modification undergone by, an object which remains in reality unchanged, e.g., the redness of a colourless crystal due to the reflection of a red flower, or the limitation of space by a vessel. On removing the red flower the crystal remains colourless as before and on the destruction of the vessel, the space is found to be all-pervading as before. So Upâdhi is something extraneous and contrary to the nature of an object that is superimposed or imagined in the object. Due to the various limiting adjuncts which are the creations of Mâyâ or ignorance, the one indivisible Brahman appears to be many. But when ignorance is destroyed by knowledge and with it all these adjuncts, then the one Brahman alone, eternal and indivisible, is left.



## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### IN THIS NUMBER

The Message by the President of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission is by Swami Akhandananda, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna and the Head of the whole Organization. It was broadcasted all over the world by the Calcutta Broadcasting Station, on Monday the 24th of February, the birth centenary day of the Master on which day the centenary celebrations were inaugurated at Belur, the Headquarters of the Organization. . . . We have attempted to show how *Unity in Humanity* can be effected by promoting a better understanding among the different peoples of the world through cultural relations. . . . Prof. Akshaya Kumar Banerjee points out the essential elements in *The Hindu Ideal of Human Civilization*. . . . Swami Ghanananda is a member of the Ramakrishna Order. In his article he points out how the synthesis of thought has been achieved by India from age to age. . . . *Sri Ramakrishna Birth Centenary Celebrations* gives a detailed report of the inauguration of the centenary celebrations at Belur, the Headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission and the Calcutta Town Hall meeting held in this connection on Wednesday the 26th of February by the Calcutta public. The celebrations lasted for one week, from February 24 to March 1. . . . Prof. Horowitz in *Hail Harijans* drives home the idea that breaking of castes will unify than split up the Indian nation.

### “MANUFACTURING OF HARIJANS IN ASSAM”

The public are very grateful to Mr. A. V. Thakkar for his revealing note of the above caption in the November

21, 1935 issue of *The Servant of India*. Here he draws the attention of the Government and patriotic Indians to the none too realistic picture of the “Tea garden coolie castes” in the language of the last Census Superintendent of Assam, Mr. C. S. Mullan.

Their name is Legion. Some are castes recognized in their provinces of origin as definite Hindu castes; others would be considered Hindu castes merely by courtesy, while such others as the Mundas and Santhals cannot be said to be castes at all, but aboriginal tribal communities. Coolies in Assam form, however, a separate class of the population, no matter what castes or tribes they belong to. . . . It is because of this that in Assam a “coolie” is always a “coolie”, and whether he works on a garden, or whether he has left the garden and settled down as an ordinary agriculturist, his social position is nil. From the point of view of Assamese society, a person belonging to any coolie caste or tribe is a complete outsider, and is as “exterior” (or depressed) as any of the indigenous castes I have classed as exterior.

The same report informs us that “they are educationally terribly backward, they have no recognized leader or associations to press their claims or to work for their social advancement; they are foreigners to the country.”

Mr. Thakkar has not described how they live or rather are suffered to live, probably because it is too painful to do so. But the real question is: Who are responsible for this degradation of human beings? The writer of the note has likened them to “squeezed lemons”. Nothing can be a truer description than



this. Year in and year out, this has been going on, not in Africa or Fiji, but on the Indian soil and under the nose of the Indian Government. Who reap the benefit of this human degradation? It is the Tea Companies and the Assam Government, none of whom think it a part of their duty to do anything for them except dubbing them "exteriors" and allowing them to die in sin and squalor. These people, we are told, form "a little over 20 per cent." of the population of the Brahmaputra valley. These 14 lakhs of human beings are being dehumanized because their clever brothers took advantage of their poverty and simplicity to leave them hopelessly in a worst economic and moral condition.

Mr. Thakkar's suggestion of taxing the tea industry for creating a Special Welfare Department for the uplift of these people should attract serious attention of our M. L. C.'s and the Assam Government. This is the least part of their duty. Any outside interference even in the shape of mere help to these unfortunates will surely be resented by interested parties unless it has the backing of the Assam Government.

#### REABSORPTION OF CRIMINALS INTO SOCIETY

"I know that penal institutions can be run without great buildings, without guards and guns, without locks and bars, for I have several times visited such a prison in Australia, within fifty miles of Melbourne. . . . I know that 'incurables' can be so treated as to be brought back into society, to desire to stay, entirely without bars and guns, because I know of such a place in Russia, within fifty miles of Moscow." —says Mr. Sydney Strong in the October 21, 1935 issue of the *Unity*. He is dissatisfied with the best arrangements of the U. S. A. Government.

Perhaps Russia and Australia too are not satisfied with theirs. This is not so from an idealist's point of view but from a matter-of-fact realist's. This reabsorption of criminals into society is a problem that demands immediate solution but which refuses to be solved, Christ and Christians, Buddha and Buddhists notwithstanding.

Psychiatrists have revealed us the fact that some are born criminals, that they have an innate tendency for criminality which is very difficult to suppress. Opportunities and repeated acts take possession of their entire personality and do not leave a bit of will to resist. It is rather easy to suppress the tendency when found out in an early stage of development. This is the duty of all school authorities. A good number of psycho-analysts as teachers in every school is a necessity the importance of which cannot be overrated. But that is prevention and no cure. The real problem is with the confirmed criminals. They are almost "incurables". It requires the creation of highly exceptional circumstances to correct such "incurables". Ordinary society is afraid of their anti-social habits and is rather compelled to keep them under some sort of watch; this restraint again is resented by the criminals and goes to harden them still.

To save ordinary society from danger and to give the criminals the maximum of freedom for healthy growth, the only wise method is to create a separate colony for them with facilities for honest life and for moral and intellectual improvements. Here also the presence of a body of expert psycho-analysts is a necessity. Life must be made easy and attractive for them. Healthy recreations and amusements must be made free. Those of their relatives who want to live with them either temporarily or permanently should be



allowed to do so. They in conjunction with the psycho-analysts, should be allowed to police and administer themselves. All duties and responsibilities of improving their colony must be entrusted to them. This opportunity of commencing life anew is itself a great step towards self-improvement. The dignity and responsibilities of a new life adds a zeal and freshness to it and removes all morbidity.

But this cannot be achieved without a sufficient flow of money. Both government and philanthropists should vie with one another in spending money for the regeneration of lost human beings, for what can be a better utilization of money than this? But this is not a purely philanthropic work; it is paying too, though not immediately, for the country gets so many working, zealous hands in place of pests and blackmailers.

### INDIA AND PASSIVE RESISTANCE

We have a brilliant article from the pen of Sir Hari Singh Gour, "Passive Resistance—Old and New", in the last November issue of *The Calcutta Review*. It is a trenchant criticism of the entire Hindu culture. We understand from what depth of his heart and with what end in view he has written the article. We have all praise for the heart. But there is a chance of his being misunderstood by the ever alert enemies of Hinduism or rather the Indo-Aryan culture.

The writer compares the Indian and Hellenic cultures thus: "Life to him (the Indian) is an evil and it has no reason to be pampered with material well-being. Herein lay the vital contrast between the Eastern and the Hellenic ideals of life. . . . To the one life being an evil it was of no concern; its early dissolution was all to the good. To the Greek, life was a blessing and

meant to be enjoyed." Here both the premise and the implied conclusion are false. The so-called philosophy of enjoyment of the Greek did not save him from Roman thralldom and the subsequent degradation continuing even to this day, Nor is it a fact that the Hindu never enjoyed life and built flourishing empires. If we are to judge a nation by the amount of enjoyments, then, we are sorry to say, history is against Sir Hari Singh. Grecian history affords a very sad picture of enjoyment when compared to Indian history. Who of the Greeks built empires? Alexander was a solitary exception. When did the Greeks develop the idea of a nation? Are we to learn it from the City States?

Next he sings hallelujah to Islam. We have no objection to one's singing provided it is not to our cost. But it is so here. Says he, "We have on the one hand the whole of the Asiatic continent before the rise of Islam and its history under its sway. Islam is a religion which embodies the spirit of the Arab nomad. It is the militant aggressive force which made the Mongolian horsemen fierce warriors and implacable foes." Mongolian horsemen needed no Arab spirit to make them "fierce warriors and implacable foes" It was they, be it remembered, who drove the Turks to Europe from their native home in northern Asia and taught an unforgettable lesson to Mohammed, the Shah of Khawarism, the then most powerful Mohammedan King of Asia. And it was these Turks who formed the bulwark of Islam. The Arab nomad is still a nomad. With a meteoric existence the Arab glory passed away handing over the imperial and cultural bequest to non-Arabs. Central and North Asian tribes never show in borrowed feathers. This fire, original fire, the Indo-Aryans too had. But they were



then hibernating after millenniums of glorious history. Asia's conquest was the conquest by the Mongols, the Turks, the Persians, and the Pathans, i.e. by the Mongols and the Aryans; the Semites had very little hand in it. So the much vaunted spirit is not Arabic, whatever else it might be.

We know the futility of always advertng to past glories. We are advocates of future glory. But the past should not be unnecessarily attacked. There is no harm of getting inspiration from the past, if inspiration can be had therefrom. Sir Hari Singh is impatient because he has failed to take notice of the changes in religion, philosophy, and society that Hindu India has witnessed from age to age. We are not to forget the Rajputs, the Sikhs, the Marhattas. We are not to forget Sri Krishna, Guru Govind, Râmadas, Dayanand, and host of others with the self-same mission. India's spirit knows how and when to change.

Aggressive militant spirit is not the only criterion of the greatness of culture; though it must be admitted it is a very important criterion. That is the truly great culture which knows how to bend as well as to strike. Had India's culture been based on force alone she would have followed in the footsteps of all the ancient imperialist nations, of most of whom, but for the zeal of research scholars, we would have no informations. Every reader of Indian history, however, has this painful revelation that the country suffered grievously because of the annihilation of the Kshatriya power. But why has it been so? Because of the Kuru-kshetra war, of Buddhism, Jainism, and Vaishnavism, the three predominantly quietistic religions. Hinduism or rather the Sanâtana Dharma has always a glorious place for the Kshatrâ Sakti.

## CASTE AND UNTOUCHABILITY

Sir Govindrao addressed an open letter to M. Gandhi about caste and untouchability, to which the latter replied in the columns of *Harijan*. Mr. N. C. Kelkar, as he was one of those whom the writer of the letter appealed to for giving a lead, expressed his opinion on the matter very clearly on the November 24, 1935 issue of *The Mahratta*. Mr. Natarajan too has expressed his on the 23rd November issue of his paper.

There is not much of difference in the views expressed in these papers. Whatever little is, is only of degrees, Sri Govindrao standing, it might be said, for haste, to which Mr. Natarajan's remark, "More haste, less speed", is the fit answer. Sir G. D. Madgavkar has stressed interdiaing and intermarriage rather too much. Here again Natarajan's views seem to us to be most rational. Says he, "Dining among Indians is regarded as a private and personal necessity of no importance as a means of promoting social intercourse. . . . But we are not sure it will be any good making intermarriages a plank in the national platform. . . . To make out that a man or woman who marries out of the customary group, does more to advance the national interests than another who is content to choose a partner in his or her own class, is to look at the question from a wrong perspective. There is no demerit attaching to intermarriages, nor is there any special merit either." As regards intermarriage Mr. Kelkar seems to have begun it in his family from the right end by first of all doing away with the sub-castes.

Untouchability, as a permanent stigma on a section of humanity, has not the shadow of a sanction either of reason and heart or of scriptures. It had its origin in the unclean habits,



physical and moral, of the tribes. When they are removed by proper education, their effect will die out spontaneously. It is said that the moment these people turn Christians, they are recognized as touchables. But it is a superficial remark. Those who have noticed the change of living in these people will attribute the change of attitude of the caste people to it rather than to their change of faith. Those untouchables who turn Arya Samâjists develop clean habits, though not to the same degree as the Christian converts. Let the superficial critics help the depressed classes in developing good habits while remaining in the fold of their forbears, let them grow economically and educationally, and the problem will solve itself without any difficulty.

Why, again, drag so mercilessly the poor, halting caste system of the present Hindu society? It is slowly dying out wherever there is culture and education. It hides itself in remote villages where the people lack education and have no idea of their own scriptures as well as of how the world is going on. Bring in light here and the much abused caste system is gone. But what about the new castes that are being formed before our eyes—the “educated caste”, the “rich caste”? The rich and the educated are forming exclusive castes, they do not mix with the poor and the uneducated. Which one is better—the old or the new system?

The thing is, India will always have caste distinctions. Cultural similarity will break old distinctions no doubt. But then new ones will rise, unless we

deliberately suppress slow natural absorption and instal in its place revolution and fanaticism, and unless we prevent the rising of new religious sects or social groups, which in course of time form castes. Take for instance the European residents in India. They have their own society, they love their Christ as we our Krishna or Chaitanya, they do not intermarry or even inter-dine with the natives; but many of them, the more cultured of them, love Indian art, Vedânta, and many other things. And longer residence will deepen love, sympathy, and respect for the children of the soil and differences will vanish automatically. They will then form a caste as exclusive as any other of our times. With a further lapse of time this exclusiveness too will go and the absorption will be complete. This is what has happened with the Sakas and the Huns. In this process there is no hurry-scurry, no pang of separation from dear ones as in individual conversion or social compulsion. As regards the absorption of new social and religious groups, however protestant and abusive at the beginning, everyone who has eyes to see can see the process merrily going on in the present society. This is the true Indian process—there is no tyranny, nor even persuasion. India reveals herself and gives absolute freedom to all groups; and in so doing she absorbs all. But perhaps “absorb” is not the true word; she makes them all her own, she wins them by love. And this winning process is the true caste system, whose aberration is the existing one.



## REVIEWS AND NOTICES

**THE VEDANTA KESARI.** *Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Issue.* Edited by Swamis Amriteswarananda and Tapasyananda. Published by Swami Hrishikeshananda from Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. Price Re. 1.

This centenary issue brought out as an offering to the reading public on the memorable occasion of the birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa contains about 120 pages of thoughtful articles on Sri Ramakrishna and his message and mission written by eminent men of the East and the West. The issue begins with an English rendering of the invocation to Sri Ramakrishna by Girish Chandra Ghosh followed by an inspired writing of Swami Vivekananda on the glory of the spiritual realization of the Master. Among the writers there are: M. Romain Rolland, Sir P. S. Siwaswami Aiyer, Dr. Mahendranath Sircar, Prof. P. N. Srinivasachariar, K. S. Venkataramani, Prof. James B. Pratt, Sister Devamata, Prof. Ernest P. Horowitz, Mr. Hy. S. L. Polak, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi, Mr. Dhangopal Mukherjee and others. The issue can be conveniently divided into three distinct divisions, the first giving the life, message and the philosophy of Sri Ramakrishna, the second containing short life sketches of the disciples of the Saint, both Sannyâsins and householders. Mention can be made of Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi's pen sketch of the Holy Mother wherein she has given a somewhat detailed account of the life, personality and teachings of the Mother depicting her as an embodiment of the highest ideals of Indian womanhood. The third gives in detail the growth and expansion of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement at home and abroad.

The issue is well illustrated and the printing and get-up very good.

**LIFE BEYOND DEATH.** BY MRINAL KANTI GHOSH, *Published by S. K. Ghosh, 2 Ananda Chatterji Lane, Calcutta. Pp. 418. Price Inland Rs. 5, Foreign Sh. 10 nett.*

The Ghosh family of Amrita Bazar, Bengal, which is well known for its early services to the cause of independent journalism in India, has also been a pioneer in the introduction and cultivation of spiritualism in this country shortly after it had

been presented before the American public by the Fox sisters in 1864. The present book "has grown out of records of seances held in the Ghosh family circle and of other spiritual manifestations which occurred during a period of seventy years". It was first published in Bengali. The generous welcome which it received from the public encouraged the author to bring out a translation in English and another in Hindi with improvements.

In the first part of the book we have records of a large number of seances, spirit manifestations, clarivoyant visions of departed souls and talks with spirits, etc. which have been attested by a large number of witnesses, some among whom are very well-known figures in public. The second part treats of certain theories and facts in the light of spiritualism such as rebirth, causes of manifestations of evil spirits, treatment of obsession cases and the like. While we are not inclined to doubt the intrusions of the dwellers of the spirit world into this world of matter, we are afraid that the author has not made a wholly successful attempt in trying to prove that the popular idea about reincarnation is mistaken, that rebirth in the usually accepted sense is not contemplated in the Hindu scriptures, and that it was taken into Hinduism from Buddhistic sources. Such researches are best left to experts. The doctrine of transmigration is so clearly accepted in the pre-Buddhistic Vedic literature that to maintain a contrary doctrine is almost a hopeless task. Apart from this the book will enhance the cause of spiritualism.

**THE ESSENTIALS OF ADVAITISM.** By Prof. Ras-Vihari Das, M.A., Ph.D. *The Punjab Sanskrit Book Depot, Saidmitha, Lahore. Pp. 146.*

An attempt has been made in this book to provide students of philosophy with an account of Advaita Vedânta in English from an original source, viz. Snreswara's *Naishkarmya-Siddhi*. As an immediate disciple of Sankarâchârya, the reputation of Sureswara as an authority on Advaita philosophy as propounded by the Achârya, stands very high. The book under review is however neither a literal translation of the original Sanskrit work nor an independent version



of it. It is "a running account of the book, sometimes elaborating and sometimes abbreviating what is actually said in the text." It has however been claimed that the meaning of the author has been faithfully followed and only what would be necessary and sufficient too for students of philosophy to understand Sureswara's arguments has been considered.

In the first chapter the efficacy of religious actions has been discussed in detail. Unselfish and religious actions have been given this much credit that they purify the mind and thus produce a state favourable for the rise of knowledge. But by no action whether of mind, body or speech can a man attain *freedom from bondage* (Moksha) which can only be attained by the knowledge of the Self (Âtma-Jnâna). In the second chapter the nature of the Self has been discussed. In the third chapter the meaning of the Vedic declaration, "Thou art That" or "I am the Absolute" has been considered at great length. In the fourth and the concluding chapter, a summary of the teachings of the preceding three chapters has been given supporting the same by quotations of some passages of Sankarâchârya. At the end there is a discussion about the conduct of an enlightened person: "When knowledge cancels ignorance with all its effects there remains nothing else to be done." But it is not to be feared that the truly enlightened person becomes like a stock or stone or that he is likely to perform unrighteous actions. When a man takes fright on seeing (through mistake) a snake in the place of a rope, he continues to tremble even when his mistake is corrected. So also, a man who has obtained true knowledge will continue to perform certain righteous actions—not as a means to some end—but they will follow without effort from the nature of the sage.

The presentation is lucid and the attempt, praiseworthy.

**YOUNG INDIA, 1927-28.** By Mahatma Gandhi. S. Ganesan, Publisher, Triplicane, Madras, S. E. Pp. 1104. Price Rs. 4.

The publisher deserves our thanks for having brought out this beautiful Khaddar-bound volume containing Gandhiji's treatment of many and various problems, not only in the political, social, and economic affairs of the nation, but in the lives of individuals as well, in so far as they have been referred to him. It also preserves much contemporary history which, but for this publica-

tion would have lain buried in the volumes of a weekly periodical. The admirers of Gandhiji will find this a very valuable publication.

**CHRIST IN THE INDIAN CHURCH.** By A. J. Appasamy. *Christian Literature Society for India, Madras.* Pp. 172.

This book is intended to be a primer of Christian faith and practice. The author seems to have read the *Gîtâ*, and in Chapter III on "Jesus Christ, The need for an Incarnation" the Hindu doctrine of Avatâra has been discussed. But Jesus Christ is the *only* Avatâra (see Page 45). "In India the claim is frequently made that Jesus is only one among many Incarnations. The devout Christian is never able to understand this claim. To put Jesus on a level with Râma, Krishna or Buddha is impossible." But a devout follower of Râma or Krishna, though never swerving by a jot or tittle in his devotions towards his Ishta (Chosen Ideal) can accept Jesus Christ as an Incarnation of God. And that is the difference between a religion based on eternal principles and one based on a personality.

**THE QUESTION BOX.** By Rev. Bertrand L. Conway of the Paulist Fathers, New York. Indian Edition by Rev. Paul Dent of the Jesuit Fathers, Calcutta. *Macmillan & Co., Ltd., Calcutta.* Pp. 263. Price 12 annas.

It contains clever answers to many and various questions about the Catholic Church. It is interesting to find such sentiments in the book as following:—

"All men will be saved in all religions who sincerely endeavour to the best of their ability to (1) Know what God, the Maker and Master of man and the Loving Father requires of them and to (2) live up to the best knowledge they can acquire in the matter and to (3) repent of and forswear and forsake out of sincere sorrow *at least their more serious shortcomings* in numbers one and two above." [*Italics ours.*]

"(4) Those who fulfill these three conditions and are not Catholics will—*with difficulty*—be saved . . . etc." [*Italics ours.*]

We do not however appreciate the dabbings in the doctrines of Karma and Moksha which the author does not seem to have understood.

**PROPHET MUHAMMAD.** By Maulana Yakub Hasan. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Pp. 133. Price 12 annas.



A brief sketch of the life and teachings of the Prophet has been presented in a straightforward manner. "This is how an average intelligent Mussalman in touch with the main currents of modern human thought sees his Prophet and would wish others to see him." An honest endeavour.

**MOTHER INDIA.** By Anilbaran Roy. *Gita Prachara Karyalaya, 108/11, Manoharpukur Road, Kalighat, Calcutta. Pp. 48.*

The brochure contains two essays on (1) Mother India and (2) The Spiritual Heritage of India.

**RAMA NAMAM.** (A three-act playlet from the Great Hindu Epic "Râmâyana". By Mudda Viswanadham. *Vyasa Kuteeram, Melupaka, Yellamanchilli. Dt. Vizag: S. India. Pp. 15.*

It depicts the devotion of Hanumân to Râma and his name.

**THE NEW EVOLUTION.** By Narayana Kausika alias N. G. Venkata Narayana Ayer, B.A., L.T. *Pp. 171. Price Re. 1-8.*

The author says in a covering letter: "I have just printed this book with the sole idea, at present, of sending copies of it to some of the great people of the world, hoping that if they have as much faith in the Truth and in the Higher Life as I, a man in the street, profess in the pages of the book, they would unreservedly take up the cause . . . etc." The book is full of words of wisdom, words and nothing but words.

**ANCIENT VERSUS MODERN "SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM" OR THEOSOPHY AND CAPITALISM, FASCISM, COMMUNISM.** By Bhagavan Das, D. Litt. *Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras. Pp. 209. Price Re. 1-8.*

As its title indicates, this is an interesting study of Capitalism, Fascism, and Communism in the light of Theosophy. It is good that Manu Maharaj and other Indian sages and law-givers of old have been frequently referred to and copiously quoted. We agree with the author that he has ventured to make certain "suggestions, possibly foolish, possibly useful, certainly well-meant!"

#### SANSKRIT

**SÂNKHYAKÂRIKÂ OF I S V A R A KRISHNA.** Edited and translated by S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri. *University of Madras,*

*Madras. Pp. xxxviii + 132. Price Rs. 2 or 4s. only.*

The book gives the text in Devanâgri and Roman characters, its translation in English and fairly exhaustive notes, both critical and illuminating. The Introduction, without pretending to be scholarly is informative and explicative. The editor's view, that the Sânkhya is an intellectual quest for the Vedic intuitive vision rather than a reaction against it, has our best support, and we are sorry to note that the point has not been pressed further. But perhaps the last word on this topic could not be said unless the Shashti-tantra was discovered. Still all the Paurânic references to the Sânkhya give their weight to the Editor's hypothesis, and the *Kârikâ* itself does not go against it. The discussion on the priority of the Mâthara Vritti to the commentary of Gaudapâda, however, cannot be said to have been closed. The editor would have done well to show more cogent reasons for his doubt regarding the identity of the two (?) Gaudapâdas of Sânkhyakârikâ Bhâshya and Mândukya-Kârikâ. It is due to these reasons that Mr. Sastri has paid rather scant attention to this Bhâshya, otherwise he would have got another supporter to his hypothesis.

The editor has followed the authors of Sânkhya-taru-vasantah and Sânkhya-tattva-kaumudi in his interpretation and translation of the *Kârikâ*; and from this point of view his labour has been eminently successful. The translation is good; and the notes have made many, almost all, intricate points abundantly clear. The footnotes, besides showing the scholarship of the editor, will prove a great help to the readers in getting some very valuable informations about the Sânkhya philosophy. The book will, no doubt, be hailed by scholars as well as by laymen interested in Indian philosophy. The University is to be congratulated on the publication.

**VEDÂNTA-DINDIMAH.** By Sri Nrisimha Sarasvati. Edited with a Sanskrit commentary by Y. Subrahmanya Sarma. *The Adhyatma Prakasha Office, 65, Second Road, Chamarajapet, Bangalore City. Pp. 80. Price 8 annas, Foreign 1s. Postage Extra.*

The book is a good primer of the Vedânta philosophy, in some respects it is better than the Vedânta-sara. The editor's commentary, brief though it is, is very helpful in understanding the author's laconic verses.



**THE MAHÂBHÂRATA** (Southern Recension). Vol xi and xii. Edited by P. P. S. Sastri, B.A. (Oxon.), M.A. V. Ramaswamy Sastrulu & Sons, 292, Esplanade, Madras. Pp. 749 and 466+110+129 respectively.

These two nicely printed and finely got up volumes of the Mahâbhârata have fully kept up the high standard of the editorial efficiency of the preceding volumes which have been reviewed in the pages of this magazine. The "Scheme of Adhyâyas" given in the Introduction to Vol. XI is an interesting addition which will be appreciated by the readers.

**PRAPANCHA-SÂRA-TANTRAM.** Pts. I & II. Edited by Arthur Avalon, Sanskrit Press Depository, 27/1, Cornwallis Street, Calcutta. Pp. 73+16+596+24.

Arthur Avalon has done an inestimable service to the right understanding and propagation of the Tantra literature, so much so that no English-reading scholar or Sâdhaka can possibly do without consulting his opinion. Tradition ascribes the authorship of the present book to Sankarâchârya and its Tikâ to the great philosopher's dear disciple Padmapâdâchârya; and the learned editor has not found any cause to differ from the tradition. Over and above Mr. Avalon's careful editing, the present volumes have also passed through the hands of the veteran Tântic scholar and Sâdhaka, Achalânanda Sarasvati. The correctness of the text is almost assured. But the most interesting portions of the book are the illuminating notes and digressions of the writer of the English introduction, which, besides many other things, gives a good summary of the whole book. The whole Tântic world has sustained an irreparable loss at the death of such a learned editor. The two volumes will, no doubt, be hailed by all interested in the Tantra literature.

**THE BHAGAVAD-GITA WITH THE TEXT IN DEVANAGRI AND AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION.** By Annie Besant. Messrs. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras. Price ¼ annas only.

The tenth edition of the book speaks of its worth.

**FROM YERVADA MANDIR.** By M. K. Gandhi. Translated from original Gujarati

into English by Sr. Valji Desai. Jivanji D. Desai, Navajivan Karyalaya, 1759, Gandhi Road, Ahmedabad. Pp. 96. Price 2 annas only.

We are glad to see the second edition of the book so soon. It is good that India and the world are earnestly hearing the true living representative of ancient Indian culture. We had occasion to review in the pages of this magazine its first edition. Nothing has been added or subtracted from it in this edition.

### BENGALI

**UDBODHAN:** *Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Number.* Edited by Swamis Suddhananda and Sundarananda, Published by Swami Atmabodhananda from 1, Mukherjee Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta. Price Re. 1.

This special number of the journal contains about 300 pages of reading matter. It is brought out in commemoration of the birth centenary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa which came off on the 24th of February last. The issue contains an appreciation of Sri Ramakrishna's life by his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda. There are several articles of great interest from the pen of notable writers of Bengal interpreting the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna from different standpoints. Some of the writers are: Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Suddhananda, Sj. Jaladhar Sen, Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, M.M. Pandit Pramathanath Tarkabhushan, Sj. Motilal Roy, Sj. Ramananda Chatterjee, Prof. Ramesh Chandra Majumdar and Dr. Kalidas Nag. There are also articles of cultural interest by Sj. Asit Kumar Haldar, Sj. Beni Madhav Barua, Sj. Kshitimohan Sen Sastri, Prof. Dhurjati Prasad Mukherjee, Prof. Amulya Charan Vidyabhushan, Prof. Priyaranjan Sen, M.M. Vidhusekhar Sastri and others. The issue contains also an article on the Disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, which gives short accounts of the lives of the important Sannyâsin, householder and lady disciples and devotees of the Master. The issue is profusely illustrated and exquisitely printed and in every way suited to the occasion. Compared with the matter and get-up of the issue, the price is very moderate.



## NEWS AND REPORTS

### SRIMATHI KAMALA NEHRU

The passing away of Srimathi Kamala Nehru has come like a shock to the country. Though she was ailing for a long time, yet it was not expected that the end would come so suddenly. Born in a rich family and bred up in comfort and luxury she did not hesitate to renounce all and stand by her husband in his fight for freedom as a true comrade. How great her love for India was could be imagined from her entreaties to her husband even when she was on her death-bed requesting him to return to India as the motherland needed his services more than she. May her soul rest in peace.

To Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru and the Nehru family we convey our heartfelt condolences in this great affliction that has befallen them. May the Lord grant them strength to bear it.

### SIR JOHN WOODROFFE

We deeply mourn the loss of Sir John Woodroffe who passed away in January last. He will ever occupy a most prominent place among the few foreigners who have felt the throb of the real Indian culture and who have by their life-long labours forced the minds of both the East and the West to the recognition and appreciation of the Indian wisdom. In expounding the great Tantrik literature he joined to the keen acumen of a lawyer and the critical impartiality of a judge a deep sympathy which opens the gate to understanding. His unremitting labours spread over more than a quarter of a century have made him the greatest authority on the subject in the West. They have made the literature of the Tantra popular and have removed the general misconceptions about it. He was more than a lover of the Tantra. His appreciation extended also to other aspects of the richly varied Indian culture. No foreigner, or for that matter no Indian after Vivekananda, has drawn more pointed attention of the Indian *mānasaputrās* of the West to the necessity of abiding by the precious heritage of India before she can cast off her inertia and rise in all her glory. He has left India under a debt which she can hardly repay.

### THE RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA ASHRAMA AND THE VIVEKANANDA INSTITUTION, HOWRAH, BENGAL

Though not directly affiliated to the Ramakrishna Mission, these twin institutions were born under the inspiration of the two saints whose names they bear, and are run by men whose connection with the Mission is very intimate. They are model institutions, each of its own type, which are sure to convince every visitor of their unique worth and efficiency. They show what a little band of self-sacrificing youths can do for the country, if only they are rooted to religion and morality.

The latter institution is an off-shoot of the former and forms, quite fittingly, one of its chief activities, if not the main. It is an H. E. School with a splendid numerical strength of 680 students and an efficient staff of 23 teachers; and its University Examination results are quite commensurate with the love and labour bestowed by its teaching staff. Its physical culture activities, Saturday literary classes, Recitation of hymns from the Vedas and the Upanishads, the friendly relation between the teachers and the taught, and a suffusing spiritual atmosphere are worth noticing. The institution has added health and buoyancy of spirit to most of its students.

The Ashrama is the centre of inspiration of the above activities as well as of many others. Here the true workers live a life of silent devotion and service, and imbibe the culture of the land, which is diffused in the neighbourhood through their activities. Some of its activities are: the daily worship of Sri Ramakrishna, the more important Hindu Pujās, celebrations of birthdays of saints and prophets of the world, holding of scriptural classes, running of a Library and Reading Room, a free Night School (very efficiently managed), a Homœopathic Charitable Dispensary, a Bhândâr for helping "the helpless and deserving people with rice, clothes, blankets, and money", and the above mentioned Vivekananda Institution with its grand arrangements for physical culture including scouting. The authorities are thinking of opening a vocational department, if necessary funds are forthcoming.



We wish every national worker should visit the institutions with open eyes.

### VEDANTA SOCIETY, PROVIDENCE

#### RHODE ISLAND

#### REPORT FOR 1934-35

Swami Akhilananda with his friends, Annapurna, Bhakti, and Frances, returned from India on December 23, 1934 landing in New York. Swami Bodhananda of New York, Swami Vividishananda of Washington and a few friends met the party at the pier. Swami was very happy to have received messages of welcome already in Cherbourg and on the boat. Many friends received the party at the Providence railroad station and gave them light refreshments when they arrived at the home of the Vedanta Society where a Christmas tree had been decorated to welcome them. The following day Swami conducted the Christmas Eve service speaking on the Incarnation of Christ. Swami Vividishananda spoke on the Significance of Christmas. The next Sunday Swami spoke on the Message of Christ, and thereafter resumed the regular activities of the season.

Services were conducted every Sunday, and classes on Tuesdays and Fridays. Tuesday classes are devoted to scriptural studies and often to series of lectures on different phases of Practical Psychology. These last are found very constructive and helpful as many pseudo-psychologists have created much confusion in American minds. Friday classes are devoted to the practice of meditation followed by study of the scriptures.

This year Swami was invited by many prominent clubs and churches in the city and in the state to speak on India as well as on different phases of Hinduism. He attended regularly once a month the meetings of the Universal Club of Brown University, an association of ministers of Rhode Island, where he lectured and joined in discussions. He was also asked this year to join the discussions of the Union Ministers meeting.

In August 1935 the Swami was invited by the Williamstown Institute of Human

Relations, which is to establish better understanding amongst the Jews, Catholics, and Protestants. Many priests, ministers, rabbis, and distinguished professors from all over the United States attended. The Swami was invited to speak once and joined in the discussions many times. He gave as the basis of better understanding the Vedantic doctrine of the oneness of life; and showed that the dynamic power of love based on the recognition and acceptance of different religious approaches would be the real cementing element.

Swami's lectures over the radio, WPRO, were so much appreciated that he is still asked to continue them every week which he has been doing through this year. At intervals of one and a half to two months he also conducts the morning service over station WJAR, where he alternates with ministers.

While Swami was absent in India, friends carried on the work here by reading on the usual lecture evenings. After Swami's return and the Christmas festivities, the birthdays of Holy Mother and of Swami Brahmanandaji were celebrated with worship and dinners. A new thing was done on Swami Vivekananda's birthday. After the dinner following the worship, the students were asked to say a few words from their impressions of Swami Vivekananda. Sri Ramakrishna's birthday was a big celebration. Swami Akhilananda spoke after the dinner, as also Reverend Wilmot, Dr. Claxton, and others. Good Friday was marked by the usual three-hour service around mid-day which people like very much. At Easter the Chapel was bright with flowers given by many friends. The season closed with a week of festivities on the arrival of Swami Ganeswarananda of Chicago and of Swami Vividishananda. There was a big dinner with Swami Paramananda and his friends from Boston also present. On successive nights the Swamis lectured, and Swami Ganeswarananda showed his moving pictures of India which were much appreciated.