

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

Arise! Awake! and stop not till the goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS.

HOW TO RESIST EVIL.

A PERSON living in society specially as a householder, should *make a show* of the spirit of resisting evil for purposes of self-defence, but at the same time taking care to avoid paying back evil for evil.

In a field where cow-boys kept watch over their cattle, there was a terrible venomous serpent. A holy man was coming that way one day, and the cow-boys warned him of the serpent. "My children," said the holy man, "I am not afraid. I know Mantras to protect me from harm of all kinds." And he continued his way and the snake attacked him with upraised hood. By the incantation of some charm from him, the snake fell helpless at his feet. "Why dost thou," said the holy man, "go about doing evil to others. Let me give thee a holy name (of God) to repeat always, and thou shalt learn to love God, and thy desire to do evil to others will leave thee." So saying, he

gave him the holy name and went away promising to see him later.

After this, the cow-boys noticed that the snake would not bite. They pelted him with stones, but he looked meek and inoffensive. One day the boys held him by the tail, and whirling him round and round, dashed him several times against the ground. The snake vomited blood and was stunned. The boys thinking he was dead, left the place. At night the snake revived; and with much difficulty dragged himself into his hole. His body was broken, and he was reduced to a skeleton, as it was many days before he could come out for food, and that only by night, for fear of further injury. Since he had ceased now to do harm to any of God's creatures, he tried to live as well as he could upon leaves and things of that kind.

The holy man came back and looked about, seeking for the snake, but in vain. At last the boys said that he had died long ago. The holy man knew that his Mantram possessed such spiritual power, that death

was out of the question before the problem of life had been solved. At his repeated call, the snake came out and bowed before his Guru. Then the following conversation followed :—

Holy man : How art thou?—

Snake : Master, I am quite well and happy, God willing.

Holy man : How is it that thou art brought down to a mere skeleton?

Snake : Lord, by thy bidding I have given up doing harm to any living creature. It is just possible that living upon leaves and such things I have got thinner.

Holy man : Well, food alone could not have brought thee to such a pass. Something else must have had to do with it. Just think it over a little.

Snake : Ah, now I see it all. The boys detecting the change that had come over me, dealt with me one day rather severely and left me all but dead.

Holy man : What a pity, my dear, that thou shouldst not know how to save thyself from being thus handled by thine enemies! I forbade thee only to bite any creature of God. Why didst thou not hiss and raise thy hood at those who wanted to kill thee, so as to keep them at arm's length?

So raise the hood and hiss at evil-doers but bite them not. Keep them off by showing that thou canst deal an effective blow, if necessary,—that thou hast the *power* of resisting evil. Only one must take care not to pour out one's venom into the blood of one's enemy. Resist not evil by doing evil in return, but make a show of resistance with a view to self-defence. That is one of the *Dharmas* of the householder.

DOST thou know how peasants buy their bullocks for the plough? Oh, they are very expert in these matters, and know very well how to choose the good bullocks from the bad. They know whether the beasts have got any mettle or not. They touch the tail and the effect is miraculous : those that have no mettle in them will offer no resistance, but lie down on the ground, as if they were going to sleep. Those that have mettle, on the other hand, will jump about as if protesting against the liberty taken with them. The peasants will choose the latter.

One must have the true mettle of a man within, if one wishes to be successful in life. But there are many who have no grit in them—who are like popped rice put in milk,—soft and cringing! no strength within! no capacity for sustained effort! no power of will! They are the failures in life.

OCCASIONAL NOTES

RO religion that the world has ever seen, has made so much as Hinduism of discrimination. Even love, without discrimination (*Viveka*) is only *tâmasic*. Even charity, bestowed erroneously, is imperfect.

Says the Gita :—

अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतं च यत् ।

असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्प्रेत्य नो इह ॥

“Whatever is sacrificed, given or performed and whatever austerity is practised without *Shraddhâ*, it is called *Asat*, O Pârtha; it is naught here or hereafter.” Again :

अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते ।

असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥

“The gift that is given at the wrong place or time to unworthy persons, without regard, or with disdain, is declared to be *Tâmasic*.”

Not only the good impulse, but also the fruit of a long habit of thought and effort, is necessary. In every deed, discrimination is the fore glow of spirituality. We should have little admiration for the architect who built a great house, on ground that was sure to sink. And similarly, the Eternal Faith holds up as the Ideal, that there shall be *fitness* in every thought and action, over and above the *goodness* that it expresses.

In this way, amongst others, the Mother Church labours to impress upon us the necessity of thought, of knowledge, of intellectual maturity. Learning is as necessary to the Hindu faith as prayer. The only religious doctrine in the world that has no quarrel with truth, wherever it may be found, or whatever it may be. Think of it! Other religions may *tolerate* science, or persons within their fold may see that they owe a duty to themselves or to knowledge; but Hinduism *requires* it. Like the clear welling-forth of water from a deep spring, should be the thought of Great Hindu thinkers.

Alas, the very absence of resistance is apt to take away the force of activity! Europe is full of great scholars. How many have we? Yet look at the difference! In Europe the whole world, and especially the priesthood, barked and yelped at the heels of Charles Darwin for twenty years: Even to-day, one will hear a sneer from the pulpit, levelled against Buckle or Lecky: Every priest feels secretly that there is an antagonism between his cause and that of the unfettered historian or critic: in India, such fears are referred to as 'Sectarianism', and a great historian or man of science—a Rajendra Lala Mitter or a J. C. Bose—is taken without further ado as a prophet and seer.

But the very attack on truth is a war-cry calling the young to rally to its defence. We all know the story of the captain sent with his thirty-three men, to deliver terms of surrender to Hasan and Hussain, who, his message done, ranged himself and his followers under their banner, though for them the result could be nothing but death. In all ages, it is the same. Truth is its own propaganda. Humanity is ever accessible to the Absolute. The thing which we conceive to be true, we cannot but embrace, though disaster, suffering and death be our portion with it. Therefore attack is better than

forgetfulness; contumely is better than silence; persecution is better than worship; if only with all these, the idea be kept constantly before the mind.

“When our country is unfortunate,” said a European the other day “the duty of the individual is to renounce his own career, and work for her only.” What the speaker meant, was the *personal* career, the work that brings happiness, wealth, and position. Devotion to the impersonal idea often creates a career, but it is one for which we pay heavily in poverty, hard work, and sometimes final catastrophe and failure. Only the apprehension of some infinite good to be attained by this, for ourselves or for others, could nerve us to such a choice. For this, we have to wake in ourselves the great appetites. The *Sannyasin* thirsts for renunciation. Let us so thirst for knowledge, for truth, for justice or for strength. Let us long to help and to save, even as children in the dark cry out for help. Realising that only by the laborious climb towards the highest we perceive, can we be wholly helpful, let us work, work, work, to reach the Absolute Good in whatever path we seek to make our own.

And above all, let us pray ever the ancient prayer of the Hebrew Scriptures—

“Show Thy servants Thy work,” O Lord, and their children Thy glory!”

But while the appetite grows strong in us, let us not be content with the first satisfaction that comes to our hand. Headstrong activity makes bitterness of failure. How often do we meet the man who wails and wrings his hands, because his efforts for the good of the world are not immediately rewarded! This is not true charity. This is but impulse, full of *tamas*. Long work, long thought, long growth of wisdom, are necessary, ere that man can strike the blows that count. And for such wisdom, we must have experience, and for such experience, again,—work.

“Sharp as the blade of a razor, long and distant,

And the way so hard to find!

Such the sages have declared it.

Yet do not despair! Awake! Arise!

Struggle on! and stop not, till the goal is reached!”

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THE MASTER AS I SAW HIM

BEING PAGES FROM THE LIFE OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BY HIS DISCIPLE, NIVEDITA.

XXVII.

WOMAN AND THE PEOPLE

(Continued from page 5)

A LIKE intensity of chivalry spoke, in his attitude towards those whom he called "the People." Education and knowledge were the right of these, as much as of their brothers, higher in the social scale. Having this, they would work out their own destiny, freely, from within. In this view of the task before him, the Swami was only continuing the tradition of all the great Indian teachers, from Buddha downwards. In the age when the philosophy of the Upanishads had been the exclusive privilege of the Aryans, the Tathagatha arose, and taught to all alike the Perfect Way, of Nirvana by Renunciation. In a place and a period where the initiation of the great Masters was the cherished culture of the few, Ramanuja, from the tower of Conjeeveram, proclaimed the mystic text to all the pariahs. It is now the dawn of the Modern Age,—with its realisation of manhood by secular knowledge,—in India. Naturally then, to Vivekananda the absorbing question was, how to give secular knowledge to the People.

He saw, of course, that the energy and co-operation of the whole nation was necessary, if material prosperity was ever to be brought back to India. And he knew well enough that the restoration of material prosperity was an imperative need. A God, he said, with his accustomed vigour, who could not in this life give a crust of bread, was not to be trusted in the next for the kingdom of Heaven! He also felt, probably, that only

by the spread of knowledge could the country as a whole be kept steadfast in its reverence for the greatness of its own inherited culture, intellectual and religious. In any case, new life could only be poured into the veins of the higher classes, by a great movement of forth-reaching to the democracy. He believed that the one thing to be renounced was any idea of birth as the charter of leadership. The sublimated common-sense that men call genius, was to the full or likely to occur in the small shopkeeper, or in the peasant taken from the plough, as in the Brahmin or the Kayasth. If the Kshatriya had had any monopoly of courage, where would Tania Bhil have been? He believed that the whole of India was about to be thrown into the melting-pot, and that no man could say what new forms of power and greatness would be the result.

He saw plainly that the education of the Indian working-folk was properly the task of the Indian lettered classes, and of no others. The infinite danger that attended the introduction of knowledge by foreign minds from foreign sources, was never for one moment hidden from him. This is the meaning of his constant plea, in his published correspondence, for the teaching of the villages, by wandering students, who would carry the magic lantern, the camera, and some means for simple chemical experiments. Again he begs for the inclusion of some secular instruction in the intercourse of the begging friars, with the humbler classes. All this, of course, would be little more than a support and attractive invitation, to the New Learning. For that learning itself, every man

would have to struggle, alone or in combination. But there can be no doubt that to bring home to a large population the idea that there *is* a world of thought and knowledge unattained by them, is the first step in the popularising of new culture. In such schemes, therefore, the Swami was emphatically right.

As befitted a religious teacher, however, the work that he himself initiated and consecrated was almost always some special service of the hungry or the sick. It was he who found the money that started the special sanitation missions, first undertaken by the Order, as a measure for plague-prevention, in 1899, and never since abandoned. Throughout his years in the West, he was seeking for workers "to devote themselves to the Indian pariahs," and nothing caused him such exultation in 1897 as to see his Brahmin disciples nursing low-caste patients through cholera. "We see again," he said, referring to this, "what happened before, in the days of Buddha." And those who knew him best, feel a peculiar reverence and affection for the little hospital in Benares, that was the last-born child of his love and pity.

But his heart was not less bound up in other undertakings, which, though less directly his, were more purely educational. The well-being of the various magazines in which the Order was interested, and the industrial education carried on by the Orphanage at Murshidabad, were matters of the deepest import in his eyes. Under present circumstances in India, the magazine is often a kind of peripatetic school, college, and university, all in one. It has a marvellous degree of influence. It carries ideas on the one hand, and offers a means of self-expression on the other, and it was an instinctive perception of this educational value that made the Swami so eager about the fate of various papers conducted by his brethren and disciples. The same number of a periodical will sometimes

combine the loftiest transcendental abstractions on one page with comparatively faltering secular speculations on the next, and in this affords an exact index to the popular mind of the Transition. The Swami himself said, referring to this paradox, "The Hindu's idea of the means of knowledge is meditation, and this serves him well, when the subject is mathematics. Unfortunately, however, his instinct would lead him to the same method in the case of geography, and not much geography comes that way!"

Vivekananda's passion of pity, however, did not concern itself with the Indian people only. True to his Oriental birth, he would always defend the *small* farmer or the *small* distributor against those theorists who seem to consider that aggregations of business are justified in proportion to their size. He held that the age of humanity now dawning would occupy itself mainly with the problems of the working-folk, or, as he expressed it, the problems of the *Sudra*. When he first landed in the West, he was greatly attracted, as his Letters show, by the apparent democracy of conditions there. Later, in 1900, he had a clearer view of the underlying selfishness of capital and the struggle for privilege, and confided to someone that Western life now looked to him "like hell." At this riper stage of experience, he was inclined to believe that China had gone nearer to the ideal conception of human ethics than newer countries had ever done, or could do. Yet he never doubted that for man, the world over, the coming age would be "for the People." "We are to solve the problems of the *Sudra*," he said, one day, "but oh, through what tumults! through what tumults!" He spoke like one gazing direct into the future, and his voice had the ring of prophecy; but, though the listener waited, hoping eagerly for more, he only became silent, lapsing into deeper thought.

I have always believed that it was for the guiding and steadying of men through some

such age of confusion and terror that in our Master's life and that of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the worship of the Mother has sounded such a mighty *Udbodhan*. She it is who unites in Herself the extremes of experience. She shines through evil as through good. She alone is the Goal, whatever be the road. Whenever the Swami would chant Her salutation, one would hear like the subdued music of some Orchestra behind a single melody, this great chorus of the historic drama. "Thou art the welfare and happiness in the homes of the virtuous," he would recite, "And Thou art the misery and wretchedness, in those of the quarrelsome and wicked!" And then, as the mingling of oppressor and oppressed in a common hope

and terror, as the trampling of nations, and the turmoil of armies, grew louder and clearer to the mental ear, one would hear the thunder of the great ascription rise above it all.

"Thou Mother of blessings,
Thou the Giver of desires,
Thou the Doer of all good,
To Thee our salutation.

Thee we salute, Thee we salute, Thee we salute.

Thou terrible dark Night!
Thou the Night of Delusion!
Thou the Night of DEATH—
To THEE our salutation.

Thee we salute. Thee we salute. Thee we salute."

THE ECLIPSE OF FAITH

IN this world human nature presents a two-fold aspect of life. In the natural variety of men, life manifests two distinct elements always fighting with each other in the field of action, the 'Karma Kshetra.' These two types of human nature like two conflicting forces are always at loggerheads. According to the dictum of the Hindu Shastras one type is called 'Sur,' the spiritual or divine, and the other type 'Asur,' the sensual or animal. They seem to be the cause of the various divisions in the form of caste, sect and creed. To make these two conflicting forces of human nature work harmoniously, to make heaven of earth, prophets worked and pointed out to erring humanity the laws of God, and have left behind them their commandments and teachings. But still the earth has not become heaven and men have not become angels. Lord Buddha preached a Goal of Equality and Freedom, and Christ a God of Love to make heaven of hell; but still the two types of men are there all the same, and the earth is not heaven.

Similarly in Judaism and in Mahomedanism mankind has been divided into the faithful and the unfaithful. The unfaithful do not agree and cannot live peacefully with the faithful. When the unfaithful are in power, they not only dogmatically differ in opinion and action from the faithful in matters political, ethical and religious, but are pleased to persecute the faithful by perverting the laws of God and the teachings of Prophets. Under the intoxication of wealth and power the sensual are apt to be slaves of the brute force and in friction with the spiritual. Thus there arises in the world the various forms of murders, executions, wars and duels.

Again, in Christianity also the same two disagreeing elements are found to have caused division. The Christian nations have, therefore, been divided into Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, or Protestant. The unfaithful classes of Europe have perverted the basic laws of the teachings of Christ to suit their own advantage. To them, it is noticeable,

are due the various discrepancies of the obscure and hypocritical church-teachings. They have forbidden an independent study of the Gospels, and teach salvation through the observance of the Sacraments, instead of through deeds of love, self-sacrifice and self-denial. Also in the place of the evangelical renunciation of earthly blessings, in the place of the evangelical submission to the rule of God alone, the submission to temporal authority has been put in the forefront.

For instance, it is nineteen hundred and nine years since the Man on the Cross, having realised the cause of human sufferings, placed as the basic laws of his teachings, the Commandments that every man should avoid all that might lead to murder, should not injure his neighbours, should forgive everything, should be reconciled to all men, and should have no enemies (Math v, 21-26). These Commandments, we find, are a mere repetition of Lord Buddha's Commands, such as '*Ahimsâparamo Dharmah*,' that is, non-resistance or non-injury is supreme virtue, the highest principle ruling man's life.

Now what do we find in India? We find that not only have the above Commandments of Christ, been disregarded by Christians, but it is said, that Indian famines and the plague are visitations of God. To learn the cause of the tragedy of Indian famines, a student of history cannot but succeed to trace it to other sources.

Fortunately in India, the Laws of Preservation have caused a wide-spread animation and an intense love for the motherland and the nation. Again, as soon as the Indians are determined to protect their own industries and products, new barriers are put to choke this instinct of self-preservation in them.

The condition of Indian people is, no doubt, terrible. But what is most terrible is not the material condition, the impoverishment of Indian peoples, and the industrial distress,—what is saddest of all and the root

of these ills, is the spiritual and mental disorder or degradation. The majority of the Indian peoples, educated and uneducated, now lives without faith. The land of the faithful has been converted into a land of the unfaithful. Under the present training, Indian peoples have ceased to be spiritual. They are becoming more and more political. But as the Christian Prophet of Russia, Count Tolstoy, says, "People can no way live a harmonious human life by merely sharing certain political opinions, but only by union in one and the same comprehension of the fundamental meaning of life. Political opinions cannot unite peoples, for there may be innumerable political opinions; some people believe in this, others in that kind of Parliamentarism, Socialism, or Anarchism. But at a given political period and for certain people, there can be but one highest attainable understanding of Life's meaning. So it has always been. So united by one and the same highest law of life, lived the Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and Indians, so lived and live the Chinese, so lived the European so-called Christian nations as long as they really believed the faith adopted by St. Paul to pagan morals and called Christian religion."

All over India a perverted outlook on life, both among the educated and the uneducated people, is sapping the root of the Indian national life. It is creating havoc in the domain of national faith, and mutual co-operation among Indians has died out. People have ceased to have faith in their national ideals, in their religious institutions, in their social and moral constitutions, in their pre-historic civilisation and in their divine Scriptures. The spiritual constitutions like the four '*Ashramas*' of life, and the social constitutions like the four castes have ceased to rule the Hindu life and Hindu society. Among Indians there is now scarcely any faith between a '*Guru*' and his disciple,

between master and servant, between parent and son, between landlord and tenant, between brothers and co-religionists. The identity of faith which had once united them, is broken. Now to revive the national life, to unite the Indians as a nation, the restoration of the old faith is imperative.

An Eclipse of Faith all over India has set in, the unfaithful predominating over the faithful, thus disintegrating and denationalising them. Now to regain the old national life and vigour, young India should follow the methods of 'Brahmacharya' and Guru-Bhakti or the habit of reverence to the Superiors. In December before last the Vice-Chancellor of the Punjab University, in his sermon to the graduates and undergraduates of that University, very truly impresses "the habit of reverence, the reverence for all that is good and great, reverence for the best and for your elders and superiors" and says: "For the proper training of your mind this is an essential condition. You must always be actuated by the spirit of obedience. For obedience is the foundation of civil society and of the State. There can be no discipline unless there is obedience, no progress in education unless the pupil follows the directions of his master, no success in any undertaking for which all organised effort is required." This Guru Bhakti, this hero-worship should be re-introduced in national education. Mere secular education which tends to politics has no place in India. To develop the patriotic feeling, an intense love for the motherland,—let there be introduced in India celebration of 'Saint's day.' Let young India learn to honour and love patriot-saints—like Shivaji, Guru Govind Singh, Swami Vivekananda. In honouring them they will be in touch with the spiritual force of Ram Das that stands as the back-bone of Shivaji, of Guru Nanak as the back-bone of Guru Govind Singh and of Ramakrishna Deva as the back-bone of Swami Vivekananda.

The 'New Spirit' which is at the present moment fertilising and animating all India, may be directed into its proper channels and use. The representatives of the various religious communities, such as Hindu, Parsee, Buddhist, Moslem, and Christian should require their respective community members to invoke with sanctity the sacred fire of that true patriotism, which has spirituality as its fountainhead, and keep it up the spirit for life. Let the Indians ponder over why there should be a succession of famines in a country which was ever famous for its wealth and natural products. Let them know that the last ten famines are due to their intoxication of foreign civilisation. Above all teach the Indians what the spirit of reliance and the faith in one's own self can accomplish.

Let there be a Religious Congress convened annually like the Indian National Congress. The religious communities in India, namely, Hindu, Parsee, Buddhist, Moslem and Christian, must be the composite elements or factors of its body. This congress should control these elements and direct them to work harmoniously, by its annual convention; for the development of Indian national consciousness that can alone recover for the motherland its rightful place among the nations of the world. The Hindu community should not seek to superimpose its ideals and methods upon the Moslem community, nor should the Mahomedan, the Buddhist, or the Christian attempt to obliterate the essential elements of the Hindu culture and Hindu notion by enforcing their spiritual ideas on them. Every community must in this way learn to work for the regeneration of the motherland with the least friction. Thus all the Indian religious communities will be trained into mutual faith and co-operation and stand in relation to each other as limbs to the body. The common tie binding them together will be intense love for the motherland. So there will exist a feeling of love and harmony between Hindu and Moslem,

between Hindu and Christian, between Hindu and Buddhist and between Hindu and Parsee. Such a fellow-feeling will produce true brotherhood, true and perfect unity. Such a Congress of Indian religious communities will be the true Indian *National* Congress. But if it be at present not practicable to form such a religious congress, let there be formed at least a Hindu confederacy with the above as its goal.

A preacher of the 'New Spirit' in one of his sermons said; "Economics views life from the standpoint of wealth. Politics views it from the standpoint of the State. Art views life from the standpoint of the Beautiful. Ethics views it from the standpoint of the Good. Religion, however, views life from the standpoint of life itself." The last sentence seems to be rather misleading to a Hindu. Hinduism teaches mankind that religion views life from the standpoint of Spirit only. It considers economics, politics, art, morals, in fact, everything, from the standpoint of Spirit alone, which is the substance of all, the goal of life. Hindustan, the land of the faithful, is the land of the immortals. Its

naked philosophers by their saintly character, by their philosophy of the Divine Self, have immortalised the Motherland from the pre-historic age. Hindustan is the home of faith, the birthplace of all religions. Her religion is the Universal Religion. Her temple is the Temple of all nations. Her Deity is the God of all religions. She personifies a Divine Truth. She represents the Motherhood of God. Let the Indians prove worthy of their unique inheritance.

From the historical Scriptures of the Hindus it is evident, that when an eclipse of faith takes place in the Motherland, God manifests Himself in human form for the protection of the good, for the destruction of wickedness, for the re-establishment of the eternal Dharma. So says Sri Krishna, the preacher of harmony of life, in the Gita. Hence we find in the world, the law of requital overtakes those who pervert the Law of God. Let Indians stick to it and let them not despair of brighter days, the dawning light of which is already visible on the horizon.

BRAHMACHARI BRAHMAVADIN.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Extracts

LII.

8th Aug. 1896.

Dear A——

* * Several things are necessary.—First, that there should be strict integrity, not that I even hint that any of you would digress from it, but Hindus have a peculiar slovenliness in business matters, not being sufficiently methodical and strict in keeping accounts, &c.

Secondly, entire devotion to the cause, knowing that your SALVATION depends upon making the B—— a success. Let this paper be your *Ishtadevatâ*, and then you will see how success comes. I have already sent for Abhedananda from India.... Remember that

perfect purity and disinterested obedience to the Guru, is the secret of all success. * *

A big foreign circulation of a religious paper is impossible. It must be supported by the Hindus, if they have any sense of virtue or gratitude left to them.

The ideal of the paper, apart from the preaching of Vedanta, should be to make it a magazine of Indian research and scholarship, of course, bearing on religion.

By the bye, Mrs. Annie Besant invited me to speak at her Lodge, on Bhakti. I lectured there one night. Col. Olcott was also there. I did it to show that I have my sympathy

for all sects.....Our countrymen must remember that in things of the Spirit we are the teachers, and no foreigners—but in things of the world we ought to learn from them.

I read Max Müller's article which is a good one, considering that when he wrote it six months ago, he had no materials except Mazumdar's leaflet. Now he writes me a long and nice letter offering to write a book on Sri Ramakrishna. I have already supplied him with much material, but a good deal more is needed from India.

Work on! Hold on! Be brave! Dare anything and everything!

* * It is all misery this Samsara, don't you see!

Yours with blessings and love.

Vivekananda.

—
LIII.

C/o MISS H. MULLER,
Airlie Lodge, Ridgway Gardens,
Wimbledon, England.
22nd Sept. 1896.

Dear A—

* * I had a beautiful time with Prof. Deussen in Germany. Later he and I came together to London, and we have already become great friends.

* * There is yet a vast untrodden field, namely—the writing of the lives and works of Tulsi Das, Kabir, Nanak, and other saints of Southern India. They should be written in a thorough-going, scholarly style, not in a slipshod, slovenly way.

* * Work on with all energy.

With love to all.

Yours,

Vivekananda.

—
LIV.

C/o E. T. STURDY, Esq.,
39 Victoria Street, London.
28th Oct. 1896.

Dear A—

* * I am not yet sure what month I shall reach India. I will write later about it. The new Swami delivered his maiden speech

yesterday at a friendly society's meeting. It was good and I liked it; he has the making of a good speaker in him, I am sure.

* * You have not yet printed the—. Again books must be cheap for India to have a large sale; the types must be bigger to satisfy the public.....you can very well get out a cheap edition of—. You have missed a good opportunity by not getting it out earlier, but we Hindus are so slow that when we have done a work the opportunity has already passed away, and thus we are the losers. Your—book came out after a year's talk! Did you think the Western people would wait for it till Doomsday? You have lost three-fourths of the sale by this delay.That—is a fool, slower than you, and his printing is diabolical. There is no use in publishing books that way; it is cheating the public and should not be done. I shall most probably return to India accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Sevier, Miss Müller and Mr. Goodwin. Mr. and Mrs. Sevier are probably going to settle in Almora at least for some time, and Goodwin is going to become a Sannyasin. He of course will travel with me. It is he to whom we owe all our books. He took shorthand notes of my lectures which enabled the books to be published. All these lectures were delivered on the spur of the moment, without the least preparation. Goodwin will have to live with me. He is a strict vegetarian.

With love.

Yours,

Vivekananda,

—
AT DAY-DAWN.

(From the German of T. Grotovsky.)

Wildly I spent the night, and through the dawn

There walked beside me. One I could not see—

Across the East great purple bars were drawn,

And from the silence spoke a Voice to me.

"Lose not thyself," it said with solemn sound.

"Blind, blind thou art, thy feet walk in the mire,

Yet hast thou wings. Then leave the barren ground,

And fly to where the stars of Heaven flash fire."

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS.

BELUR MATH.

THE 13th of January was a day of sacred memory to the disciples and admirers of the great Swami Vivekananda, as being the date of his birth, forty-five years ago; and the day was observed at the various centres of the Ramakrishna Mission with devotional ceremonies suited to the occasion. The public commemoration was held on the 17th, the chief features of which were the feeding of the poor, religious enthusiasm and delivery of lectures on the life and mission of the great Master.

At the Belur Math, the head-quarters of the Ramakrishna Mission, the public ceremony was celebrated with usual grandeur and significance. The day opened with a reading from the Upanishads, and by noon the delightful grounds were filled with an interesting crowd of disciples and friends anxious to testify by their presence from far and near to their feelings of love and reverence for Swamiji. His portrait, tastefully decorated and beautifully enshrined amongst various floral tributes in a circular pavilion, drew numbers of people who paid their homage by prostrating themselves, and Sankirtan parties sang devotional songs before it. Upon the gathering, the charm of his great life seemed to brood in silent majesty, and the murmurs of the life-giving message, that he carried from door to door in his country and even beyond the seas, and which is breaking forth in a new awakening upon his countrymen, seemed distinctly audible.

As the feeding of the poor is the special feature of the day, the best energies of the Sannyasin Brotherhood of the Belur Math were directed to the making of it a success. The poor people of Belur and the surround-

ing villages began to pour in, and the expansive lawn was full of cheerful voices of men, women and children, who sat down in rows on the grass, and were sumptuously served with varieties of delectable food. This loving and humble service given to the people whom he so loved, and whom he held up before the nation as the only God to be worshipped—the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the down-trodden—was in itself the best offering that could have been made to the memory of Swamiji.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA,
KANKHAL.

The birthday anniversary was commemorated in an excellent way. The Ashrama was beautifully decorated, and besides especial Puja, Bhoga and Aratrikam, about 900 poor people of all castes and creeds, chiefly sweepers and Chamars, the "untouchables," were invited and entertained with Pâyasam.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, DACCA.

On the morning of the 17th January, rice was distributed to the poor, and in the afternoon the devotees assembled in the Mission room and the proceedings opened with a Hari-Sankirtan before the picture of the Swamiji installed for the occasion. After the singing of a Sanskrit hymn, sketches of Swamiji's life and mission were read, and again the Hari-Sankirtan followed. With the distribution of Prasad to the gentlemen assembled, the meeting was brought to a close.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA HOME, MYLAPUR,
MADRAS.

The public celebration of Swami Vivekananda's birthday took place in Madras on Sunday, January 17th, and was this year a

time of special rejoicing because of the presence of the revered President of the Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Brahmanandaji.

At nine in the morning, three Bhajana parties came to the Sri Ramakrishna Home at Mylapore, where a large number of friends had gathered, and the singing of sacred songs and the chanting of the names of God continued until one o'clock, when a mid-day meal was served to all who had participated. In the meanwhile the feeding of the poor had begun at a neighbouring market and during the noon hours several thousand people were fed.

The early afternoon was again passed in singing, and at 5-30 the public meeting was convened. Mr. V. V. Srinivas Aiyengar B.A., B.L., read an able and thoughtful paper on "Swami Vivekananda, the Mission and Meaning of His Life," which we reproduce elsewhere.

Mr. P. R. Sundara Aiyer B. A., B. L., in thanking the lecturer for his excellent paper, told his own experiences with Swami Vivekananda, who was his guest during his second visit to Madras, and from time to time he emphasised his remarks by reading various passages from Swamiji's new book, "Inspired Talks," published a few weeks before. In closing, Mr. Sundara Aiyer said with the simplicity of a schoolboy: "I have told you these things because I believe it will make Swamiji happy to hear one of his humblest pupils repeat to others the lesson he has learned from him."

After Aratrikam and the distribution of Prasad the meeting came to an end.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA SAMAJ, HOSPET.

The birthday anniversary of Sri Swami Vivekanandaji was celebrated with great success, on January 17th.

Early in the morning, a band of musicians and a multitude of devotees and admirers of the Swami carrying in their midst

his photo beautifully garlanded, paraded the streets, singing melodious songs and visiting all the chief temples of the town. By the time they returned to their destination, it was nearly 12 o'clock. In the meantime other workers were ready with meals prepared for the poor. More than 600 of them assembled on the maidan before the Sankari temple and were sumptuously fed.

At 6 P. M. a public meeting was convened with Mr. R. Krishna Charlu Garu in the chair. After the due Puja offerings being made by a Sastri, papers on the life of the great Patriot-Saint were read. Then amidst loud applause, the chairman rose and spoke with his usual eloquence. Among other things he expressed his high admiration for the Swamiji and emphatically declared:—"If at all any substantial impetus has been given to the spread of Vedanta outside India, it has been begun and carried out by Vivekananda alone. Even if he did not teach us any new truth, he put forth the very oldest truth in the newest garb, which attracted the attention of the Westerners, including Scientists, Atheists, Agnostics etc." The meeting terminated with the distribution of Prasad. A few devotees remained till 10 P. M. to perform the Mangalam rites.

AT THE VEDANTA SOCIETY, BANGALORE CANTONMENT.

The Birthday of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated on the 24th January on a grand scale. In the Sabha School a thousand of the poor people were sumptuously fed, and a pretty procession started from there to the public streets, in which Swami Ramakrishnanandaji, Sister Devamata and others took part. In the evening there was assembled in the R. B. A. N. M's. High school an ardent audience.

The proceedings commenced by an address of welcome being read and presented to His Holiness Brahmananda Swamiji, President,

Sri Ramakrishna Mission, on behalf of the Cantonment Society by Mr. M. G. Varadachar B.A., B.L. We take the following excerpts from it :—

“The Vedanta Society of Bangalore was started some eight years ago, and at the time of its birth it had the good fortune of receiving the blessings of Swami Vivekananda. It is a matter of indisputable faith among us that what Swami Vivekananda has blessed once can never droop or languish, and often, this hopeful and courageous thought has sustained and supported us in moments of gloom and despondency.

“We consider ourselves and our Society thrice blessed by your holy advent in our midst this evening and to receive your blessings. Often, in the course of our readings from the works of Swami Vivekananda, and our musings on his life and that of his Divine Gurudeva, a great longing to have known them face to face, and to have had the privilege of serving them, has taken possession of us. That longing, we can truly say, has been partially realised by us to-day in having served you in our own small, feeble way. “He that has seen me hath seen the Father,” said Jesus the Christ. And well may the truth of these words be applied to your case also, in that he that has seen you, revered Swamiji, has seen the great Paramahansa of Dakshineswar, for are you not, indeed, his son, his beloved son, as the Master Himself loved to call you. We would take this opportunity, Swamiji, of giving expression to our sense of deep gratitude and high appreciation of the good and noble work done by the members of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, particularly here, in Bangalore. In them we have never failed to find examples of noble ideals nobly lived. They have always given us of their very best. They have, both by practice as well as by precept, tried to show us the higher way. And by their uniform simplicity of life, ready sympathy and earnest desire to help the

struggling soul towards freedom, they have proved themselves worthy sons of their great and Divine Master.

“Revered Swamiji, may your holy blessings be with us all and with our Society, and help us to lead purer, higher and nobler, lives, day after day, and teach us ever to be ready to help our brother-men to lead the higher life, and may you be spared long to guide and conduct the destinies of that world-wide movement associated with the names of Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.”

Swami Ramakrishnananda said that he was commissioned by His Holiness Swami Brahmanandaji to convey his blessings to all, and that the President regretted that owing to indisposition he was not able to be present, but the speaker said, the President's heart and soul were there in the audience. He pointed out that they had assembled to celebrate the birthday anniversary of a great son of India and that son was not dead. He was a part of God and God could not die. Swami Vivekananda was a great thinker. His writings and speeches clearly showed the greatness in the man. The lower men who thought only of enjoyment died, but great men lived always. He remarked that Shakespeare and Milton were not dead. He regretted that great men were neglected when they lived, and after they died they began to be appreciated. Swami Vivekananda was not so much appreciated in the civilised countries when he was in earthly existence as now. He congratulated the Bangalore Society for having done a great duty by setting apart one day to think of his greatness.

Sister Devamata, who on rising was heartily cheered, said that a great man could be claimed by no one nation. Buddha was being claimed by China, Jesus by the Western Hemisphere, and Mahommed in lands other than Arabia, and what was true of those sages was true of Swami Vivekananda. She pithily pointed out how being born in Calcutta,

Swami Vivekananda's spirit was born in Dakshineswar, his theory in Madras and his glory in America. He levelled all disintegrating differences and his love flowed like an infinite stream. She pointed out that America was to him like his own house. The Americans on hearing the Swamiji, raised their heads and said "We cannot die, as we are above death, and here is a great prophet to quicken us." All America began to gravitate round him. Though Swami Vivekananda belonged to India as her prophet, he was loved all over the world and England, Germany and France claimed him by right of discipleship. She remarked that the Swami did not want anything for himself. He wanted money but that was to clothe the naked, feed the poor and house the homeless. He wanted co-operation, he wanted souls to guide others. He thought the illiterate, down-trodden Pariah was his brother. The Swami wept when he saw a poor woman who had no food. He prayed to God, "Why made You them miserable." The Swami did not want to be enlogised, but he wanted work to be done. She paid a high tribute to the memory of Swami Vivekananda and exhorted her hearers to think of the greatness of Vivekananda and do his work. She was heard with rapt attention.

Mr. G. G. Narasimachariar and his brother Mr. Krishnamachariar B. A., of Madras, spoke also and pointed out that Swami Vivekananda was a great prophet. Mr. Ramiah B. A., spoke in Canarese most feelingly and was heard and cheered profusely.

Three little girls sang Mangalam, and Sister Devamata garlanded them in the end. Swamis Atmananda, Ambikananda, and Vishudhananda of the Mission sang devotional songs which were greatly applauded. Fruits were freely distributed.

AT THE OTHER CENTRES OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION.

The birthday anniversary was also observed with great religious zeal and devotion at the Ramakrishna Orphanage, Murshidabad; the Ramakrishna Ananthbandhu Samiti, Salkia; the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, and the Ramakrishna Home of Service, Benares; the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati; the Ramakrishna Math, Vaniyambodhi; the Vivekananda Society, Colombo; the Vivekananda Reading Hall, Kuala Lumpur; the Vedanta Society of New York; and in all the other centres connected with the Ramakrishna Mission, at home and abroad.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA: THE MISSION AND MEANING OF HIS LIFE.

[*A paper read by Mr. V. V. Srinivasa Aiyengar at the Swami Vivekananda's birthday anniversary meeting at Madras, Jan. 17, 1909.*]

ONE year has passed away since we met here last to commemorate the life and work of Swami Vivekananda. One more year has extended the gulf of time between that great man and the generations that will never know him face to face, and never realise directly the full force of his magnetic personality. The waves of the work-a-day world have been splashing against the rock of his memory and washing off the dirt in some places and wearing away elsewhere the letters in which

are engraven the story of his life. We have met here to celebrate the anniversary of his birth and pay our humble tribute to his greatness. No, not so much to sing the glory of his life and the worth of his work, but in such singing to intune ourselves into the necessary mental condition for carrying on the noble task he had in view, and from which he was called away all too soon.

Such, I feel, is the chief aim of this and other similar commemorations. The dead great may

readily be believed to have passed the stage of being pleasantly affected by flattery or praise. It is perhaps difficult to establish by any process of analysis that such celebrations are in the nature of a duty strictly so-called. In any case it is certain that the duty, if such is due, is not to the persons in whose honour the celebrations are held but to ourselves and to those that come after us. Surely we owe it to ourselves to secure all the light and leading that the past has to give us in guiding our steps in this labyrinth of aims and endeavours we designate life. More especially is it so in our country with all its present-day problems.

That is at once my explanation and apology for having ventured to give an ambitious title to my discourse. I am not vain enough to suppose that I have discovered the central key-note of the wonderful life, and the still more wonderful activity, of a man of such stupendous greatness and many-sidedness as Swami Vivekananda. Nor do I for a moment imagine that it would ever be possible to appraise the part played by any person living or dead, and tell off his exact importance or unimportance, in the bewildering world's drama. But if I disclaim any attempt to furnish a critical analysis, or render a tabulated statement, of the mission and meaning of a great life, still I hold it up to you as an aspect of study. My object will be fulfilled if I succeed in eliciting some interest for a point of study which, it seems to me, will prove to be very fruitful.

I mean by the term 'mission,' not any external mandate but a mandate proceeding from the inner self, a mandate unheeded by most, heard indistinctly by a few, and recognised in its true nature only by one in a million, or by one in a century, a mandate to which the man of genius, of greatness, listens as to his fate, and by which he guides himself to reach the far-off goal indicated to him.

It is true that most of us have no such mission. If we had we should all be great. We are not unlike the pieces of straw floating down the stream of life by the current of passing events and circumstances. We have no definite goal to reach, no singleness of purpose, no self-direction of effort, no organisation of endeavour, no unity of plan, and no devotion to the straight path. The result

is, we find ourselves in a crowd which takes us hither and thither, or seems to do so, and in which we jostle and are jostled, push and are pushed, and labour and toil, or think we do, till we can bear it no longer, and so drop off. Not so the truly great man. He does not seem to look around him. His eyes are fixed somewhere far away. We know when he is coming. We always make room for him and let him pass on. He walks straight and neither delays nor dallies on the way. Every step he makes, takes him nearer his goal, so much unlike us who cannot even say in what direction we are being carried on. How many of us can say of ourselves whether we are moving, and if so in what direction and where. Suppose you notice a man hurrying along the road with an air of concern and trouble and taking hold of his arm ask him where he is going, and he blinks, is surprised at the question and is unable to say where, would you not put him down as a fool or a mad man. If that is so in respect of such a trivial affair as passing along a road from one place to another perhaps in the same town or village, why do we not regard with anything like similar feelings, our purposeless moving on the road of life. The truth is we have learnt to walk but not to live. The art of living is never taught and rarely learnt. The great men seem to know it by instinct. It was by some such instinct, which is often only another word for a process of infallible reasoning, that Swami Vivekananda must have determined for himself his mission in life. He never struck one as a loiterer on the way. In whatever he did he took a decisive step towards his goal. That is why his very talk was so inspired. That is why his speeches were so telling, his works were so luminous and his teachings so full of practical wisdom.

And now what was the goal he thus set himself to reach, what was the mission he dedicated himself to perform, and what was it that he actually achieved or fulfilled. It seems to me that there can be no two opinions as to it, whether we approach the question from the point of view of what he himself wanted to do or what he actually did. He felt himself called upon to deliver a message,—the message of his Master, the message of India to the whole world. He stood on the platform of

the Parliament of Religions in September 1893 and found himself famous. For barely nine years almost as a nine-year wonder he lived, and passed out at the end of it mourned by the civilised world. He had delivered his message in America, in England and all over India in thrilling words. For some months he was the talk of the world. And having delivered his message, it almost strikes me that, he waited for a further call. And when it came, it proved to be a call from off the scenes of his triumph. He felt, on doubt, in his mind that the message of his Master was the highest message that India had to deliver to the world,—to herself and to the rest of the world. India, from the hoary antiquity of the Vedas, has passed through countless spiritual experiences. It has been the nursery of all forms and stages of religious thought and practice. And in the fulness of time India came to a consciousness of her own, considered her message, and through her sage Ramakrishna Paramahansa made it known to the world. It was a message of harmony,—of harmony between the spirit and the body, between materialism and Western ideals on the one hand, and spiritualism and the Eastern ideals on the other, between science and religion, between the various religions of the world, between the conflicting schools of Philosophy, and so on. As he himself proclaimed, "Assimilation and not destruction" was the keynote of his message; and he said that it was the keynote of Hinduism. Sect after sect, new religion one after another, has risen within the fold of Hinduism but the main religion has remained all the time, refusing to be crystalised and assimilating at every step whatever was best in the new thought. In the Vedanta as expounded by him, he saw the common ground and meeting-point of all the religions of the world. He has proclaimed it to be the basis of all religious thoughts to which every other form is bound eventually to tend; but meanwhile, toleration and not fanaticism, brotherhood and not aggression, help and not hostility. He was himself in his own person the very embodiment of the doctrines of assimilation which he preached. Just picture to yourself a Hindu ascetic donning the robes of renunciation, speaking the English language with a fluency and eloquence which many an English-

man might have envied, and with a mastery of modern scientific thought electrifying the Parliament of Religions of the World in one of the chief cities of the Western Hemisphere. I challenge you to furnish a better picture of assimilation. This doctrine runs through all his utterances. And when we consider the matter fully and bear in mind the history of his life, we almost feel it could not have been otherwise.

Like most modern young men in India, imbued from early life with the traditional learning of ancient India he passed through the University, but the difference arose when the conflict came. Every young man passes through some such conflict. As surely as the darkening clouds in the horizon portend the impending storm, so surely does the dawning growth of youth signify the coming conflict in the soul. Which of us has not felt the conflict in some degree or form, in one sphere or another. The larger the capacity, the larger and the keener is the conflict. We can easily imagine the conflict in the mind of Narendranath, as the Swami was called before he donned the robes of the ascetic. We can imagine the questions he put to himself during that time of life when everything is greeted with a big interrogation. We can imagine the restless, sleepless nights he passed. We can imagine him at one moment on the verge of suicide, disgusted with a despicable world and a drifting, aimless life of misery. We can imagine him at an inspired moment broadening his soul and drinking in the beauty of creation, his soul going out, as it were, to everything from the worm near his feet to the distant stars ahead. We can imagine him trying in despair to effect a reconciliation between the burning zeal of his patriotism and a life of utter renunciation, between his duty to his country and his duty to humanity and to God. Such conflicts must have been. We have no details as to how he passed through them. He was too great to speak of himself. But we all know how he came out of the conflict. He came out victorious. He solved the questions masterfully, not by submitting and giving up, but by overcoming, and we have the result before us.

We weaklings, staggered by the questions, solve them by ignoring them, and lead lives full of inconsistency without a guiding principle, thus

becoming creatures of every passing thought or emotion. Not so the great Masters. Swami Vivekananda solved the problems by the central principle of the Hindu philosophy, the doctrine of Yoga. With his logical mind he applied the principles of Yoga to the various problems of modern India that confronted him, and found therein the solution. The essence of the doctrine of Yoga consists in the assimilation of conflicting opposites in a higher unity. Its sphere of operation is not limited, nor is its scope confined, to the various Yogas enumerated as Karma, Jnana, Bhakti and so forth, and he found it to be susceptible of universal application. He found that the principles enunciated by the Lord Sri Krishna could be successfully applied not only to the solution of the questions that harassed the mind of Arjuna, but also to the ever-recurring questions in the advancement of the world. Now that we see the result of such application, it is clear to us that such a conclusion was logically necessary and inevitable. Was it a question between the demands of the spirit and those of the body? The answer came,—The body is the handmaid of the spirit, not to be killed but to be cared for and controlled; the spirit has no work without the body, so let the body and soul work in harmony to realise the highest end of man, the spiritual ideal.

Was it a question of conflict between science and religion? The answer came,—No religion which is really opposed to science can be true, and no science can stand unless it is ultimately based on religion, for religion is the science which comprehends all other sciences. Was it a question between the struggles of life and the renunciation of the ascetic? The answer came,—You can renounce and yet struggle: every one can and must labour and fight, but with a calm and balanced mind which is not affected by the result, and which delights merely in doing the duty of the hour. Was it a question between oneself and others, one's own country and the rest of the world? The answer came,—there is no action wholly selfish or wholly unselfish, the self and the not-self are but parts of a bigger whole, organically united with each other; and also, only those actions which are deemed unselfish really promote the true interests of the Self, and those which we do to further

our little selves do only tend to take us down. Was it a question of selection between the various Yogas, or methods of realising the Supreme? The answer came: All are roads equally leading to the same goal,—they but represent the different aspects of the mind; find their unity in the essential unity of the human mind and spirit, and follow that which is your own, and salvation is yours. Was it a question of the conflict between the three schools of philosophy in India? The answer still came: There is no real conflict, any of them implies the one or the other,—all of them are but steps or stages, or aspects of view only; do not quarrel about words, the Reality is One, hold It fast. The message he delivered was thus a clear ringing message of harmony, of the assimilation of apparently conflicting opposites in a higher unity. And he arrived at the result by applying the very same central principles which have made the Bhagavad-Gita the popular book that it is to-day, the Yoga Shâstra as it is styled. The root-meaning of the word Yoga is itself the keynote of such a wide application of its principles.

To deliver that message was his mission, and he did it with what result we all fully know. In that message he delivered, he has indicated wherein lies the hope of our country. He told the Western nations that their material civilisation was built on sand and would go down unless a spiritual foundation was provided. He sounded the note of warning that all their boasted progress was hollow, and the development of perfect humanity required the uplifting of the spirit. He told his own countrymen that spiritual development did not consist in keeping quiet and immured, each in his own corner, and ignoring the laws of existence. With trumpet voice he has called us to come forth and see what the rest of the world is doing. In modern India even spirituality as commonly understood has ceased to exist. The strenuous Brahmacharin devoted to the higher life is to be scarcely seen anywhere. The consequence has been, the fighter has forgotten to fight, the labourer did not labour. Hindu society required reorganisation on fresh lines. Vivekananda's ideal was a nation composed of Sannyasins in spirit, devoting body and soul to the amelioration of the country and humanity. He was not spared to lead the people into action, perhaps

the call did not come. Perhaps he felt the time was not ripe. Be that as it may, beyond all doubt he saw the vision of truth, and trumpeted it forth to the world. He endeavoured to lash his countrymen into activity, he has served to raise his country and countrymen in the estimate of the nations of the world. Such a life as his should ever be full of lessons for us. He might have been a brilliant lawyer, a leader of the Bar, happy and contented in earning money by tens of thousands, and giving away bits of it in charity, respected by the people and the rulers, distinguished by sonorous titles, living in a palace surrounded by a happy family and slowly ripening to aged respectability. He sacrificed all those prospects and took up the beggar's bowl. The fire of his sacrifice glowed and illumined the whole world and won for him immortality. In the nine years of his labours he did more than most people can do during a whole lifetime. His life was organic, swayed by a single purpose and devoted to the great cause he cherished at heart. His life is a standing monument of the potency of individual effort even in an age of dominant democratic sentiments. It shows what an individual can accomplish by sacrifice and devotion.

But all these and many more that can be mentioned are lessons which can be learnt from the lives, generally speaking, of all great men, but the life and work of the Swami Vivekananda have for us in this country a special significance, and more so at the present time. To him we owe in a large measure the national sentiment which is now surging through the land. He it was who made us self-conscious, proud of our past and hopeful of the future; he made us blush for our inactivity and called on us to gird up our loins. He was the first to see the dawn and rouse us. He it was who pointed out the path of progress which the people of this country are just entering. But what signifies more than all these is the fact that he was a religious teacher. The history of almost every great nation in the world teaches us that every period of development and progress in arts and letters, in industries and commerce, in the improvement of society or the state, in fact, in all that is or that may be comprehended in the term civilisation, has always been preceded by religious reform and spiritual awakening. So it has been in

this country. But such religious reform and spiritual awakening became difficult to be achieved when our people passed, under the British rule, to a life of quietness and easy contentment. Foreign missions could do very little except with the depressed classes. And so it came to pass that in course of years the forms of religion alone were continued to be observed and the real religious spirit of the people was slowly disappearing. It was to repair this evil daily increasing, that the various religious bodies known as Samajas came to be started all over the country, but these institutions were the products of the intellectual craving of the educated classes, and did not in any sense represent an upheaval of religious sentiment. The advent therefore of Swami Vivekananda at the critical time was hailed with joy by all lovers of the country. They hoped that through his instrumentality a spiritual awakening would be wrought in the country, and that perchance the awakening would be signalled by the formation of a large religious body including in its folds all castes and creeds, united in common brotherhood, and imbued with sufficient vitality to revivify the spiritual embers of the degenerate peoples of this land. But it was not exactly so to be. At least it has not yet been.

The important point for us to note here is, that the religious teacher is the forerunner of a national awakening, in however small a degree. As it has been always in the past so must it be in the future. No great national development would be possible without a spiritual awakening of the race. It behoves us all therefore to consider the question of a spiritual uplifting as the only and surest means of realising national greatness in all lines of development. Our enquiry has thus led to the conclusion that whether we take the individual or the nation, a spiritual awakening is an indispensable condition of progress; assimilation is the indispensable condition of life and growth, and sacrifice is the indispensable condition of success. To put the matter more shortly still, the exhortation of his life to each of us is,—spiritualise yourself, assimilate whatever is best, and sacrifice everything to the common good. No nation ever became great or remained such without these three great qualities, and the history of every race that ever became great in the world is the story of how

one or more of these qualities made for their greatness, permanent or temporary, and how when these qualities faded away, the greatness also went out.

The spiritual awakening in Asia called Mahomedanism founded empires all over the Old World, and Rome began to decline only when her citizens became addicted to sensual pleasures. Biology teaches us that life and growth are sustained by assimilation, and that when assimilation ceases, decay sets in and death ensues. The British Empire is a standing monument of the potency of assimilation, and the phenomenal success of Japan in recent times is a further proof of what assimilation can achieve. History is full of instances of how great causes have succeeded, or been saved, by the sacrifice and devotion of individuals. In fact it may almost be said, that no great cause ever succeeded without a large measure of sacrifice. The Greeks appear to have recognised this in their symbolism, and made sacrifices for the success of great undertakings; and even in our country, customs are not wanting, which impress on us the need for sacrifice. If sacrifice on the part of individuals has achieved great results, it is needless to speak of the power and potency of a whole nation which is composed of individuals ready to sacrifice for the common good. A study of the works and speeches of the Swami Vivekananda which have recently been published in a collective form, will be sure to serve as the best tonic to the youth of this land. The words seem red-hot from the furnace of his intellect heated by the fire of his emotions. There was a directness and irrepressible force in all he said or spoke that carried everything with it. No doubt it is one thing to listen to those words from the lips of the Master himself, and another to read them in the quiet of the study, on the printed page. It seems to me but yesterday, it is still so fresh in my mind, how every sentence he uttered came thundering on the audience between the flashes of his looks, how the powerful gestures with which he accompanied the more telling portions of his speech sent thrill after thrill into the hearers and electrified the audience, and how the whole audience, it seemed to me at those moments, would have risen to a man to do his bidding, whatever it might be. But these are past and gone, and we have only his

words left to us, and the recollection of what he was. But I have no doubt that even these would serve to rouse us from our torpor and make ourselves worthy of the land he loved so well, worthy of our illustrious past, worthy of the hopes he cherished for us, and worthy of all that is best and noblest in the human race.

And who will undertake to say that in the near or distant future, some one, inspired by the very task from which he was called away all too soon, will not rise in the very ascetic fraternity to which he belonged, in this very institution dedicated to the revered memory of his Guru, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa,—some one, with the call for which he waited, with a sacred mission to regenerate this land and fulfil in practice the truths he preached to us, the ideals he taught us, the message of his Master, the message of India to the world?

AUTUMN TWILIGHT.

The air is chill, the yellow leaves are falling,

The sky is grey with tears that will not fall,

Among the trees a few sad songsters calling

Hear only sighs in answer to their call.

And yet comes Eve, with silent, shadowy spaces,

And yet comes Eve, with sombre, purple West,

And smoothes the scars of battle from our faces,

And kisses us, and softly whispers, "Rest!"

Sing me a song of Twilight, O sad singer,

Of live, winged shadows deep'ning into Night,

Of Twilight touching us with cool, still finger,

And drawing Day's dull curtain from our sight,

To show us magic sleights—the firm earth shifting,

To send Time groping backward in the past;

To launch the soul forth into Great-Sea drifting!

And gives it peace at last.

Nay, hush your song, die out, O last bird's sobbing!

Gather, O shadows, deeper and more deep!

Rise not, O Moon of Night! cease heart from throbbing!

Flutter, O tired eyelids, into Sleep!

Come close, O Night, your wraps around me flinging,

And let there be a little rest from strife,

For Silence is more beautiful than Singing,

And Death than Life.

W. R. TITTERTON.

GLIMPSES

(Collected by Mr. P. V. Seshagiri Rao.)

Learning as it polishes the mind enlarges our ideas, and gives an ingenuous turn to our whole conversation and behaviour, has ever been esteemed a liberal accomplishment, and is indeed the principal characteristic that distinguishes the gentleman from the mechanic.—*Alexander Chalmers.*

* * *

Men of genius who are pleased with the theory of any art will not be contented till they arrive at the practice.—*Ibid.*

* * *

Most of the faults in the general conduct of mankind and their frequent miscarriages in their most favourite enterprises, will be found upon examination to result from an imperfect and partial view of what relates to their duty or undertakings.—*Ibid.*

* * *

No other disposition or turn of mind so totally unfits a man for all the social offices of life, as indolence. An idle man is a mere blank in the creation, he seems made for no end, and lives to no purpose. He cannot engage himself in any employment or profession, because he will never have diligence enough to follow it; he can succeed in no undertaking, for he will never pursue it; he must be a bad husband, father, and relation, for, he will not take the least pains to preserve his wife, children and family from starving, and he must be a worthless friend, for he would not draw his hand from his bosom though to prevent the destruction of the universe.—*Ibid.*

* * *

They who may first demand our favour are those who are allied to us by the ties of blood; next to these stand those persons to whom we are connected by friendship; and next to our friends and relations mankind in general.—*From the British Essayists. Vol. XXIII.*

* * *

It should be considered that nature did not bring us into the world in a state of perfection, but has left us in a capacity of improvement which should seem to intimate that we should labour to

render ourselves excellent. Very few are such absolute idiots as not to be able to become at least decent if not eminent in their several stations by unwearied and keen application, nor are there any possessed of such transcendent genius and abilities as to render all pains and diligence unnecessary. Perseverance overcomes difficulties which at first appear insuperable, and it is amazing to consider how great and numerous obstacles may be removed by a continual attention to any particular point.—*Ibid.*

* * *

He who does not do good will certainly do mischief; and the mind, if it is not stored with useful knowledge will necessarily become a magazine of nonsense and trifles.—*Ibid.*

* * *

I know not any greater misfortune that can happen to a young fellow at his first setting out in life than his falling into low company.—*Ibid.*

* * *

He that sinks to familiarity with persons much below his own level will be constantly weighed down by his base connections, and though he may easily plunge still lower he will find it almost impossible to rise again.—*Ibid.*

* * *

It is the man who provokes danger in its recess, who quits a peaceful retreat, where he might have slumbered in ease and safety, for peril and labour, to drive before a tempest or to watch in a camp; the man who descends from a precipice by a rope at midnight, to fire a city that is besieged, or who ventures forward into regions of perpetual cold and darkness, to discover new paths of navigation, and disclose new secrets of the deep; it is the adventurer alone, on whom every eye is fixed with admiration, and whose praise is repeated by every voice.—*Ibid.*

* * *

A sense of spiritual weakness and of spiritual wants, a belief that Divine aid and help are to be had, are principles which carry the soul to God; make us think of Him, and think of Him in earnest;

convert, in a word, morality into religion; bring us round to holiness of life, by the road of piety and devotion, render us humble in ourselves, and grateful towards God.—*Paley*.

* * *

A night's rest, or a comfortable meal, will immediately direct our gratitude to God. The use of our limbs, the possession of our senses, every degree of health, every hour of ease, every sort of satisfaction which we enjoy, will carry our thoughts to the same object. But if our enjoyments raise our affections, still more will our hopes do the same; and most of all, beyond comparison, those hopes which religion inspires.—*Ibid*.

* * *

No man's spirits were ever hurt by doing his duty. On the contrary one good action, one temptation resisted and overcome, one sacrifice of desire or interest purely for conscience sake, will prove a cordial for weak and low spirits beyond what either indulgence or diversion or company can do for them. And a succession and course of such actions and self-denials, springing from a

religious principle and manfully maintained, is the best possible course that can be followed as a remedy for sinkings and oppressions of the mind.—*Ibid*.

* * *

Let us reflect on the vanity and transient glory of this habitable world. How by the force of one element breaking loose upon the rest, all the vanities of nature, all the works of Art, all the labours of men, are reduced to nothing. All that we admired, and adored before as great and magnificent, is obliterated or vanished, and another form and face of things, plain, simple, and everywhere the same, overspread the whole earth. Where are now the great empires of the world, and their great imperial cities? Their pillars, trophies, and monuments of glory? Show me where they stood, read the inscriptions, tell me the victor's name. What remains, what impressions, what difference or distinction do you see in this mass of fire? Great and marvellous are Thy works, just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints! Hallelujah!—*Socrates*.

THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH IN BANGALORE

THE imposing ceremony of opening the new Ramakrishna Math in Basavangudi, Bangalore, was performed on January 20th, in the presence of a large and influential gathering and several of the high officers of the State were present. The President of the Ramakrishna Mission Swami Brahmanandaji, with Swami Ramakrishnanda and others arrived from Madras and were received on the platform by Mr. Narayan Aiyengar B.A. B.L., Assistant Commissioner, who is the central figure of the organisation in Bangalore. Precisely at 8 A.M., the Dewan arrived, and read the following address on behalf of the Bangalore public :—

TO SWAMI SRI BRAHMANANDAJI.—President of The Sri Ramakrishna Mission.

Revered Swamiji,—

We have great pleasure in welcoming you to Bangalore. The names of Sri Ramakrishna Deva and Swami Vivekananda have already become house-

hold words in these parts. Their work is well known all over the world.

We are familiar with the Divine promise—

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥

We are convinced that in Sri Ramakrishna Deva this promise has again found its fulfilment.

We are glad to have been able to place at your disposal a building in Bangalore.

May the Lord of the Universe grant you power to disseminate spirituality and may this Ashrama at Bangalore be the centre from which healthy influences will radiate in all directions.

Mr. K. P. Puttanna Chetty read another address which we give in extenso :—

REVERED SWAMIJI,—Everything in the world moves by ebb and flow. The march of civilisation is not always steady. The most cherished and helpful treasure of mankind, spirituality, is not

outside the pale of this law. Mighty prophets arise and uplift the world to their lofty ideals of living and purity, from time to time. The Lord Sri Krishna, the Lord Jesus, the Lord Buddha and the Lord Mahommed deluged the world with their hallowed influence, and yet the highest problems of life once again grew inexplicable. Modern science dealt such heavy blows on the crumbling foundations of the eternal verities that everywhere religion got discredited. If life meant anything more than a meteoric flash of bodies in space, to be enjoyed for the sense of the pleasures it gave, then such a claim had to be proved true by the ordinary rules of evidence.

Well, such a proof has been vouchsafed to us. The Divine promise has again found its fulfilment. The Lord alone can help us in such a crisis. You know the promise—"यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य" etc." Judging from the life He lived and the power He manifests through His disciples in the world of thought to-day, we have no doubt that in Sri Ramakrishna Deva, the Lord has once again manifested Himself in the flesh, this time to spread His Sanatana Dharma all over the world, from Japan to the West Indies. For what else is the significance of the great unifying movements of the day? The old Laws of spirituality are again re-established in us in a yet wider significance by the Divine Master of the day. All the thought of the past has once again been put in the crucible of truth, and the essence and spirit have been re-vivified once again for the good of mankind. And this thought has been wonderfully preached to the whole world in the language of modern science and philosophy by His great Disciple, Sri Swami Vivekananda.

You know, Swamiji, mere books and preaching are not enough. The Life of Highest aims, unselfish high work has also to be lived to carry home to people the meaning of religion and philosophy. The band of Sannyasins under your loving care have already accomplished much to spread true religion everywhere, in America, England, France, Germany, India and Japan. Revered Swamiji, yours is a charge which may stagger the most daring soul. If we have rightly understood the march of religious progress, in a century or two the work of your Mission will bear fruit which must

eclipse the achievements of Buddhism, Christianity, old Hinduism or Mahommedanism. We are too near the Great Fountain of Light—Sri Ramakrishna Deva—to appreciate the march of His power and influence. But judged from the opportunities before us, such as the world-wide civilisation of the day, and the force and truth of the teachings vouchsafed to us, we can have no hesitation whatever in foreseeing how broad and deep the achievements of the future must be.

On you, Swamiji, has fallen the mantle of Sri Ramakrishna Deva and Swami Vivekananda. You have great lieutenants like the Swamis Ramakrishnananda, Abhedananda, and a dozen or more of high-souled Mahatmas. We earnestly pray to the Lord that you may be enabled to raise more spiritual giants of their type, and hand on the crown-jewel of Indian thought, untarnished and bright, to future generations of mankind, the broad world over.

Swamiji, coming next to Bangalore, we here have always watched your work with the greatest appreciation. Unhappily, nobody in Southern India appears to have understood the advent of the Lord in Calcutta during His earthly life. But with the very first pulsations of His Power in Swami Vivekananda, Southern India became electrified with his Divine message. A band of ardent young men of Mysore, in Madras, literally discovered the genius of Swami Vivekanandaji. During his humble wanderings, even prior to his going to America and spreading the Message of His Master in the most modern civilised countries of the farthest West, His Highness the late lamented Chamarajendra Wodeyar Bahadur and his distinguished minister, the great Sir K. Seshadri Aiyar appreciated the Swamiji's masterful abilities and power for good. The Maharajah even took down a phonograph record of the Swamiji's voice and helped to send him to America. When later the Swamiji captivated and conquered the thought of the West by his message, Bangalore was among the first to thank him in public for his invaluable services.

Later on, the valuable work of your colleagues, Swami Ramakrishnananda and Swami Abhedananda in Bangalore, is so very fresh as to need no stretch of memory to recall. It was Swami Abhedananda

who laid the foundation-stone of this building during his campaign of lecturing in 1906. To-day, the public of Bangalore are proud to have been able to place at your disposal the building, which we now request you to open.

Swamiji, Southern India has supplied great Acharyas who have kept alive Vedic thought to this day in this ancient land of Aryavarta. The Sanskrit scholarship of the South still holds a high place in the rank of Indian learning.

We earnestly pray and hope that in this Modern Revival, Mysore may yet produce great Mahatmas, capable of passing on the torch of spirituality to future generations, under your loving care.

Swamiji, let us all join with one voice in according you a most cordial welcome.

The Swami Brahmananda spoke as follows in reply to the addresses :—

DEWAN SAHIB, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

India has always been the land of spirituality. India's wealth is God. That is why an Indian says, "My greatest treasure is Thy feet," and what a treasure ! Can there be anything better ? No.

The Lord is in everything and there is nothing so true as He. He is, all else is nought. This great and stupendous fact people forget. They have to be again and again told that they are Atman, the Atman is everything, and the world is nought.

My Master Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva came here to teach this. He has started His mighty work. The world will be spiritualised. The world is thirsting for the highest truths, the verities of life. He came, saw truth in every religion and lived the life of universal love. His advent has purified the world's atmosphere once again ; through His grace every land will be blessed.

I am very glad to find that Bangalore has been one amongst the foremost places to appreciate His advent. You are extremely fortunate in thus understanding His Message. And what wonder that you should so understand and appreciate ! Yours is the land of Acharyas ! So to this day you keep up the Vedic studies, in their pristine purity ! In your Maharajah here you have the greatest and most pious Hindu prince of the day.

So I expect very great work from this centre. May Sri Ramakrishna Deva bless you to take full advantage of this spiritual upheaval of the world !

I now call upon my beloved brother, Swami Ramakrishnananda, to explain to you more fully the objects of this Mission.

The following address was then delivered by Swami Ramakrishnanandaji :—

Your Serene Holiness, Dewan Sahib and brothers and sisters,—

Sri Ramakrishna came, as you have all expressed just now, to revive the fallen religions of the world. Nowadays, as far as my experience goes, I find that the idea of Godhood is regarded as a very secondary idea. We regard the existence of the universe before us as the only reality, and a millionth part of that reality we never ascribe to God. If that were the case, people would have given up everything to the love of God, for He is the source of all attractions. He has been so described in the Scriptures and realised by the great souls. He is infinite beauty, infinite power, infinite sweetness and infinite charm. If a man actually believed Him to be so, how could he give Him up and make much of things which end only in misery and death ?

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty or that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

The world has a very beautiful exterior, but behind it there is death, desolation and darkness. Very few have the good fortune to pry beyond the grave. There is the world before us. And because we cannot have anything better, anything greater than this, we stick on to it. But what is the idea of God ? Our great forefathers have defined God to be *Sat-chit-anandam*. My friends, let us analyse this word. *Sat* is eternal life, *chit* is all knowledge and *anandam* is all bliss. Ask yourselves whether you want to live or whether you want to die. The answer at once comes, We want to live and not to die. And ask yourselves again whether you want to know partially or to know everything. The answer at once comes,—We want to know all. We want to be all-knowing. You have got the innate hankering after knowledge. If you know something about the stars, the next

moment you will want to know the whole Solar System. This hankering will follow you till you know everything.

Ask yourself whether you want to be happy or miserable. The answer comes,—Eternal bliss is my ideal. So, your ideal is, eternal life, omniscience and eternal blissfulness: This ideal is realised only in God who is *Sat-chit-anandam*. He is the only real Entity behind all this unreal existence, which to-day is and to-morrow is not. When that God is forgotten, just at the time when God, the Father of all, finds out that His children are taking wrong paths, He has to come down because, He is the Father of infinite love. Our Dewan Sahab has just quoted the celebrated lines of the Gita, that God really incarnates Himself at such a time. He must incarnate, for the world belongs to Him. And as you have just now said, in Ramakrishna Deva, the fulfilment of that promise has again come. It is a fact that Sri Ramakrishna's life is a miracle. An idea of wisdom is, that if a man has read many books then only he is a learned man. But here was a man who was illiterate in its truest sense. But how is it that nowadays the whole world regards him as a unique man, an intellectual giant, and even in the West he is regarded by many as an Incarnation of God. He never went out to learn. Still how was it that he has been able to learn things and spread a knowledge which even our books cannot furnish? In reading the Upanishad, we find two words, *Parāvidyā* and *Aparāvidyā*. *Parāvidyā* is superior knowledge. The sage explains it as—By realising the One Eternal you obtain *Parāvidyā*, by knowing which, everything else in the universe becomes known. The other kind of knowledge *Aparāvidyā*, or inferior knowledge is the knowledge of Rigveda, Yajurveda and the other Vedas. The Sruti itself tells you that the study of the Vedas is not so important as the realisation of truth. The study of the Vedas will not enable a man to realise truth. Then who can realise truth? The answer is, he who wants truth and nothing but truth, to him truth reveals itself. This has been exemplified in the life of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna. He wanted truth. He went to school only once and was forced by his learned brother to study a little book on grammar. You might

know that his brother was one of the most learned men of Bengal. Just after Sri Ramakrishna was initiated in the art of book-learning, he saw one of the best students of his brother carrying something in his napkin and when Sri Ramakrishna inquired what it was, he said—this is some rice and one green plantain which I got by performing the functions of a priest in the neighbouring house. Then he reflected—if as the Vedanta says, Brahman only is real, and after studying all this, a man can condescend to perform the functions of a priest only to keep up his life, then this Vedanta is not real Vedanta at all, and Vedanta is to be sought for somewhere inside and not outside. From that day forward, he gave up book-learning and set himself to the study of real Vedanta. He kept the whole Nature as his book and studied it. What was the result? The result was the illumination of self, and the acquirement of *Parāvidyā*, the superior knowledge, by knowing which, everything else could be known. And illumined by the Omniscient Being who resides in the hearts of all, he became the mouthpiece of that All-Knowing Being. “God is living in the hearts of every living being. He is not outside ourselves. He is rooted in us. And that God we should not forget.”

God is nearer to us than we are to ourselves. It may appear to you to be a paradox, but it is a fact. Where are you at present? You are scattered outside. You are where your name is, where your wife and children are, with those whom you love most. You are there and there alone. And whatever you love most is outside the world at present. And so, as you have gone outside yourselves and you have to bring yourselves in. That is not easy. Have you ever tried to bring yourselves inward, even for a minute? You will find the experiment extremely difficult. You have gone outside your real home and cannot find it easy to return. But God is always inside you. Thus I say He is nearer to you than you are to yourselves. And our primary duty should be to know Him. It is this fact that Sri Ramakrishna came to emphasise and to preach broadcast to the world. He came to point out to men that book-learning makes learning nothing. You must unlearn it and then alone you will be able to go inside and

then only the concentration will ~~come~~, and then only illumination will come to you ~~and not~~ till then. This is what he preached, the grandest of ideals. Don't believe that you are a sinner. It is a sin to call a man sinner. You are all pure and perfect. You are come from God. Out of a man comes a man, out of a horse comes a horse. And if you have come out of God, you are all Gods. Don't believe in all such false teachings as that you are a sinner. Only on account of ignorance about your true nature you have forgotten what and who you are. A mirror is all clean; only some dirt has accumulated on it; your duty is to wash it off and keep the mirror clean. And the moment you wash off the ignorance, you will be able to realise that no new self has come to you, that your original self is all right, but on account of the accidental impurities which have settled upon it, you appear to be impure. To say that you are a sinner is the worst falsehood that can be entertained by man.

Another thing which Sri Ramakrishna has preached is, that every religion is a path leading to the same goal. This we must bear in mind especially when every religionist wants to make out, that his religion is the only true one and that all other religions are false. Sri Ramakrishna in his lifetime has been able to find out that the goal which every sect of Hinduism promulgated is the very goal which is the ideal of the Buddhists, of the Christians, of the Mahomedans, of the Zoroastrians, and all the rest of the religions of the world. This, he has clearly pointed out, is the universal basis of Vedanta. What is that basis? It is the most natural basis, which I have been just now pointing out to you. Vedanta is merely a study of human nature. By studying human nature, Vedanta has been able to arrive at the conclusion that every one has been aspiring after the three ideals,—eternal life, blissfulness and all knowledge. Vedanta is based upon this eternal verity *Sat-chit-anandam*, and upon this every religion has been based. For, every teacher will have to show the utility of his doctrine, otherwise who will care to accept it? This utility is not John Stuart Mill's invention. It was from time without beginning. The first thing we considered was what utility it would bring to us. Kapila began his

philosophy in that way. Religion promises to give you the highest ideal you aspire to. The Christian says, that his religion gives you that ideal, so says the Mahomedan, the Shaiva, the Shakta, the Vaishnava, and others. Some may call that ideal Allah, others Jehovah and others Ishvara, and so on. But all in essence means the same thing, and the highest ideal is nothing but that. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, that water may have many names, but the names do not change its properties. In the same way, your ideals may bear different names; but behind all these names, there is one ideal, that highest ideal—the realisation of eternal life, eternal bliss and omniscience. Although he taught us this, he also used to point out that every man must stick to his own religion as that is most natural to him, in order to enable him to realise his ideal sooner. We must stick to the religion which we have inherited. And this is in perfect unison with the teachings of Sri Krishna who said—a man must follow his own religion rather than embrace another.

I do not want to take more of your time. You have given us a home and we shall work here and teach the precepts of the divine Master under this roof. With these words, I resume my seat.

Sister Devamata then rose and spoke as follows:—

The opening of a Math in India is a common occurrence, and perhaps on that account, makes little impression on the unthinking mind. But as for myself, I am not accustomed to that mode of thought. I believe that when the key turns on that door and the door opens, a new era begins for Bangalore and for all the world. Swami Vivekananda was the sole living word of Sri Ramakrishna sounding about the whole world, and though he was alone in his work, yet to-day we are hearing from the very heart of Africa, from the farther islands of the Pacific and from the very northern parts of Europe, the appreciation of Ramakrishna Mission as the living word of Swami Vivekananda. In it he has embodied all his plans, all his hopes and all his methods of work for India and the rest of the world. If you read his rules and ideas as he formulated them, you will find in them the summary of all his lectures, the incarnation of the very life and soul of humanity. This epitomē

marks, as it were, the very embodiment of Swami Vivekananda.

When that simple unknown Sannyasin came down from the North with his *Kamandalu* in his hands, did any of you know that a new dawn was appearing in the spiritual world; did any of you know him throughout all those years of wandering in the North before he came to the South? Did you know then that there was a smouldering fire in him which was destined to grow into a flash in Chicago and bring new light to the world, of which you never dreamt before?

You know that in the physical world, the period of parturition is great just in proportion as the manifestation of life is high. In the physical world we get quick results. But in social and political movements the forces are high and the results are very slow. So also, in the spiritual world where the growth is organic, that growth is necessarily slower still, just as a tree that has to bear the brunt of the strong wind must necessarily have its roots deep into the earth to resist it. And so this Math stands to-day as the result of silent and unknown work on the part of some of Swami Vivekananda's children, who have lived here amongst you, almost unperceived by you, and yet to-day, you have this sign of visible spiritual development. Silent as it is, you might hope to obtain mighty results therefrom.

I know that there are some amongst you who would have wished, that before the Math was built there could have been a workshop or an Industrial school. But, my friends, I have had more experience perhaps in the world about the practicality of such things than you, and I have found that the good works in the world are divided into two ways like this. Suppose one works in a prison-house, concerned to make prisoners comfortable, to give them soft beds, wholesome food and proper recreation; while another says what does it matter what people say, or what the prisoners eat; these people are in prison, come let us break it open and take the prisoners out. This course alone will give them happiness. The fact is, we never even dream that we are in prison, and that is why to-day so many Industrial schools, asylums for the aged and the widows are established. But it was the glory of the sons of India that they

said, they would rather sleep on the ground and go semi-naked about the streets and face starvation than think of obtaining spiritual freedom by any other means but renunciation. That is the reason why although India is so low, she yet stands high on the spiritual platform, and although she is weak, she has yet a spiritual power that is supremely worthy of her.

I have lived two-thirds of my life in a country where people eat three hearty meals a day and yet go hungry, sleep on soft beds and yet find no rest; they live in palaces and yet feel themselves homeless. Why? Because they are more and more becoming slaves to mammon, and that spirit is driving them day and night by false deception, bringing them no happiness. But you, here in India, are given to spirituality, a spirituality which gives food to feed the soul and a place where the soul can rest in peace. You are therefore quite at home with it, and can you give it away for mammon? No.

Do not lose this opportunity. Certainly there was no one in our times who ever understood the message of God but Swami Vivekananda. There was never any one who knew the needs of modern India better than he. There was never a greater spiritual teacher and a lover of mankind than he. And this is his work. Do not say that it is hard for any one to understand the mission of Vivekananda, and that on this account you cannot work with him. Swami Vivekananda was no doubt so mighty that one man cannot understand him. But one man may have grasped something of Vivekananda, and another may have understood something of him also. So let us stand together and work together; and if you all thus stand together striving shoulder to shoulder to realise those ideals which he has set before us, then, I say, the result of our conjoint labour here will be prodigious, and Bangalore will be rendered a very great city. You may not just quite realise the effect of this work, because it is only the dawn that is before your eyes. But I can tell you that when the first shining rays of divine light dispel the long night of the foolish imitation of European habits and awaken you to a sense of your own self-consciousness and strength, then you will arise and realise what has really been achieved by you and what you are capable of doing.

Glory yourselves on the fact that you have made a home for the children of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna, not only for the children who speak your language and are used to your ways and customs, but the children of all the world. And then truly will it be a new day when the people from the West, North and South will gather together here and joining hands with you will sing, perhaps in different languages and in different ways, the glory of the one God, and will work together for the united common family of humanity. When this stage is reached and only then, the spirit of Swami Vivekananda will be at perfect rest and will live in the eternal abode of that divine Guru Sri Ramakrishna, and you yourselves will be sharing in the labours, the glory and the joy that is his in his eternal rest.

After the conclusion of Sister Devamata's thoughtful address the following programme was duly observed with much religious fervour:—

1. The opening ceremony of the Math, in which the Dewan Sahib handed over the keys of the building to the Swami Brahmananda.
2. Unveiling the picture of Sri Ramakrishna-deva.
3. Worship and *Homa*.
4. Vedic chanting, prayers and *Mangalam*.
5. *Aratrikam*.
6. Distribution of flowers and *Prasad*, which brought the proceedings to a close.

INSPIRED TALKS—A REVIEW

Inspired Talks by Swami Vivekananda.

Recorded by a disciple during the seven weeks at Thousand Island Park. With two photographs, one of Swamiji, and the other of the house where he lived at Thousand Island Park. Excellent get-up. 7½" x 5". Pp. 282. Published by the Ramakrishna Mission, Mylapur, Madras. Cloth Rs. 2.

We must congratulate all concerned, the teacher, the publisher, and the editor, on the production of this admirable account of one of the most interesting periods of Swamiji's life. These talks were given some twelve years ago, to a small group of disciples, at Thousand Island Park,

U. S. A. and were not originally intended for publication, but notes were carefully recorded and preserved by Miss Waldo, one of the disciples present, who now gives us this volume, which will certainly secure a ready welcome. It may be noted that the contents of this book open with a preface by the Sister Devamata giving an outline of the inception of the work, followed by an appreciative introductory narrative by Miss Waldo who dramatically describes the story of scenes in Swamiji's early days in America; while yet another disciple furnishes in "The Master," a personal and picturesque sketch of the great teacher as she knew him.

These notes are fragmentary but this circumstance does not rob them of the value of completeness. Everything that touches the teaching of Swamiji is invested with interest and this fresh contribution fulfils the promise of its title, and can be read with great acceptance by the religionist at all stages and of all creeds. The subject is treated with the ease and certainty that comes of the Master's complete knowledge of Vedānta, and the utterances of a man who, thoroughly convinced himself, would gladly impart to others the light and peace which have blessed his own soul. This high-priest of progress who represented genuine Vedānta, seemed conscious that he held the philosopher's stone for the interpretation of religion.

For all in our life that is of the finer consciousness, these inspired talks have a stimulating effect;—they quicken the perception of truth and help to clarify and energise the religious feelings of those who assimilate into their existence their vital essences. It is a store-house of beautiful thoughts, from which the religious disciple of any cult, the apostle of any cause, the Pundit and the student alike, may draw inspiration.

We, who have been in close contact with the Swami, feel our hearts opened anew while we peruse his words, and there comes back to us the memory of his magnetic personality, his tender and caressing voice, and the rapt mystic light in his eyes as he gave out sublime truths. His spiritual fervour seemed to remove him so far from earth, to exalt him from the man into the saint. It is, therefore, not an easy book to appraise in a brief review. Indeed, it is impossible for us, who

easily allow ourselves to be led imperceptibly onwards by the spiritual nourishment, to adjudicate fairly on its merits. Its range is vast and its information so intimate on such a variety of high ideas.

It is the true gold of philosophy, and there is often more of real thought and suggestiveness in a single page than would go to the making of many philosophical treatises.

If India has lost her empire over commerce, she is winning an increasing ascendancy over the minds of men in the realm of spirituality, which she has made peculiarly her own! Its greatness is being recognised far and near, and her philosophy is being assigned its true place in the world.

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The report of the Famine Relief Work is in the Press and is expected to appear shortly.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

(CULLED AND CONDENSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

DURING every minute of the world's twenty-four hours, 3,000,000 matches are struck.

A MILLIONAIRE named Samson has left his entire fortune, £1,500,000, to the Berlin Academy of Sciences.

Two-thirds of all the letters which pass through the post-offices of the world are written in English.

Approximately 528,000 claims for old age pensions have been allowed in Great Britain, and it is calculated that next year the cost will be about £7,000,000, though that may be much exceeded.

IN an ostrich that recently died in British East Africa, 113 metal cartridge cases, together weighing 3lb. 3oz., were found among a miscellaneous assortment of stones and nails.

ABOUT nine lakhs of rupees have been granted by the Maharaja Bahadur of Darbhanga towards giving "takkavi" loans as well as gratuitous relief to the suffering ryots of the Raj.

MYSORE mines in December showed a return of 21,017 ounces of gold, which constitutes a record in the history of the mines. The previous best return was 19,987 ounces in December 1907.

GERMANY is said to produce one-fourth of the honey crop of Europe. In the United States the production of the crop is spread over a good many States. The value of the same last year is placed at \$25,000,000.

IN celebration of the centenary of Evangelista Torricelli, the inventor of the barometer, a colossal barometer fifteen yards high and nearly a yard in width has been constructed by Father Alphani, the director of the Florence observatory.

A PROCESS of manufacturing coloured woods has been patented by a Norwegian firm. Whole stems of green trees are coloured, the sap being pressed out of the stem by force, and the dye injected in its place. It is claimed that wood treated by this process is much more durable than ordinary wood, and will not warp.

ONE of the most interesting exhibits was a display of orchids by Sir Jeremiah Colman, of Gatton Park, among which was a specimen of the *Bulbophyllum Lemniscatoides*, carefully protected by a glass bell. It is barely an inch in circumference, but it is said to be worth £500. The flower is like a tiny bunch of black grapes which have been split open, and show under the microscope a delicate tongue.

IT is with deep regret that we have to record the death of Babu Nabin Chandra Sen, one of the greatest poets that modern Bengal has produced. His poetry has adorned the literature of his native country, has stirred the deepest feelings of patriotism in the heart of the most callous, and has inspired an ardour for the good, the true, and the beautiful in all who have come under its fascinating influence.

SIR John Hewett, the Lieutenant Governor of U. P., recently met with a sad accident. His Honour was out for a bicycle ride when a country-cart collided with his machine. He fell and was badly cut about the head and bled freely. An old Indian woman, who happened to be there, tore her covering and wiped the wound, showing great solicitude for him who was not known to her as the *Lat Shaheb*. His Honour has rewarded her with Rs. 500.

VERY satisfactory results have been obtained by the Vivekananda Girls' School, in Ceylon, at the last Government Examination which was held in October. There are more than fifty girls in the school, and tuition is now given, up to the 5th standard. Arrangements will soon be made to teach up to the 8th standard, and Mr. Ramanathan, we are informed, has kindly promised to meet all the additional expenses that may be necessary for the upkeep of the higher standards.

LORD Kitchener has received a large number of telegrams from regiments and

crops in the Indian Army thanking him for having secured an increase of pay to the officers and men. The annual charge in connection with this increase will be about 42 lakhs in pay for rank and file, 14 lakhs for officers, and 7 lakhs for the free issue of firewood. Some twenty lakhs will be met by the Finance Department immediately for payment of a week's salary to all Government servants drawing less than Rs. 50 monthly.

THE result of the excavations of Agam Kuan, an old well near the site of ancient Pataliputra, will no doubt be of great interest to archæological scholars. The well is believed to be 2,500 years old and contains many relics of antiquarian interest, which the excavations are bringing out. Forty feet of water have been pumped out and it is proposed to excavate thirty feet of the *debris* below. Copper pieces bearing inscriptions of Babar, Shah Alam, &c., brass pots of very ancient make, a stone slab with Persian inscriptions, and religious offerings called *Bhoot Ka Jamote* in large numbers have been dug out.

THE proceedings of the birthday anniversary celebration of Swami Vivekananda at Kuala Lumpur began with sports on the Victoria Institution grounds, and later the members of the Vivekananda Reading Hall entertained their friends to light refreshments. The formal meeting took place at 7. p. m. After the recitation of several hymns and songs, the Swamiji's photograph was garlanded. A paper on Swami Vivekananda and his teachings was then read by Mr. S. Ponnudurai, after which prizes were distributed to the successful competitors at the sports. Next followed some reading from religious works, and singing of "Thevaram" (devotional songs).

THE solemn inauguration of the Medina section of the Hedjaz-Railway took place on

Sept. '08, which was the thirty-third anniversary of the Sultan's accession to the throne. The railway connects Medina with Damascus, a distance of over 800 miles. Nearly 300 miles to Mecca remains to be laid. It has cost over £3,000,000, much of which has been subscribed by Moslems all over the world. The land was given by the Sultan, and Turkish soldiers supplied the labour. The new line will enable the pilgrimage to the holy cities of Medina and Mecca to be made without passage along the Red Sea, and at the same time will facilitate the transport of military supplies in Arabia.

A KIND of mechanical junior clerk—a machine which will open four or five hundred letters a minute—has been patented by one of the smartest business women in New York, Miss Sophie Heilbrun.

The inventor though only twenty years of age, has charge of one of the most important mail departments in the city, and about 10,000 letters pass through the department each day. The time wasted in opening these led Miss Heilbrun to think of the letter-opener.

Boxes containing the letters are passed under a roller, which grinds just the barest edge off the tops, and leaves them ready for their contents to be picked out. Miss Heilbrun has a salary of £1,200 a year.

WHEN we read of Helen Keller we feel there ought to be no sordid problems in life, no physical tragedies. We get transported into what seems at first a world of miracles, till we realise what infinite hope, courage, and trouble have been at work to create this world. In getting to know this world of the blind deaf-mute girl we feel what unexplored powers of the tactual sense there must be in all of us. But it requires the intelligence, the patience, and persistency of a remarkable mind to explore these powers to the extent that Miss Keller has done.

"Without imagination what a poor thing my world would be!" she writes, and it is this imagination, full of intuition and poetry, which gives the touch of genius to the writer.

SOME startling manifestations of psychic phenomena have been given in New York by a young mechanic named Frank E. Foskett before two eminent professors, Prof. P. F. Hall and Prof. William James, and a number of students of psychical research. A person who was present in one of the *séances* has given a brief description of Foskett's powers.

He declared that Foskett was completely dematerialised, and added:—

"He seemed to dissolve in thin air as we watched him. He was gone forty-one seconds then he materialised again. The spectacle was startling.

"We have asked him to appear before us again. It seems unbelievable, but he certainly seemed to be dematerialising." Those who examined him do not believe that hypnotism accounts for his feats. They consider that he possesses some hitherto unknown latent psychic force.

THE Monlamchenpo, the grand annual religious convocation of Lhasa, begins in January and continues till the middle of February. This institution was founded by the great Buddhist reformer Tsong Khapa at the end of the 15th century, and has been kept up in unbroken succession since. Heads of monasteries of Thibet, Mongolia, Western China, all assemble at Lhasa on this occasion, and pious pilgrims from Higher Asia, whose number generally exceeds fifty thousand, come to join here, crossing the cold, sandy deserts of Gobi and Mongolia. The ceremonies are held four times daily, at 4 a. m. when the temperature is several degrees below zero, at 10 a. m., at 3 p. m., and at 6 p. m., when the lamas sit on cushions, with their feet and arms bare, to chant

sacred hymns. At this time the devotees are regaled with buttered tea and biscuits at the State expense, and the greatest attention is paid to the sanitation of the City of Lhassa, its municipal administration for the time being transferred to the highest executive official of the grand monastery of Dapung, called Shalno. The Dalai Lama is expected to be present on the Thibetan New Year's Day which falls in the first week of February.

It has been proposed to hold, in Calcutta, a Convention of Religions for the elucidation of the doctrines of the different religions followed by the different sections of the Indian Community. To give effect to the above proposal, a representative committee have been formed with Babu Sarada Charan Mitra, (late Puisne Judge, High Court, Calcutta) as President.

Theses on the following, amongst other religions and different sects thereof, will be read at the Convention. 1. Hinduism comprising Buddhism, Jainism, Shaktism, Vaishnavism, Saivism, Sikhism, Brahmoism, Arya Samaj and Theosophy. 2. Christianity. 3. Islamism. 4. Zoroastrianism. 5. Judaism.

The committee think it desirable that each religious community should elect its own representative to elucidate its doctrines at the Convention.

Every thesis should contain elucidation of the principles of the religion or religious sect dealt with by it, and state its peculiar features distinguishing it from other religions and religious sects, but it should not contain any attack, direct or indirect, on any sect or religion.

The precise date of holding the Convention will be shortly announced.

MR. Luther Burbank lectured on "New Creations of Flowers and Plants, and How They are Produced," at Berkeley, under the auspices of the Agricultural Club of the University of California, U. S. A.

Burbank spoke briefly of a few of his creations—the Burbank potato, of which 14,000,000 bushels are being produced on the Pacific Slope annually. Prof. Burbank told of having collectors in all parts of the world, and of his work, which, he said, was in the nature of an architectural process, the constant building up of fruits, flowers and trees. To build up or change a plant, said Burbank, required the same careful study and work as the building of a home—a foundation must be laid, and each part of the superstructure must be carefully built, or the entire creation will fall.

Every flower, even every blade of grass, has its individuality, said Burbank. Plants are like humans in that they are governed to a great extent by heredity, profit or fail by environment and they can be moulded by attention. It has long been recognised that the breed of animals can be improved, but only during the last few years has it been recognised that the species, or breed, of plant life can be bettered, and even more easily than can animal life. By care and attention, the characteristics and habits of plants can be changed, their fragrance can be added to or detracted from as man may direct; the flavour of fruits can be increased or decreased, and their flavour can be changed to suit the grower, and so may the colour of fruits or flowers be changed.

Burbank spoke particularly of his experiments with his new species of spineless cactus. He had demonstrated on his own place at Santa Rosa, he said, that 198,000 pounds of cactus fruit could be grown on one acre of ground. The cactus fruit, he said, contained 16 per cent. sugar, and was as wholesome as an apple. There was no plant in the world that produced so profusely and such nourishing food as the spineless cactus, and he believed it would ultimately mean the reclaiming of thousands of acres of desert lands.