

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

AVATARA—III

MASTER: God is indeed Infinite. But He is Omnipotent. He may so ordain that His Divinity as Love may be manifest in the flesh and be among us as God Incarnate. Divine Incarnation is a fact.

Of course, one cannot make this perfectly clear by means of words. It is a fact to be seen and realised by the spiritual eyes. One must see God to be convinced of this.

By analogy we can at best faintly apprehend the matter. Suppose, one touches the horn of a cow, or her feet, or the tail, or the udder; would not this be the same as touching the cow herself? For us human beings, the chief thing about the cow is the milk, which comes from the udder. Well! the milk of Divine Love streameth to us from God Incarnate.

Who can know God? It is not given to us, nor is it required of us to *know* Him fully.

Collected and adapted from 'The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna' by M.

It is enough if we can see Him—feel that *He is the only Reality!*

A person, suppose, comes to the Holy River Ganges and touches the water. He would say, 'I have been blessed with the vision and touch of the Holy River.' Surely it is not required of him to touch the whole River from Gomikhi to Gangasagar,—from its source to the mouth!

SEEKEST thou God? Then seek Him in man! His Divinity is manifest more in Man than in any other object. Look around for a man with a Love of God that overfloweth—a man who liveth, moveth and hath his being in God—a man intoxicated with His Love. In such a man hath God incarnated Himself.

FIRE is latent in all objects. In the constitution of wood it remains in a degree far greater than in other objects.

(To M.): God indeed is in all things; only His Power in more or less manifest in the flesh

IN an article in the Nov. no. of the *Modern Review*, Pandit Siva Nath Sastri, the Minister of the Sadharana Brahmo Samaj, writes thus of a meeting with Sri Ramakrishna:—

A Christian preacher of Bhowanipur, who was my personal friend, once accompanied me on my visit to Ramakrishna. When I introduced my friend to him, I said—"To-day I bring a Christian preacher to you, who having heard of you from me, was very eager to see you." Whereupon the Saint bowed his head to the ground and said, "I bow again and again, at the feet of Jesus." Then took place the following conversation:—

My Christian friend—How is it, Sir, that you bow at the feet of Christ? What do you think of Him?

Ramakrishna—Why, I look upon Him as an Incarnation of God.

My friend—Incarnation of God! Will you kindly explain what you mean by it?

Ramakrishna—An Incarnation like our Rama or Krishna. Don't you know there is a passage in the Bhagavat where it is said that the Incarnations of Vishnu or the Supreme Being are innumerable?

My friend—Please, explain further; I do not understand it quite.

Ramakrishna—Just take the case of the ocean. It is a wide and almost infinite expanse of water. But owing to special causes, in special parts of this wide sea, the water becomes congealed into ice.

When reduced to ice it can be easily manipulated and applied to special uses. An Incarnation is something like that. Like that infinite expanse of water, there is the Infinite Power, immanent in matter and mind, but for some special purposes, in special regions, a portion of that Infinite Power, as it were, assumes, a tangible shape in history; that is what you call a great man; but he is, properly speaking, a local manifestation of the all-pervading Divine Power; in other words, an Incarnation of God. The greatness of men is essentially the manifestation of Divine Energy.

My friend—I understand your position, though we do not quite agree with it. (Then turning to me)—"I should like to know what my Brahmo friends would say to this."

Ramakrishna—Don't talk of them, they do not see it in that light.

Myself—(addressing Ramakrishna). Who told you, Sir, that we do not believe that the greatness of the great teachers of humanity was a Divine communication, and in that sense they were incarnations of a Divine idea?

Ramakrishna—Do you really believe it to be so? I did not know that.

Afterwards there was a conversation during which the Saint illustrated, in his well-known homely way, many spiritual truths which quite struck my Christian friend as something very noteworthy.

OCCASIONAL NOTES

OF all the questions that a wakeful and fresh intellect will constantly ask, there is none, perhaps, more sure to recur, than, What is Freedom? Many of us are born struggling for actual freedom, for our own freedom. All of us are born to struggle for something. Nothing more terrible could be imagined than a human being put into cir-

cumstances so artificial that all motive for struggle was eliminated, and he was deprived of the natural human right, of something to desire and strive for. We can imagine a man in prison for life realising such hopelessness, though, if so, it must be because his whole conception of activity is social or muscular, and therefore can be thwarted. Or a cage

made of riches, or rank,—such a cage as that of royal birth, for instance—might produce this effect on a nature too good to lose itself in fleshly delights, and too stupid to find paths of self-development. But if so, the man who never struggled would grow up an idiot. That at least is certain. All our vivacity, all our intelligence, is developed by struggle. Only shapeless incapacity could result from its lack.

It has been said that the great may be distinguished from the little by whether or not they are struggling for freedom. This may be true. For there is no doubt that we may struggle for, and even realise a thing, which we could not possibly define intellectually. Most of us win our own freedom in this thing and that thing, and thus gradually build up a more or less perfect freedom. Many struggle for freedom under the name of *the Right*. 'God and my Right'—'*Dieu et mon droit*'—is a formula that refers to some such contest of the soul. It is only Hinduism that has been subtle enough to recognise that beyond the thing itself which seems to be the object of our strife, the real thirst of the soul is for *freedom*—and that this freedom is the essential condition of self-development. The man who is free, says *Dharma*, is the only man who is himself. The man who is really and fully himself, is free—free in all directions, free of all bonds.

One essential characteristic of freedom is that it has always to be realised in opposition to something. The struggle of every individuality—whether a simple or a compound—is to define itself, by attaining self-direction, by repudiating the control of its fellow-organisms. Freedom from the pressure of his social surroundings is an absolute necessity of manly men. The manly man may choose to act precisely as his society would desire, but he must believe that he does this because he himself chooses, and not because society

compels. And yet any great anxiety on this point is crude enough, since manly men are too accustomed to their own freedom, and their own power of defending their freedom, to be uneasy about it, or suspicious of invasions upon it. It is only a child, who has never yet felt himself grown-up, who finds it necessary to refuse whatever is asked of him, in order that he may hug to himself his own liberty of refusal. And here we note the vanity, the selfishness, the pre-occupation with self, and indifference to the needs of others, that make such natures, at such a stage, unfit for high and arduous forms of co-operation. The really great are born with such assurance of their own freedom to withhold, that they are full of eagerness to *give*, and welcome every opportunity of serving, as a privilege. Such natures we see every day. Unselfishness is not rare amongst human beings. On the contrary, it is the mortar that joins the bricks of the whole edifice.

Society, then, is one of the forces against which the individual has to realise his own freedom—one of the powers from which he has to wrest it. But here the question again occurs, what *is* that freedom for which the individual is struggling? And here arises one of the supreme fallacies. Some take it that freedom is identified with slavery to their own impulses. This is the freedom that makes drunkards, gluttons, and libertines.

At first, all our activity, all our development of faculty, depends upon desire: afterwards, desire is seen as a form of disease, of which we must be cured! Is this the truth? The momentum of desire, that impels us to yield inevitably to our own caprices, is not freedom. It is the last and subtlest form of bondage, the more dangerous and deadly for the fact that we are liable to mistake its nature. Liberty to realise what is our own will may be an essential condition of freedom, but

until we are as free from that will, and the desires suggested by that body and mind, as from those of all the other hundreds of millions of human beings, we do not know what real freedom is.

How large, how calm, how full of exquisite joy and graciousness, never dimmed, is the heritage of life that awaits the individual in whose elysian fields of the soul, where this freedom has been won! It may be manifested in any way, by any means. For only the free can apprehend what freedom is. Only the free can determine how freedom shall be shown. Only the actions of the free are potent, unhampered by feebleness of their own or aggression of others—free! free! Freedom is indeed the supreme good of the soul. So far from being ‘a night in which all cows are black,’ it is, as every Hindu knows, the perfect access of daylight, neither too much nor too little, into every nook and cranny of our universe. But even so, when we seek to define it, we are met by an eternal impossibility, and can only ejaculate “*neti! neti!* Not this! Not this!”

The soldier has to learn that obedience is his form of prayer. To be doing *japam*

when one ought to be resting, and consequently to be sleepy when one ought to be at work, is not a meritorious condition. No *punya* that way! The sunny-heartedness of the child, on the other hand, ready to forget all about its mother, if its mother tells it to run away and play, is true *bhakti*, and better than many *pranams*.

What a wonderful discovery was that of the Swami Vivekananda, that *manliness* may be the whole of piety! Some races have practised such virtue, out of sheer instinct, but never before was a survey of life so comprehensive, so far-reaching, added to the treasury of authoritative pronouncements on religious truth. This manliness-which-is-righteousness involves, it will be noticed, a kind of *mukti*, for the manly man has no time to be conscious of his own manliness. Heroism in great moments is the natural blossom of a life that in its little moments is fine and fearless.

“Do the work that’s nearest,
Though it’s dull at whiles,
Helping when you meet them,
Lame dogs over stiles.”

is not a bad rule of life for the simple and the brave.

PAPERS ON EDUCATION.—I

BY THE SISTER NIVEDITA

THE education that we give our children inevitably expresses our own conception of that synthesis of which our lives form a part. Thus, the American school will consider itself incomplete, until it has found out how to initiate the youth into mechanical processes. The Australian school will probably strive to lay the foundations of agriculture. The schools of a scientific age will recognise the importance of science, and those of a classical revival, that of dead languages. It

follows that two different ages will never repeat each other exactly, in the matter of education, for the simple reason that in different historical epochs, nations select different branches of training, as of central necessity to their children, only, in reality, because they are paramount factors for the moment, in the national life.

In Bengal, for instance, under the Sanskrit Renaissance of the Guptas, a knowledge of the Sanskrit language and literature became the

distinctive mark of a gentleman. A thousand years later, a man in the same position had to be versed in Persian also. To-day, English is the test. Thus a similar mental and social dignity is attained by changing means, at different epochs.

Fortunately for the civilisation of India, the Hindu has always clearly perceived the mind behind the method, as the thing with which education has fundamentally to deal. It is this which, in spite of so many catastrophes, has, in the past, saved the Indian genius from destruction. And it is this which constitutes its best security for the future. Just so long as the Brahminic system of directly training the minds of the young to concentration persists, will the Indian people remain potentially equal to the conquest of any difficulty that the changing ages may bring them. But once let this training be neglected or lost, and in spite of purity of race, the vigour of the Indian mind would probably fall to a level with that of modern peoples in general, waxing and waning with the degree and freedom of self-expression that the passing period might permit them. At present—owing largely to the peculiar psychological discipline, received by girls as well as boys, along with their devotional training—the most salient characteristic of the Hindu intellect is its reserve of strength, its conservation of power. As we read the history of the country, we are amazed at the unforeseenness with which geniuses occur, and the brilliance of their isolated achievements. The Indian Bhaskaracharya, in the twelfth century, envisages the fact of gravitation with as unflinching a conviction—though social conditions do not lead him to so clear an enunciation—as the Western Newton, in the seventeenth. A race of women, cloistered and secluded, blossom forth suddenly into a Chand Bibi. Within the last twenty years, in spite of universal clerkship, we have given to the world men who have enriched humanity in

Religion, in Science, and in Art. The invention of smokeless powder, and improvements made in surgery, are extended *applications* of knowledge, merely. India has shown herself potent to add to knowledge itself.

These things are some indication of the sleeping power of the Indian mind. They are the chance blossoms that show the living-ness of the whole tree. They tell us that what Indian people have done in the past, that Indian people can do in the future. And if it be so, then we owe this undying vitality to the fact that whatever may have been the characteristic expression most prized, at any given moment, our forefathers never neglected the culture and development of the mind itself. The training of the attention—rather than the learning of any special subject, or the development of any particular faculty—has always been, as the Swami Vivekananda claimed for it, the chosen goal of Hindu education. Great men have been only as incidents, in the tale of this national effort, to achieve control and self-direction of the mind itself.

It is not here, then, in the object and nature of the inner psychological process, that Western educators have anything to teach India. Instead of this, the superiority of the West lies in her realisation of the value of great united efforts in any given direction,—even that of self-education—and in the particular synthesis which, as she may think, it is necessary for the educational process to reflect. Thus, India may, all things considered, be capable of producing a greater number of geniuses, per thousand of her population, than Germany; but Germany has known how to bring *the German mind* to bear on the German problem! That is to say, she has organised the common, popular mind, and to this organised mind she has presented the riddle that is to be guessed. Let us think of the mental weight and area, the material quantity and power, so to speak, of the thought thus

brought in contact with the question she wants answered. What is that question? Very probably it is strictly relative in its character. We may perhaps assume, without injustice, that it is the prosperity and well-being of Germany and the German people, only. This is no impersonal, no absolute goal, such as that Renunciation and *Mukti* which India proposes to her children. Quite true. And yet, to the mind and soul of the individual German, the prosperity of his country will appear as an impersonal end. Even the Hindu has to begin climbing towards renunciation in the abstract, by first practising self-suppression, for the sake of others, in the concrete. Even to the Hindu, the thought of the family is apt to be the first, as it were, of "those altar-stairs that slope through darkness up to God." Those dependent on him, he will say if we ask him, are a trust put into his hands, as a means whereby to work out his own *karma*, and reach true discrimination. And why should the German not feel the same thing about his country? Why should this not be to him the last great step in "the altar-stairs" of life?

Supposing that it is so, he must be able to pursue the studies necessary to the earning of a livelihood, with the idea before him of a noble devotion to the cause of his people as a whole. Not cherishing this idea, he would still have had to prepare himself for a life of earning—even the Hindu has to do that!—with the difference that he could not then have put into his training or his service all the ardour of motive, or all the lofty imagination of which he is capable. There is nothing so be-littling to the human soul, as the acquisition of knowledge, for the sake of worldly reward. There is nothing so degrading to a nation, as coming to look upon the life of the mind as a means to breadwinning. Unless we strive for truth because we love it, and must at any cost attain, unless we live the life of thought out of our own rejoicing in it,

the great things of heart and intellect will close their doors to us. There is a very definite limit to the distance a man can go, under the impulsion of a worldly motive. But if, on the other hand, his very love for those dear to him, is on a plane so lofty and so true that it presents itself to him as a reason for being and reaching the utmost possible; if he knows that the more he can realise, the better will it be, if not for his own immediate family, yet for that wider kindred that he calls his country, then his public spirit is of a quality to give him wings. It adds freedom, not bondage. It becomes an achievement, not a limitation.

In this matter, India may have something to learn from the West. Why should we limit the social motive to a man's own family, or to his own community? Why not alter the focus, till we all stand, aiming each at the good of all-the-others, and willing, if need be, to sacrifice himself, his family, and even his particular social group, for the good of the whole? The will of the hero is ever an impulse to self-sacrifice. It is for the good of the People—not for my own good—that I should strive to become one with the highest, the noblest, and the most truth-loving that I can conceive. It may even work out to my own personal destruction. It may lead to my swimming across the flood, to carry on the work of the telegraph-station, or leaping into the pit of death, for the rescue of a comrade. Either might be fatal. Shall I leave my family to struggle with poverty, unprovided? Away with the little vision! Shall we not eagerly die, both I and they, to show to the world what the Indian idea of duty may be? May not a single household be glad to starve, in order that a nation's face may shine? The hero's choice is made in a flash. To him, the larger vision is closer than the near. Within the instant, he strikes for eternity, strikes and is done. In concentrating the German mind on the German problem, Europe makes a hero

out of many a common man. This also is a form of realisation.

We have to think, then, of the concentration of the Indian mind on the Indian problem. In order to do this, we are not asked to abandon that older system of training the mind itself, and rendering it familiar with absolute and universal considerations, on which, as already said, so much that is distinctive in Indian power and culture has depended in the past, and must depend in the future. But whereas, at present, the great bulk of our popular mind is preoccupied with schemes of instruction, for the purpose of earning individual livelihoods, we now desire to consider the best means for bringing about a conscious unification of that mind, in order

that we may be better able to compass thereby the common weal, the good of the whole. This substitution of the common good for the particular good—with the result that a higher level of individual good is rendered possible!—is a process whose practicability is evidenced in Europe herself. It is not on special personalities and rarely-equipped faculties that the course of European history depends to-day; so much as the weight and power of common mind that has been unified and released, to work on certain given tasks. It is so released, and prepared for such release, by the form and quality of popular education. It is for us, then, who are Indian, to see what are the essentials of that education, with a view to appropriating its benefits to India and the Indian people.

HERTHA

I am that which began,
 Out of me the years roll;
 Out of me God and man;
 I am equal and whole;
 God changes, and man, and the form of them
 bodily: I am the soul.

Before ever land was,
 Before ever the sea,
 Or soft hair of the grass,
 Or fair limbs of the tree,
 Or the flesh-coloured fruit of my branches, I
 was, and thy soul was in me.

First life on my sources
 First drifted and swam;
 Out of me are the forces
 That save it or damn;
 Out of me man and woman, and wild-beast
 and bird: before God was, I am.

Beside or above me,
 Nought is there to go;

Love or unlove me,
 Unknow me or know,
 I am that which unloves me and loves: I am
 stricken, and I am the blow.

But what thing dost thou now,
 Looking Godward, to cry
 "I am I, thou art thou,
 I am low, thou art high?"
 I am thou, whom thou seekest to find: him find
 thou but thyself, thou art I.

I that saw where ye trod
 The dim paths of the night
 Set the shadows called God
 In your skies to give light;
 But the morning of Manhood is risen and the
 shadowless Soul is in sight.

The tree many-rooted
 That swells to the sky
 With frondage red-fruited,
 The life-tree am I;

In the buds of your lives is the sap of my leaves ;
ye shall live and not die.

But the Gods of your fashion
That take and that give,
In their pity and passion
That scourge and forgive,

They are worms that are bred in the bark that
falls off ; they shall die and not live.

I the grain and the furrow,
The plough-cloven clod
And the ploughshare drawn through,
The germ and the sod,

The deed and the doer, the seed and the sower,
the dust which is God.

Child, underground ?
Fire that impassioned thee,
Hast thou known how I fashioned thee,
Iron that bound,

Dim changes of water, what thing of all these
hast thou known of or found ?

Canst thou say in thine heart
Thou hast seen with thine eyes
With what cunning of art

Thou wast wrought in what wise,
By what force of what stuff thou wast shapen,
and shown on my breast to the skies ?

Have I set such a star
To show light on thy brow
That thou sawest from afar
What I show to thee now ?

Have ye spoken as brethren together, the sun
and the mountains and thou ?

What is here, dost thou know it ?
What was, hast thou known ?
Prophet nor poet
Nor tripod nor throne

Nor spirit nor flesh can make answer, but only
thy mother alone.

Mother, not maker,
Born, and not made ;
Though her children forsake her,
Allured or afraid,

Praying prayers to the God of their fashion, she
stirs not for all that have prayed.

A creed is a rod,
And a crown is of night ;
But this thing is God,
To be man with thy might,
To grow straight in the strength of thy spirit,
and live out thy life as the light.

I am in thee to save thee,
As my soul in thee saith :
Give thou as I gave thee,
Thy life-blood and breath,
Green leaves of thy labour, white flowers of thy
thought, and red fruit of thy death.

O my sons, O too dutiful
Toward Gods not of me,
Was I not enough beautiful ?
Was it hard to be free ?
For behold, I am with you, am in you and of
you ; look forth now and see.

For truth only is living,
Truth only is whole,
And the love of his giving
Man's polestar and pole ;
Man, pulse of my centre, and fruit of my body,
and seed of my soul.

One birth of my bosom ;
One beam of mine eye ;
One topmost blossom
That scales the sky ;
Man, equal and one with me, man that is made
of me, man that is I.

—Algernon Charles Swinburne.

SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS

IN these days of confusion of noble old ideals, we feel a sad want of mental peace, the constant companion of purity and contentment. In spite of all the comforts that modern investigations have afforded us, we cannot disown a tremendous void in our heart for peace. Like our body, our higher nature also craves its food. There can be no peace in the world so long as we, who live, move and have our being in it, keep to this selfish way of living. There can be no peace for us so long as we are not masters of our own selves, and do not look upon our fellow-beings as deserving of the same consideration as ourselves. A nation that takes no interest in the growth of its character, will lag behind in the march for progress. How often has each of us traced his miseries to his own weaknesses, and repented of his countless foibles! Why then do we not try to be better, but fall again and again into the pit that we heartily wish to avoid? Our lack of *Sraddhâ* or faith in ourselves is at the root of all our evils and miseries.

Life which we prize so much, is, after all, a mixture of good and evil. In spite of his best efforts to have his wishes fulfilled, man meets with but partial success. Success and failure, hope and disappointment wage their never-ending wars in the heart of man. Many a man running after wealth and fame, find at last that their youthful hopes have turned out to be but commonplace realities.

Thus our life is a continuous series of struggles. If we analyse what all these struggles are for and whether there is any common goal towards which we are striving, the answer is, happiness. Man wants to be happy always, unbroken happiness is *the* craving of worldly existence. If we, again, analyse our idea of happiness, we find it is purely subjective, depending upon the turn of our minds. A child, for instance, is happy with a doll, not so the

youth; what is happiness to a hunter is disgusting to a sage. But we continue to ride the hobby-horse and chase the shadow, and we are rewarded with vain hopes, wasted hours and weariness of spirit, till it is too late, sometimes, to give up the game. When at last we attempt a retrospect of our past life in a serious mood, we find that we have reaped very little in reality, that the game was not worth the candle. Fortunate, however, is the man to whom pangs of remorse and repentance come, and the world seems dark with the shadows of Sorrow and Death, and he feeling himself helpless cries out in the agony of his heart. The light dawns and he becomes convinced that the darkness lay only within himself. So long as man is selfish, the world will continue to be dark. Let us not hope for real peace and happiness until we learn to forget our own interests in trying to make others happy. We are miserable, because we are ever after making others so, in order that we may secure something agreeable to us by robbing them of it. As we sow, so must we reap. We deceive and are deceived; we love and are loved; we hate and are hated. This is the law of nature.

Thus the awakening soul finds out that all the miseries that are in the world are but the offspring of our own ignorance and selfishness, and with growing introspection he mistakes not the nature of real happiness. It then behoves us to cast off this delusion, and candidly take upon us the results of all our actions, good and bad alike. We alone are responsible for what we are, and we alone can mould the future as we will it to be.

Blessed with Reason, our life is not that of animals which live from moment to moment, but we can link the present with the past and judge what will come in the future, as an offshoot of our present actions. Whatever

our past has been we need have nothing to despair. We may fail a hundred times, for, to err is human; we cannot help committing blunders. But must our life therefore be a curse? We have before us brilliant examples of great sages in all ages and countries, mighty souls, who raised themselves beyond the reach of earthly cares and torments, and who did all they could to help their suffering brothers by pointing out a way of escape. These blessed spirits overlooked the common weaknesses of the flesh, and knowing that behind us all there was the omnipotent Atman, preached to us a gospel of strength. No impossible ideals have those sages held up to us, for they exclaim, "Ye are children of immortal bliss, ye are lions, not sheep, shake off false dreams and arise! Keep out all ideas of self, ye that want to be free!" The problem of life is solved when one has obeyed these commands of the Masters. Life is no more a burden to him who has learnt to kill

his selfish passions. Kill our selfishness we must. We learn by hard experience that our attempts to seek happiness in the gratification of the senses, have been all in vain. Let us then begin by controlling our lower self. Let us have perfect command over our nerves. A sound mind in a sound body is not the possession of an impure soul. What good can we expect of a man who always delights in harbouring within his mind a thousand impure thoughts? If one desires to be strong in body and mind, one must practise purity in thought, word and deed, otherwise one cannot escape being weak and miserable, however favoured one may be in worldly possessions. It is only the strong and the self-controlled one who can seek and know the Atman, and thus realising the same Self equally present in all, he does not hurt the Self by the self but reach the Goal which is Bliss everlasting.

BRAHMACHARI VAIRAGYANANDA.

FROM THE LIPS OF MY GURU

1. Have love for thy Guru as for God.
2. Let truth be the centre of all thy thoughts, words and actions.
3. Life is not worth living if thou canst not live for others.
4. Sacrifice must precede success.
5. The fear of doing things base and mean is the stamp of noble birth.
6. Humility of spirit is the true index of culture.
7. Let patience follow thee like a shadow.
8. Evil thoughts are the parent of evil deeds.
9. The path of purity is the way to spirituality.
10. Forgiveness reigns in noble minds.
11. Be thou like the anvil that braveth all blows.
12. Seek neither praise nor blame, for either is equally delusive.
13. Religion is only possible for those who are indifferent to pleasure and pain.
14. Guilelessness is the stepping-stone to spiritual life.
15. God-vision is the highest riches.
16. The plant of spirituality needs companionship of the holy men for its watering.
17. Remembering God is life, forgetting God is death.
18. Life is a search after the Mother, knowingly or unknowingly.
19. Once in the lap of the Mother and wandering (in recurring births and deaths) ceases for ever.
20. Oceans and seas, hills and mountains,
Rills and rivers, the sun and moon,
Nay all things in the universe—
Animate and inanimate—
Do proclaim Her love and glory.

21. Let thy devotion to the Mother be deep as the ocean and wide as the starry firmament.

22. Purity is the Mother-ward path.

23. It is Her purpose that rules the universe. Thou art simply a channel for the working of that Divine purpose.

24. Glorify Her name in all thy thoughts, words and deeds. If need be, lay down thy life at Her feet. Repeat the name of the Mother, till the flames of the burning ghat claim thy mortal frame.

25. Say—"Hail prosperity! Thou art a blessing from my Mother."

Say—"Hail adversity! Thou art a blessing from my Mother."

Say—"Hail death! Thou art a blessing from my Mother."

26. Pray—"Grant me, Mother, that one-pointed devotion that may make me behold Thee in every object and hear Thy voice in every sound."

Pray—"May all the acts of my daily life be performed as ceremonials of Thy worship."

Pray—"Grant me, Mother, that I may have the Karma-yogin's spirit of work without attachment, the Raja-yogin's control of the mind without the body-idea, the Jnana-yogin's knowledge of the Self without dry intellectualism, and the Bhakta's devotion without foolish sentimentalism."

ANNADA PRASAD GHOSE.

POTHANA, THE POET AND SAINT

"Of themselves do the bees come to the full-blown flower when its sweet perfume is wafted by the breeze," is the prophetic saying in illustration of the truth of the silent seers swaying the destinies of the farthest parts of the globe. Remaining where they are, in a cave or a forest, or in an obscure village, the perfected souls cannot help diffusing the fragrance of their greatness all around and the world is naturally drawn towards them. The Prophet of Nazareth made no tour round the world, yet nearly half the human population worships Him as the Son of God, incarnate in the flesh! The Lord Buddha never went out of India but almost the whole of the Asiatic continent is today filled with the votaries of this Divine Teacher. The simple, illiterate, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva of our own day, never went out of his abode in the Temple of Dakshineswar, never thought of preaching his divine message, but the modern civilized world adores him and pays him divine homage. Even so was the case with the hero of our subject, whose illumined life though influenced a limited sphere, yet is worthy of our highest admiration.

Like poets of other literatures, there are Telugu poets, such as Nanniabattu, Thikkanasomiaji,

Errapraggada, Srinatha, and Mallana, to whose innocent love of nature, the exuberance and richness of the chaste and sublime expressions they make use of in describing it, bear living testimony. Poets there are, Bhaskara, to wit, who, like Wordsworth and Shelly, have given forth a rapturous flood of melodious music in their effort to apprehend the reality in nature. There are records of even a few first-rate poetical heroes who merged themselves in the Reality, and yet retaining their individuality at times burst forth into elegant and musical poetry, a cursory reading even of which would make one thrill with ecstasy.

The foremost among the Telugu poets of this class is the blessed Pothana, whose name is a household word in the Telugu country, and who is well remembered as the revered author of "Srimat-Andhra-Bhagavatam." Leaving aside the difference of opinion, among Telugu writers, as to the exact date of Pothana's birth, it may be safely taken for granted, that he flourished in the middle of the fourteenth century A. D. As to his ancestry, according to the most authoritative records on hand, we can trace it to no further than Bhimana whose son was Somana. Yellana, the son of Somana, had a son called Kesana whose name has been handed

down to posterity as the worthy father of the revered Pothana, the brightest of all the poets. Pothana is said to have been born in 1378 A. D. It is to be deplored that all the records extant on his life, are totally silent about his childhood and boyhood.

Pothana lived at Vontimitta (Ekasilanagaram) a village in the Cuddapah District, Madras. Since his ancestors had all chosen agriculture as their profession, Pothana too became a tiller of the soil. Being not in the position to engage servants, he himself had to labour hard in the fields throughout the day, in sun and rain and cold. His was the lot to suffer the pangs of bitter poverty. It is so often the case, the roaring lion often lives in the darkest cave.

“ Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,
The dark, unfathomed caves of ocean bear.”

Naturally enough Pothana in these days of boyhood, living among simple rustics, had neither the time nor the intention of devoting his life to study and contemplation.

One day when he was grazing his cattle on a hill close by, it so chanced—perhaps the first incident in his life that brought on a sudden and thorough change in him—that he saw in a cave a strange figure sitting cross-legged, with eyes closed and face wearing a bright and serene appearance. Who can know what the feelings of the rustic Pothana were, but he fully prostrated himself before him and stood there with folded hands with all the devotion of a simple-minded villager. He was initiated by the Yogi whose name was Chidananda, and was instructed, it is believed, to repeat the name of Sri Rama.

His after-life, it is needless to say, was marked with a career altogether different; for he was now no longer the old peasant Pothana. His simple rustic look yielded place to the serious and thoughtful expression of the philosopher. He would not often be found now working in the fields or grazing the cattle. Forest-recesses or solitary river-banks were the places he now resorted to, where he would burst forth into spontaneous musical poetry. He hungered after Truth with the yearning of an innocent child for its mother. Once he bathed in the river Tungabhadra, chanted the Sri-Rama-Mantram and sat there rapt in deep meditation, when there stood before him the blessed Lord, in

the lovely figure of Sri Rama. It is said that he received there *Adesha* (command) from the Lord Himself to compose the “Andhra-Bhagavatam” and dedicate it to the Supreme. Pothana is even now revered in many parts of the Telugu country as “Andhra Vyasa” (the Telugu Vyasa) and “Sahaja Pandita” (the nature-born scholar)!

Thus runs the opening verse of his Bhagavatam:—
“Instead of expecting to receive lands, vehicles, jewels, wealth and rank, by dedicating this work to these earthly kings, Bammera Potha Raju composed the Bhagavatam for the good of the world, and dedicated it to Sri Hari.” All the Telugu poets raised themselves to high rank and position by dedicating their work to the then ruling chiefs and kings, and Pothana perhaps was the only one who preferred to suffer poverty by dedicating his work to the Most High rather than flatter the rich.

His faith in the Lord enabled him to work miracles. Once when he was writing his Bhagavatam in his field and his son Mallana was tilling the land, Sri Natha, who was one of the court-poets of the Carnatic chief and a near relation of Pothana was passing that way with all his pomp, being carried in a richly-decorated palanquin. The haughty Sri Natha with a view to exhibit his psychic powers before Pothana and to induce him thereby to dedicate his work to his royal master, asked the front carriers of his palanquin to let go their hold and move aside; yet curiously enough, the palanquin was moving forward as before. The intrepid Pothana, strong in the armour of God, instantly asked his son Mallana to unyoke one of the two oxen from his plough, which being done, the plough went on as before. Nothing discomfited, Sri Natha ordered the back carriers of his palanquin also to withdraw. Pothana too asked his son to untie the other ox also. So the palanquin was moving forward without carriers, and the plough was tilling the field without oxen!

It is said that when he was writing the story of the *Vardha* (Boar) Incarnation in the third Skandha (section) of his book, the then ruling chief, wroth at not having the Bhagavatam dedicated to him, came with a strong escort to surround Pothana's hut and take him away as a prisoner. But the armed troop instantly ran away helter-skelter at the sight of a huge roaring wild Boar who—it is as

serted in the story—was none other than the great Yaráha Himself. Once when he was writing the story of Gajendra Mokshanam (the liberation of the great Elephant) in the eighth Skandha, the spontaneous flow of his poetry suddenly came to a dead stop and he began deeply contemplating on the line which was to complete the verse. Being unable to make it up, he left it where it was. It is told that the Lord Vishnu Himself, in his absence, entered his hut in Pothana's guise, wrote the line, and disappeared! Many other such incidents, which will sound incredible to the modern ear, seem to have occurred in the life of this great poet-saint. The following is however worthy of mention. In the above story it is written: "Seized with the idea of offering protection to the (suffering) Elephant, (the Lord Hari came away in haste) without telling even a word to Lakshmi, without taking His disc and mace, without being followed by His retinue, and without even looking that He was properly dressed." His rival, Sri Natha, took objection to this verse and sarcastically asked Pothana, whether the Lord had gone there as a looker-on of the fight between the Elephant and the crocodile when the former prayed to Him for protection. Pothana who preferred example to precept, did not argue, but presently concealed Sri Natha's son and while his rival was just at dinner, informed him that his son had fallen into a well. Sri Natha, who had not yet done with his meal, at once ran to the well even without washing his mouth. Pothana jokingly asked the confused Sri Natha, "Well, Sir, you have not brought a rope, ladder etc., or a diver to rescue your beloved son! What! You have come here, I see, merely as a looker-on of your son's drowning!" So saying he brought Sri Natha's son before him and retorted by remarking, "More confused, O Sri Natha, was the All-merciful Father

when He heard His devotee calling for His help in distress."

Pothana was a great Vedantist as well. His work is wonderfully replete with high philosophical truths and startling Vedantic enquiries. One has to wade through the whole Telugu literature to meet with another work in which the accuracy of philosophical thoughts and the depth of earnest devotion are so harmoniously blended together. The sublime majestic verses describing the Gajendra's earnest prayers to the Supreme, portray the loftiest philosophical attainments of the author. The soul-touching lines of exquisite beauty in the tenth *skandha* of his book, descriptive of the feelings of the Gopis when their beloved Sri Krishna suddenly vanishes from amongst them, bear testimony to his highest emotional development. Thus Pothana was a Jnani and a Bhakta in one. His poetry is spontaneous, yet artistic and musical. His style is chaste and pleasant. His exposition of philosophy is peculiar, yet simple and convincing.

Pothana is said to have also written "Virabhadra Vijayam." Another small work, "Bhogini Dandaka" claims him as its author. The one thing which is markedly appealing throughout his works, and which has exercised a dominant sway over the minds of all the brightest Telugu poets, is the burning passion of Realisation.

His son Mallana inherited the high attainments of his gifted father and came to be known as "Praraha Kavi" or the Majestic Poet.

Pothana, the prince of poets, passed away, it is said, in 1435 A. D.

He is not one who has greatness thrust on him nor is he born great; but of him we may rightly conclude in the words of the poet "Who he is, that you judge!"

A SEEKER.

GLIMPSES

If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him.

—*Dhammapada.*



Be at rest.—
The past is Death's, the future is thine own;
And love and joy can make the foulest breast
A paradise of flowers, where peace might build her nest.

—*Shelley.*



The attainment of truth is possible only when self is recognised as an illusion. Righteousness can be practised only when we have freed our mind from the passions of egotism. Perfect peace can dwell only when all vanity has disappeared.

—*Buddha.*

*

It is not so much the men that count as the Man.

—*Napoleon.*

*

I do not want any heaven at the price of the undying anguish of the meanest man that ever lived. Let us all sleep together, if need be, in a night that shall never know morning, but do not mock me with the offer of an endless song in any mouth that shall have for echo an endless groan on the burning lips of an outcast brother.—*Minot J Savage.*

*

He indeed is known as the *Jndni* who, when one arm of his is being chopped off by an axe and the other besmeared with sandal-paste, feels neither being hurt in the one nor pleasing in the other.

—*A Sanskrit Sloka.*

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Our physical as well as social life, customs, manners, art of life, philosophy, religion, nay even many an accident, all are crying out to us: *that we shall renounce.*—*Goethe.*

*

THE SECOND CONVENTION OF RELIGIONS

THE second Convention of Religions met on January 9, in the Mayo Hall, Allahabad. The attendance was very large, the entire Hall being full. The assembly included many eminent men of different provinces, besides the representatives of various religions. Proceedings began with a beautiful and apposite Veda *Mantra* sung by Srimati Sarala Devi Choudhurani at the piano, accompanied by Miss Ryce on the violin and a sweet chorus of children. A special Sanskrit prayer composed for the occasion was next recited by Pandit Hari Narayan Jha, which was followed by a Christian prayer. Mr. Sarada Charan Mitra, the General Secretary of the Convention then welcomed all present in a

Forty Sacraments are useless

To the man to passions given,
For they lead him not to Brahma,
Lead him not to Brahma's heaven,
Sacraments though rarely taken,

Bless the man to virtue given,
Lead his soul to holy Brahma

Lead his soul to Brahma's heaven.

—*Gautama's Dharma Sutra, viii. 24, 25*

*

The learned men have said that a man himself is born as his son; therefore, a man whose wife has given birth to a son, should look upon her as his mother.—*The Mahabharata.*

*

—All the means of action—

The shapeless masses, the materials—
Lie everywhere about us. What we need
Is the celestial fire to change the flints
Into transparent crystal, bright and clear.
That fire is genius.

—*Longfellow.*

*

Change yourself, and fortune will change with you.—*A Portuguese Proverb.*

*

Life may change, but it may fly not;
Hope may vanish, but can die not;
Truth be veiled, but still it burneth;
Love repulsed,—but it returneth.

—*Shelley.*

felicitous speech. He observed that they were all parts of the same common humanity, sons of the same Divine Father, and that their mission was to encourage love, peace and harmony and not to enter into any controversial points with one another. He then declared the Convention open. The Hon. Maharaja Bahadur of Kassim Bazar next proposed the election of the Maharaja of Darbhanga as President. He was seconded by Raja Mahendra Pratab Sing of Brindaban. The Maharaja of Darbhanga occupied the chair amidst cheers. Mr. Mitra then announced that the Gaekwar had wired from Baroda regretting his inability to attend the Convention. The Maharaja of Darbhanga then deliv-

ered the following address:—

I esteem it indeed a very high honour to be called upon for the second time to preside over this great Parliament of Religions. The last time on which this Convention was held was in Calcutta, nearly two years ago, on the 9th April 1909; and those of us who were then present will not soon forget the fine impression made by the widely-diffused fraternal spirit which appeared to animate all the members, as they began to realise, during the course of the session, that they had much more in common in the realm of religion than they had hitherto supposed, and that the outward forms of creed and ritual and worship which hitherto have acted as walls of separation, were as dust compared with the spiritual ties which bound them together in the fundamental verities of all religions.

It gives me no small pleasure on this occasion, on behalf of myself and all those who have had the charge of arranging this Convention, to extend a right cordial welcome to you, the delegates, who have so willingly come from all parts of the Empire to take part in the deliberations of this great assembly. It is a most hopeful and cheering sign of the times. Our last Parliament did well. Let this one do better, in more securely welding together the bonds of our spiritual friendship and our more intimate acquaintance and mutual understanding with one another. Many of you are doubtless acquainted with the old story of the Man in the Mist. In the distance he saw an object and thought it was a dog; on coming somewhat closer he saw it was a man, and when he came quite near, he found it was his own brother. This is a parable full of meaning for us all. Let this be a place where all mists shall be dispelled, and where we shall, in clear light, recognise each other as brothers—pilgrims on the march—wending our ways, albeit by different routes, to the Home of our hearts—Our Father, God.

I, therefore, welcome this great Convention assembled here to-day as a proof that the former one has done good work in kindling an interest in the comparative study of religions and in clearing the path for the realisation of the truth that all religions of the world represent, each in its own way, on varying spiritual planes, the strivings of human hearts to obtain a more and more intimate

knowledge of the One God, who is over all and in us all—the Great Father of Man.

I desire to emphasise this truth at the outset, for it appears to me that the knowledge of God is the one master-quest of life,—to know Him, His character, and His will concerning us, in order that by loving Him, we may also obey Him and become more and more like Him, as daily we approach Him in reverent worship and lowly thought. This is the ultimate aim of all religions; and any religion that does not possess its adherent with the spirit and aim I have just referred to, is of little practical use in the ordering of a man's daily life.

From the idea of the Universal Fatherhood of God, there follows the natural corollary of the Universal Brotherhood of Man,—a truth which, when realised, will solve all the perplexing problems and antagonisms which are rampant in the world at the present day, and which would make our India the abode of love and loyalty, where fanaticism and racial discords would be extirpated for ever, and where all would join in helpful brotherhood in furthering the progress of our country in all its best interests.

This surely is the end sought for in this Religious Convention, not merely in an academic way to hear papers read regarding the different creeds and cults of mankind (although these are good things in themselves) by men who know them, but to realise in a very practical way that as religious men, belonging to different communities, all travelling on their way to God, we ought to put our religion into our daily life and allow it to permeate all our family, social, civil, and industrial pursuits, helping each other all the while, and letting it be seen that we are, through all our creeds, beginning to realise that we are all children of One Father, and therefore we ought to behave as brothers towards each other.

As a general rule, a man is born into his religion, and is brought up and trained in the beliefs of his forefathers. It is the God-appointed way. A man does not require to change his religion in order to arrive at a knowledge of God, and to know that men are brothers and ought to love one another as such. But he ought to keep his mental and spiritual eyes clear and open to the reception of truth (for all truth is of God) from whatever quarter it may

come; for, adherence to one's own religion need not include the negation of, and disregard for, others. Truth is not the exclusive possession of any race or creed. It is the aim of every religion to know the Supreme, and the only difference arises in the paths by which each tries to reach Him. I am sure that we would be rendering more faithful service to Him if we were to substitute toleration for bigotry, and instead of wasting our energies in exposing what we may consider to be the defects and fallacies of other religions, we were to strive to discover those beauties (so bountifully scattered in every sacred book) that lie behind the veil in all revelations. And you will agree with me, that a study in this direction, carried on with all reverence and humility, will meet with ample recompense from the Most High.

I am a Hindu of Hindus. I was born of a Hindu family and was brought up, I hope not unintelligently, in the faith of my forefathers. I shall not attempt now to give anything like an exhaustive exposition of the Hindu religion, as that will, I trust, be done by others during the course of the present session. The sects of Hinduism can be branched under three separate headings,—‘तस्यैवाहम्,’ ‘अवैवाहम्,’ ‘त्वमेवाहम्,’ The first means ‘I am His,’ the second ‘I am Thine,’ and the third ‘I am Thou.’ The very beginning of our religion is the realisation that a man belongs to God and is safe in His keeping—‘I am His.’ The second, ‘I am Thine,’ is an advance on the first thought, and betokens a more intimate personal relationship, and a living faith in the actual presence of God in daily life. In the third and final form, the Hindu enters into a closer relationship with God, becoming one with Him—‘I am Thou.’

According to Hinduism nothing really exists but the one Universal Spirit, formulated in ‘एकमेवाद्वितीयम्,’ “There is but one Being without a second”; whatever appears to exist separately from the Spirit is mere illusion. This is the true Veda.

Starting from the Veda, Hinduism is all-embracing and adapts itself to all sorts and conditions of men. Its ceremonial observances appeal to some; others are attracted by its practical nature in regulating the affairs of daily life; the severely moral aspect appeals to many, the devotional and imaginative side has also its votaries; and to others the

philosophical and speculative side appeals in its full force. A similar idea is expressed in that *sloka* of the *Srimad Bhagavata*:—

निवृत्ततर्षैरुपगीयमानाद्भ्रवैषधाच्छ्रोत्रमनोऽभिरामात् ।
क उत्तमश्लोकगुणानुवादात् पुमान् विरज्येत विनापशुग्नात् ॥

“What man other than the slayer of the Atman (which is without sorrow), should be averse to singing the glory of the Lord, of supreme fame, which is resorted to by saints divested of desire, which is the cure of the world-malady, and which is a delight to the ear and the mind.” (*Bhāg.* x. 1. 4.)

All the great religions have their own symbols. It is impossible for the neophyte to apprehend the Deity as pure Spirit; for the great mass of mankind He can only be realised by Incarnations and symbols, and hence in Hinduism the symbols are great and manifold, each representing some aspect or attribute of the Divine. This is called by many, who do not understand the inner significance of its meaning, ‘idol-worship.’ But although the idol, or symbol according to Hinduism, is permeated by God, as every atom is in the universe, such worship is directed to the special aspect or attribute of the Divine Being, which the idol or symbol is meant to represent. And just as pictures are necessary to a person so long as he has not seen the objects that they portray, so these idols, or symbols of the Divine attributes, are needful to aid the worship of God by man, until in the course of time by the development of his intuitive faculties and the unfolding of a higher spiritual life he will become less and less dependent on the visible symbol, and ultimately reach the final state of *Sadyujya* and become merged in the Eternal Spirit.

The subject of idol-worship is intimately connected with the question of *Avatāras*. The Supreme Immanent God has no form; and yet it is a form that the devotee worships as the ‘idol.’ The particular form that he gives to the image he worships, is one in which he believes God to have manifested Himself. Nor is there anything incongruous in this idea of God's manifestation. God is the ordainer of the world; every item of the world-process is under His guidance.—‘अस्यैव प्रशासने सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ तिष्ठतः’ says the *Brihadaranyaka*. And at the commencement of this process, He sets going those forces which keep the phenomena of the Universe running along their appointed course;

but in course of time, owing to the multiplicity of conditions and diversity of potentialities bearing upon them, the world begins to show signs of disorder and confusion. He is, in fact, like the master mechanic who sets up a machine and starts it, leaving its parts to perform their respective functions; and just as he has, from time to time, to set right any parts that may have got out of order and give fresh impetus and direction, rendered necessary by the conditions then prevailing,—so also in this most complicated machinery of the Cosmos, when the Creator finds that the diverse energies rushing forth in various directions would, if left to themselves, throw the whole fabric into inextricable confusion, He, in His limitless compassion, incarnates as an *Avatāra* to counteract the disruptive forces of mankind and strengthen and rehabilitate the laws conducive to its welfare. This is what Sri Krishna has Himself declared in the following verses :—

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।
 अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥
 परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।
 धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय संभवामि युगे युगे ॥

“Whenever, O Bharata! there is a slackening of *Dharma* (virtue) and corresponding rise of *Adharma* (vice), then I incarnate Myself;—for the saving of the good and the destroying of the evil, and for the rehabilitating of *Dharma*, I appear as an Incarnation from cycle to cycle.”

In order to make His aid most effective, He has to take some sort of a physical form; and the form that He chooses for this purpose is the one that He finds most effective in the bringing about of the desired state of things. If the forces threatening disruption happen to belong to the region of water, He takes the form best suited to work in that element; if these forces are of the air, the form taken is one most effective in that region; and so on. There is no limitation to His choice; and there can be nothing intrinsically high or low in the form He may choose to adopt as long as it serves the purpose of the Incarnation. To Him all forms are the same. That is why His manifestations have been called *Avatāras*, crossing down, descending. By having recourse to this voluntary descent for the good of the world, the Supreme God, the fount of all that is good and noble, sets us the

example of that Self-sacrifice which stands at the root of all morality and ethics.

Perhaps I may be allowed to say a word or two about our caste system. And here I may say, parenthetically, that caste is no monopoly of the Hindu communities. In every nation under the sun, the caste system exists, although it may be called by different names in different countries. It has its uses, and like all things human, its abuses; but on the whole it has wrought beneficently in our Hindu social order. The primary castes of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras were created, as the *Purusha-Sukta* tells us, to serve definite purposes of the body-politic—the Brāhmana to keep the religion intact, the Kshatriya to guard and to rule, the Vaisya to look after the economical and industrial interests of the country, and the Sudra to serve. All the other subdivisions were evolved and developed by social and industrial causes. Each caste has its own religious ceremonies and social rules, as well as its own customs regarding work, food, marriage and funeral ceremonies and the like; but looked at broadly, it has been a great system of primary education for the people of the land. If education means the drawing forth of the potentialities of a boy and fitting him for taking his ordained place as a member of society, then the caste system has hitherto done this work in a way which no other plan yet contrived has ever done. The mere teaching a youth a smattering of the three R's and nothing further in a primary school, is little else than a mockery. Under the caste system the boys are initiated and educated almost from infancy into the family industry, trade, profession or handicraft, and thus they become adepts in their various lines of life almost before they know it. This unique system of education is one of the blessings of our caste arrangements. We know that a horse commands a high price in the market if it has a long pedigree behind it. Is it unreasonable to presume that a carpenter whose forefathers have followed the same trade for centuries will be a better carpenter than one who is new to the trade, all other advantages being equal? Caste system has doubtless evolved some abuses. But no other nation can cast stones at us in this respect.

The great books of our Hindu religion inculcate all the human virtues which are embraced in love

to God and to our fellowmen, loyalty to the Sovereign, to law and to the social order, help to the helpless and the friendless of all classes. Everything relating to daily life is penetrated with the spirit of religion, and a kindly respect for the religions of those who belong to different cults.

I am firmly convinced that the beginning of a new life is visible in Hinduism. We are all realising, as we have never realised before, that if spiritual Hinduism is to have a chance of regenerating our people, it must begin in family life by precept and example: it must be recognised in the teaching at our primary schools, colleges and universities, and the practice of the presence of God must be carried on in the daily life. We have already begun to sow the seeds of such a teaching by the institution of a great missionary enterprise throughout the length and breadth of the land, which, it is to be hoped, will yield good results in the near future. To a true Hindu, a Godless education is worse than no education at all.

I must now draw these remarks to a close. As a Hindu, I know I am speaking the sentiments of all my co-religionists when I say, that Hindus look with kindly feelings on all the different religions represented here to-day in this vast gathering assembled from far and near, and it is the very purpose and aim of this Convention that these feelings for one another should animate our hearts. The more we know each other, the more we will respect and love one another. Then all religious bitternesses and animosities will melt away, and disloyalty will cease to be. Religion, the cornerstone of character, will shine in all we think and say and do; righteousness will be exalted in the nation, and peace will flow like a river throughout the land. I cannot do better than conclude with the lines which the American poet, Whittier, addressed many years ago to the Reformers in England:—

Press bravely onward, not in vain,
Your generous trust in human kind:
The good your bloodshed could not gain,
Your peaceful zeal shall find.

After the address was over the following papers were read by the gentlemen named:—

1. Shaivism by Mr. J. M. Nallaswami Pillai of Madras.

2. Judaism by Mr. Isaac of Calcutta.
3. Modern Buddhism by Babu Nagendra Nath Basu of Calcutta.
4. Vaishnavism by Mr. Padma Nath Bhattacharya Vidyabhushan of Gauhati.
5. The Message of Christ by the Rev. Mr. Burn Lucas.
6. Shakti-ism by Mr. Kasi Nath Sahay of Behar.
7. Islam by Khwaja Kamal-ud-din of Lahore.

THE SECOND DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

The Convention met again the next day, H. H. the Maharaja of Durbhanga presiding. The attendance was even larger than that of the previous day. A magnificent picture entitled 'Salvation for All,' was displayed on the *dais*. It represented the great prophets of humanity, a sort of Society of Saviours. In the centre of the painting was the beautiful Lord Gauranga, with arms uplifted above, his face filled with rapturous devotion. On His right in the front stood the great Sankara, sweetly smiling, with Ramanuja quietly folding his palms, Madhwacharya, Nimbarkacharya and Vallabhacharya. Behind these great ones from the South there were seen, from the centre, the Shakti, the great Guru Nanak, the strong face of Swami Dayanand Sarasvati and the mystic, serene appearance of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. On the left of the Lord Gauranga, one met the compassionate gaze of the Lord Buddha from His peaceful face, next to Him being the grand simple aspect of Zoroaster, the sorrowful yet triumphant eyes of Jesus and the serious face of Rammohan Roy. Behind these in the second row were Adinath Jain with a piece of cloth before his mouth, Moses clad in his priestly vestments, and Mohammad severely austere. In the foreground of the picture were the holy books of the prophets, and in the background the holy places of their respective religions.

The Proceedings began with some music by Sri-mati Sarala Devi Choudhurani. The Rev. Mr. C. F. Andrews then read a prayer, after which the Hon. Justice Sir George Knox, delivered the following address of welcome as President of the Reception Committee of the Convention, from which we take the following extracts:—

'Brothers! In the name of God the common Father of us all I bid you a hearty welcome....

We all meet on a common platform of love in this Convention, each earnest in the removal of the causes of discord and animosity. Universal humanity is our watchword. May I venture to ask you to carry the standard one step further and add, the raising of universal humanity towards the Divinity from which it sprung, as our aim? I agree that to know ourselves and to know our neighbours is the first great step.

But this knowledge, even when we attain to it, leaves us in a comparatively low place. Surely we shall never be content to rest there, and the more so as each realises when he wins that knowledge, that our origin is not of the earth, earthy. As we roll back, each one of us, our pedigree, if we only carry it far enough back we see, maybe clearly, that in the first instance it was God who breathed into us the breath of life, that we were created in the Divine image, and that it was God's breath which made us living souls. This is undoubtedly what Christianity teaches me. If I turn to the Rig-veda I find the same idea.

With invocations on the guidance of the Father's mind and the Mother's great inherent power I muse prolific Parents, that have made the world of life, and for their good all round wide immortality.

If I turn to Greek literature it is the same. In Pindar I find it.

The Koran tells us, humanity is one vast brotherhood, with God as the Creator and Master who looks upon all as equal.

Realising then that we are heaven-born, our next step is to realise that we have to recover our birth-right and the means whereby it can be recovered.

It is at this point that creeds diverge, give such different utterances and draw such widely different ideals of the end. But if we are in earnest, then difficulties will spur us on rather than discourage us, and our evident aim should surely be to prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good..... This will, I hope, explain the anxiety with which I again impress upon all to examine each the creed of the other with an open mind, and thus to take the first step forward. As I was reminded the other day, God keeps the going man. Hence is the necessity not for academic knowledge, but for ascertaining, holding fast and moving onward, taking our stand on that which we by proof find to be good.

Brothers, I was born in India, not, it is true, in the Aryavarta but it has pleased God to place me in Aryavarta for nearly half a century and to enable me to make friends with those who are Aryans in the true sense of the word. Six-sevenths of my life have been spent in India. I love her in all her phases and I love her sons. I recognise and trust how very much she has done for me, how widely she has broadened my view of life, and I would fain give her the best of my hopes, energies and aspirations. I love her language, the perfect Sanskrit; I love her philosophy and I have given to it not a little study. Never shall I forget the eager interest with which I first read the beautiful idylls of Kalidasa, the Meghaduta and the Ritu-Samhara. I was filled with delight in going through the Sakuntala. I admired the broad legal mind of Manu. But with all this love still I am a Christian.....

For myself and for them (whom I love), my Prayer is that contained in the noble and practical Hymn of that robust man, Thomas Hughes.

“Oh God of Truth whose living word
Upholds whate'er hath breath,
Look down on Thy creation, Lord,
Enslaved by sin and death.

Set up Thy standard, Lord, that they,
Who claim a heavenly birth,
May march with Thee to smite the lies
That vex thy ransomed Earth.

Then God of Truth for whom we long,
Thou who wilt hear our prayer,
Do Thine own battle in our hearts,
And stay the falsehood there.

Yea, come! then, tried as in the fire,
From every lie set free,
Thy perfect truth shall dwell in us,
And we shall live in Thee.”

With this prayer on my lips I again, brothers, bid you welcome.

Papers were afterwards read as follows:—

1. Israelitism—Mr. N. E. David (taken as read).
2. Islam, read by M. Mohammad Ali, M.A., LL.B.
3. A Rational Teaching of Zoroastrianism—Mr. B. F. Auklesaria (taken as read).
4. Zoroastrianism, a Revealed Religion—Mr. T. T. Vinadalal, M. A. (read by Professor Nalin Bihari Mitra, A. C. College).

5. Buddhism, the Doctrine of Immortality—Anagarika H. Dharmapala (read by Professor P. Sinha of A. C. College).

6. Buddhism in Its Relation to Hinduism—Rai Bahadur Jadunath Mozumdar, M. A., B. L. (taken as read),

7. The Arya Samaj, read by Professor Rama Deva, B. A.

The Convention then rose for recess.

After the recess, the chair was, in the absence of the Maharaja of Darbhanga, taken by the Hon. Maharaja Manindra Chandra Nandi of Kasim Bazar. The following papers were read by the gentlemen

named :—

Jainism (Shvetamvari) by Vijoy Dharma Suri Shastravisharad, (Hindi).

Christianity as Redemption from the World (by the Rev. Mr. A. P. Hogg) read by the Rev. Dr. A. H. Ewing.

Bahai Faith by Sayed Mustefa.

Practical Vedanta by Swami Chidananda.

The papers on Brahma Samaj by Prof. Ruchiram Sahani, Rai Sahib, and Angelology by Mr. E. J. J. Modi, B. A., were taken as read,

We are sorry we have not received the report of the last day's proceedings.

THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CELEBRATION :

GREAT CROWDS AT THE BELUR MATH : THOUSANDS OF POOR MADE HAPPY.

THE spirit of the Swami Vivekananda is still here. Though freed from the bondages of life it remains with us, drawn by love and the purpose to help.

Anyone who might doubt this would have had that doubt forever banished had he come to Belur Math, Sunday January 29, when the 49th. birthday of the great Swami was celebrated with befitting, sacred service, the feeding of thousands of the poor, and with that tremendous, soul-inspiring enthusiasm that comes as the direct result of a burning devotion and spiritual, living understanding of the message and the life of a great Teacher,

It was a day—above all, of religious feeling and consciousness. The very air was charged with love for the Master—yes and that love of thousands of earnest souls brought among them the great soul of Swamiji. One felt that. One knew that,

It was a day also of joyous festivity. It was a great day for those particularly who came from the near-by villages and from the city of Calcutta summoned in the early hours of the morning by the beating of drums, giving them the glad news that for them that

day the Master had prepared a feast, not alone of soul, but also one that would benefit them physically, who were of the poorest of India's poor.

The Swami willed that the great message he gave the world, was to be great not only in a philosophical and spiritual way, but that it should be of help to those of whom Jesus the Christ said : " Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." And the Math, striving likewise and as earnestly as the Swami himself, to realise his ideals—now that he has passed from ordinary mortal view—are doing this great charity in his name and that of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. They are doing it just as did the Swami when he was with them in mortal life,

The proceedings of the day began with a reading from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in the morning. The buildings of the Math were festively decorated and the room occupied by the great Teacher in his latter days was filled with flowers and his pictures decorated. One large picture of Swamiji, garbed in Sannyas robe, stood in an especially beautiful and flower-strewn shrine. Thousands

of people passed before this and made Pranams. Now and then great shouts of triumph: "Jai Swamiji ki jai," rent the air, echoing and echoing across the spacious grounds of the Math and the sacred river that flows beside.

Great companies of men and women visited, with devotion in their hearts and the name of the Teacher on their lips, the memorial chapel where his ashes rest. The white marble *Vedi* was adorned with garlands of marigolds.

The park-like ground between the chapel and the Math served as a dining-field for the thousands of Swamiji's poor and just to the rear of this field was the large, open-air kitchen with maunds and maunds of whitest rice, great, shining brass *dekchis* heaped with curries, and hundreds of earthen vessels filled to the brim with appetizing *dahl*. Throughout the night previous Brâhman cooks had laboured and throughout the morning itself, Beside these tempting delicacies there were irresistible *luchis*, sweets and cooling curds.

It was a sight of sights, a memorable sight to see those thousands of men, women and children feast. They came with hunger, whetted, not by appetite but by the pains and pangs of dire want. It made one, at the same time, both sad and happy—sad to think of the poverty of such numbers and happy because at least on this occasion their vital needs were temporarily relieved.

Then those who looked on with joy at this feast—and there were hundreds of spectators—were inspired by the service of scores of ready helpers who made it their point to wait upon the hungry multitude. These helpers were lads, some of them of the best families and all with the best hearts. Of course, the Swamis and the Brahmacharins of the Math were occupied every moment, supervising and helping and inspiring everyone.

Those who visited the Math also benefited—for they were given the holy food of Prashad,

Following the feast a large group of people gathered on the grounds of the embankment fronting the Math entrance and heard among other lectures and recitations a stirring address on "The Influence of the Swami Vivekananda in America," delivered by Mr. Alexander, an American journalist and a disciple of the Vedanta philosophy.

During the course of the day singing-parties engrossed the attention of many and as the hours passed, silent, devotional groups visited the sacred chapel to receive the blessings and spiritual gifts of our Lord Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, and of his great disciple, our beloved Swamiji.

Altogether it was a day of days, an occasion when the presence of the Master and of Swamiji was especially felt and everyone was conscious of having been blessed by that beneficent presence.

A WESTERN VEDANTIN.

AT MADRAS

The birthday anniversary of Sri Swami Vivekananda was celebrated on the 29th January, in the Ramakrishna Home, Brodie's Road, Mylapore. In the morning, as usual there was Bhajana in which all classes of the Hindu community took part without distinction of caste or creed. In the midday about 2,000 poor people were fed. In the evening there was a lecture on "Sri Swami Vivekananda" by Mr. Myron H. Phelps of the New York Bar, which is reproduced elsewhere.

After the conclusion of the lecture which was heard with rapt attention, Mr. Phelps said that he would be very glad if anybody in the Hall who had known the Swami and his spirit could certify to it by their words in addition to what had been already said by him.

Mr. Setlur of Mysore said that from his personal acquaintance with the Swami he was convinced that everything uttered by the Swami was inspired. The one great ambition of the Swami which he did not live long

enough to fulfil was the establishment of a Ladies' Math in Poona, to train them to educate their sisters and to give medical relief. Another great ambition of the Swami was the education of the masses who were the real Indian nation.

Mr. V. Munuswamy Aiyar, Reporter, *Madras Mail*, dwelt on the valuable services rendered by Mr. Goodwin, the shorthand reporter. It was Mr. Goodwin who preserved the memorable words of the Swami and they were all deeply indebted to him. He, the speaker, had never come across a more devout disciple than Mr. Goodwin who spent all his lifetime in the service of the Swami. He also referred to another of the devout disciples of the Swami, namely, the late lamented Alasingaperumal, who was very anxious to buy up the bungalow in San Thome in which the Swami stayed while at Madras, before he went to America.

Dr. M. C. Nanjunda Row in proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. Phelps, said that Mr. Phelps had come all the way from America to do good to India. Everybody present was seeing him before them, sitting like a white Sannyasi. He had consecrated his life to their cause. It was a happy sign of the times that such souls should be in their midst at the present moment. One great sin of India as pointed out by Mr. Phelps, was the neglect of the masses. The subject had been engaging the attention of the educated people. The educated classes could not do anything, because their education had made them clever, fit only to talk and to put forth counter-arguments against arguments. The only hope in regard to the education of the masses lay in the younger generation. The masses could not be educated by the mere introduction of primary and compulsory education by the Government. Mere ordinary education to Pariahs would make them only discontented. As Swami Vivekananda had said, a number of young Sannyasins who had thoroughly

grasped the truths of Vedanta should carry those truths to the masses, along with the imparting of instruction to them on Western lines. They should visit the *paracherries*, and teach them to bring forth from their hearts the divinity in them. In order that the teaching may take effect, secular education should go hand in hand with spiritual education. With the aid of magic lanterns and other cheap apparatus, the great truths of science should be taught to them. They should be taught verbally geography, geology and chemistry, hygiene, sanitation and cleanliness. They should be made to realise that they were not depressed classes and that they must prove it by attaining the culture and prestige of the higher classes by means of education in secular and religious truths. A number of young men must devote their attention to that noble work. Again as regards the masses, a great gulf existed between them and the educated classes, and nothing had been done to bridge that gulf. To that end a great national festival must be held on spiritual lines, in which no distinction of caste or creed should be observed, and it should be shown that all Indians formed one nation. They could form small associations like the Ramakrishna Home and similar institutions.

Referring to the recent Theosophical teachings he said that many of the educated Indians had been given to swallow big pills, with promises that those pills would do very great good and that they would be able to see the great Christ coming. Those people should not forget that the real Christ was within them. They must discover the Christ within themselves. There was one great fallacious teaching given out by the Theosophical Society, namely, that seeking *Moksha* was selfishness, because it was the seeking of individual salvation, and that therefore they must not seek *Moksha*. Young men should not be gulled into believing such things, being carried away by eloquence. Just as a tree was judged by its fruit

and the value of the tree was enhanced by the sight of its fruit, so was the value of a religion enhanced by the fruit of *Moksha*. By the attainment of *Moksha* not only an individual became free but that individual would also make everyone else free and liberate the world. The highest aim of the Hindu religion was *Moksha*.

He then explained *Moksha* as the highest of *Purushârthams* and pointed out the necessity that that ideal should be impressed upon young minds. *Moksha* entailed loss of self-consciousness and egoism, liberation from self. It was the loss of self-consciousness that led them to *Moksha*. Was liberation from self-conscious existence and attainment of supra-consciousness selfishness? He was not speaking in any spirit of animosity towards the Theosophists, but in a spirit of pity towards his young friends.

Swami Ramakrishnananda said:—*Moksha* means liberation from the bondage of selfishness.

Dr. Nanjunda Row continuing said, that it was by not adhering to such high ideals that most of the educated men were becoming materialistic. They had lost that ideal of *Moksha* and hence all their efforts were confined to "money-making, eating, drinking and begetting and dying in mathematical precision" as Swami Vivekananda once said. It was the beacon light of *Moksha* that should ever rivet their attention and make them so regulate their mundane activities as not to lose sight of it but advance towards it.

In conclusion he thanked Mr. Phelps for having given them his advice, and hoped that if followed it would bear wonderful fruit.

The meeting terminated with *Deeparadhana* and distribution of Prasadam.

AT BANGALORE

Under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Mission at Bangalore, the 49th. birthday anniversary of Sri Swami Vivekananda was cele-

brated on Sunday the 29th January, within the premises of the Mission building at Basavangudi. From early morning a number of Sankirtan parties gathered in the Math, where a spacious pandal was put up for the convenience of those who were anxious to take part in the proceedings. The Bhajana parties went in procession through the City and passed the Sankara Math. They were viewed by the Princesses of the Mysore Royal family from the balcony of the Sankara Math, where they had just then arrived to offer *pūjā* to Sri Sringeri Swami. The different groups were led by Sri Vivekananda Sanga Bhajana parties and sang devotional songs. On arrival at the Math, they were received by Swami Nirmalanandaji, who distributed food to them all. In the evening a large gathering assembled to hear Mr. N. Venkatesa Iyengar who read an impressive paper on the "Life and Teaching of the Swamiji." He spoke in Kanarese, and laid stress on the noble life of the Swami and said how the late Maharaja was interested in the Mission work and helped the Swami in his voyage to Chicago. He prayed that the present Maharaja might also take a similar interest in the Mission work.

Mr. M. G. Varadachar spoke in English, in the course of which he remarked that unlike Alexander or Cæsar, Swami Vivekananda, without an army of soldiers, conquered America and spread the religious thoughts of the Hindus to the remote regions of America. Mr. Ramiah, of the Vokkaligar Sangha, followed him with a lengthy speech in Kanarese. He said he was proud to say that the Swami was the true son of India.

The proceedings were wound up by Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, thanking those who took part in the proceedings. Separate accommodation was provided for ladies, who had also gathered in large numbers. Sangeeta Vidwan Bidar Krishnappa came especially from Mysore and entertained the audience with music. A special feature of the gather-

ing was that several untouchables were present and took part in the proceedings, thus showing the cosmopolitan spirit of the gathering.

AT CONJEEVERAM

The 49th. birthday of the Swami Sri Vivekananda was for the first time celebrated in Conjeeveram, on Jan. 29, with great eclat. The big Conjeeveram Girls' School premises were tastefully decorated and a chalk painting of the Swamiji was placed in the centre of the pavilion for worship. The programme commenced with Bhajana by Sjt. M. Ramachandram, aided by the students of the Girls' School. At about 10 the feeding of the poor commenced under the kind guidance of Sri-man Kolla Ramanappah Chettiar, about 300 poor, including Pariahs and Moham-medans being fed sumptuously. From 3 to 4-30 p. m. Mr. Murthy, the medalist, of Madras, entertained the public with most lively divine songs. The public meeting commenced at about 5 p. m. with Mr. C. Varadachariar B. L., in the chair. The learned chairman, after making an introductory speech, asked Sjt. P. C. Venkataiyar to address the assembly on the life and work of the Swamiji. Sjt. Arya gave a very interesting speech in Tamil and this was followed by a short and pathetic essay in English read by Mr. Murthy, the songster. Messrs. M. Ramachandram and V. Venkatarama Aiyar and Srimati Parvatavartiniammal, delivered short speeches. Two resolutions were adopted, one to start a fund called the Vivekananda Poor Fund to help poor students and the maimed and blind, and the other, to celebrate the Swami's birthday every year. The resolutions were supported by the public very warmly. A provisional committee consisting of 3 ladies and 14 gentlemen was also formed to carry out the scheme. After the usual vote of thanks, the Mangalârti Pooja was performed and *Prasadam* distributed.

AT THE SRI RAMAKRISHNA ADVAITA ASHRAMA, BENARES

The Tithipuja of the Swamiji was performed on Saturday, the 21st. January 1911. Many Bhaktas and admirers of the Swamiji were present on the occasion and all took deep interest, and joined in the *Homa* ceremony which was the special feature of the day. The gentlemen were then entertained with Prasad at about 1 p. m. and the celebration was closed with Bhajana and music in the evening.

The public birthday anniversary of the Swamiji was commemorated on Sunday the 29th. January with greater success than in the previous years. Over 400 gentlemen consisting of Swamiji's Bhaktas and admirers were present on the occasion and they were all busy in feeding the poor from 1 to 4 p. m., which was the principal item of the day. Nearly one thousand poor people were sumptuously fed with *Loochis*, *hállooâ*, *lâddoo*, etc., in the big maidan of the Sevashrama and the Ashrama. Then began the reading from the "Inspired Talks by Swami Vivekananda," and after a recitation in Bengali, Babu Koomud Ch. Sen read for about an hour a very interesting and inspiring paper by Babu Girish Chandra Ghosh of Calcutta, specially written for the occasion under the heading "Sri Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama and the Sevashrama." Afterwards Babu Surendra Sen of Barisal gave a very eloquent and impressive lecture for about an hour on Swamiji's life and teachings, which was highly appreciated by the audience. The celebration then concluded with Bhajana and music and distribution of Prasad at 7 p. m.

AT DACCA

The members of the Ramakrishna Mission, Dacca, celebrated the birthday festival of the Swamiji on the 21st. and 22nd. January. The hall and its environments were beautifully decorated with ornamental workmanship. In

the front was placed the picture of Sri Ramakrishna in a *Singhasan*, and just below rested the picture of the Swamiji, shining the hearts of all with majestic beauty. The morning was spent in devotional occupations, and all joined, later on, in *Kirtan* which was exceedingly touching. *Prasad* was then distributed with joyous shouts of "Jai Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Dev ki Jai" and "Jai Swami Vivekananda Maharaj ki Jai." In the evening an *Arati* was sung in a solemn and devotional way.

As the Schools, Colleges and Offices were open, it being a week-day, many students and officers could not join the *Tithipuja*; so the public festival was reserved for Sunday, the 22nd. January. In the morning of this day rice was distributed to the poor. At about 2 p. m. people began to crowd in the hall in swelling numbers. The work of the festival began with three songs specially composed for the occasion. Several prose and poetical pieces from the Works of the Swamiji were then recited and the gentlemen assembled heard them with rapt attention. The festival was brought to a close by the distribution of *Prasad*.

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AT THE RAMAKRISHNA SEVASHRAMA,
KANKHAL

Besides especial Puja &c., there was a *Bhandara* in which over a hundred Sadhus were sumptuously fed.

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The Birthday anniversary was celebrated with great devotion and enthusiasm in the following Centres with the programme as stated :

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH,
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA SANGAM,
VANIYAMBADI, 29th. January.

Programme: 1. Puja and Bhajana. 2. Feeding the poor. 3. Address on "The Life and Work of Swami Vivekanandaji at 5 p. m.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA SAMAJ, COCANADA,
29th. January.

Programme: 1. Radhotsavam, 8 to 10 a. m. 2. Homa, Puja etc., and reading from sacred books, 11 a. m. to 1 p. m. 3. Feeding the poor, 1 to 3 p. m. 4. Addresses on the Life, Work and Philosophy of the Swamiji and a brief history of the Ramakrishna Mission, 5 to 7-30 p. m. 5. Harikatha, 10 p. m. to 1 a. m.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, BANGA-
LORE CANTONMENT, 12th. February.

Programme: 1. Nagara Sankirtan, 8 to 11 a. m. 2. Feeding of the poor, 11 a. m. to 6 p. m., at the Sabha School. 3. Music, 4 to 6 p. m. 4. Address on "The Life and Work of Swami Vivekanandaji" in the Hall of the R. B. A. N. M's High School, 6 to 7-30 p. m.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY,
COLOMBO, 5th. February.

Programme: Forenoon, Feeding the poor. Afternoon, 1. Chanting the Vedas. 2. Presidential Address. 3. Recitation &c. 4. Lecture on "The Life of the Swami."

AT THE VIVEKANANDA READING HALL,
KUALA LUMPUR. Federated Malay States,
29th. January.

Programme: 1. Feeding of the poor, 12 a. m. to 3 p. m. 2. Garden party. 3. Meeting in the Hall, 7 p. m.

AT THE SALKHIA RAMAKRISHNA ANATHI-
BANDHU SAMITI, HOWRAH, 19th. Feb.

Programme: 1. Puja etc. 2. Nama Sankirtana. 3. Feeding of the poor.

AT OTHER CENTRES.

The birthday anniversary was also celebrated as usual, by the Vivekananda Society of Calcutta at the Belur Math; The Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Himalayas; The Ramakrishna Orphanage, Bhabda, Murshidabad; At the Vedanta Societies in America; and at all the other centres of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and abroad.

REALISATION

(TO THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.)

Came the Herald of Light on a great, effulgent day, on the morn of the day of God. Came a Light of Love beyond the great wide earth and bade him come,—come,—come beyond the world to the Radiant Heights of the great World-God.

He folded his bodily vesture with all of its physical life. At the Master's touch he ascended, ascended,—rising higher and higher, passing the pale lights of the stars, passing the pale light of the moon, piercing the effulgence of the sun and became one with the effulgence of God.

He passed from out this house of earth. He dropped this lump of clay. He passed beyond the veils of form,—yea, e'en beyond the veils of mind. He lifted the curtains of Endless Night and entered the gorgeous glow of the light beyond the world.

The world faded from out his view. He had left it. It became as naught. He emerged from the horizons of the seven worlds and saw the freedom of the soul. He found it boundless, deathless, changeless, utterly beyond all dying things. He found it free, untrammelled, God-like,—the God he worshipped as his Self.

Now he knows the peace of the Infinite and knows the splendours of the radiant day beyond the great night of the world. Now he no longer yearns ; the struggle has forever passed—for he is in Nirvana and with God.

Beyond the borderlands of the world he has soared into the Formless, Thoughtless Infinite—yea, and knows the soul of man and God. He has dropped the care-worn thing called life and stands upon the Eternal Heights. He has reached beyond the world-form and seen the meaning of the thing called life. He has grown beyond the bondage of its meaning and its shadows and become one with the Infinite Divine.

F. J. ALEXANDER.

SEE THE SHINING STAR

THOSE who have the Hindu blood running in their veins derive a constant strength and hope from the words of Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita,—“Whenever, O descendant of Bharata, Dharma subsides and Adharma prevails I body Myself forth. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of Dharma, I come into being in every age.” And as its fulfilment we have noticed the unmistakable signs of His blessed advent, in the birth of the great spiritual giants of different types, from time to time, in this blessed land of Dharma. In times of yore, Buddha, Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, Sri Chaitanya and other brilliant luminaries rose one after the other, and spread their unquenchable light of Truth far and near. Their wonderful life-histories shed a perennial charm over us all. In modern times also, new stars of greater or lesser brilliance appear and disappear, in the spiritual economy of Nature, remaining visible to our adoring gaze for a longer or a shorter period as required to fulfil their mission. Recently the shining star of Vivekananda appeared in the clear blue sky, spreading its lustre throughout the whole world of man, and though now invisible to our mortal eyes, it illumines our hearts just the same as ever and will for all time to come. Let the rising generation study this phenomenon, the guiding-star of their soul.

When everything seemed dark, when the proud nations of the West came in the name of civilisation to India to lead us to light, when the sons of India almost forgot their mission in life and abandoned themselves to the mercy of the surging tide of materialism, the ever-watchful Lord of compassion sent once more His Messenger in the form of Vivekananda, nay incarnated Himself to awaken and rouse them to their glorious heritage. Though his sojourn among us was brief and dazzling yet he lives in our minds as a sweet and inspiring Presence making us sensible of the tremendous service to the cause of humanity at large, which he rendered without any distinction of caste and creed and without the least idea of self and egoism. To the sacred remembrance of his blessed name we are all bound to dedicate our lives. Fear not, ye men of wealth, that we mean to hurl a bomb

upon your hoarded purses by proposing to invite donations to construct a memorial in his honour, which the forces of Nature can play a havoc with. We don't want any such ephemeral monument; our minds are his Ashramas, his Maths, his Sevashramas which he loved so well. Young men of India, I appeal to you for whom he lived and worked and left all he had, so that you may propagate his thoughts and ideas for the glory of our motherland and for the good of humanity. He has freely laid open before us the treasure-chests of our ancient spirituality, and acquainted us with the intricate workings of its keys, calling us to their guardianship. And who are they that are to fulfil this huge trust by handing them down in the same spirit, which is only possible by living the same life of tremendous self-sacrifice? We affirm that we, the young people alone, are fit to take that work up in the spirit of worship, just as unpolluted flowers alone are fit for the worship of God.

What are we to do? Can we not see around us the poor Indians, the hungry Indians, the down-trodden pariah Indians, and last but not the least in importance, the Indians who are losing their *Shraddha*, their Dharma, day by day? What should be their destiny? Are they, alas, to be ruined by going from bad to worse? No. Certainly we cannot let them lie doomed to their wretched condition for ever. Is there nothing in our humble means to raise them and make them feel that they also are the sons of the Rishis, as much as any of those who chanted the Vedic hymns in the dawn of time? Study the life and works of Swami Vivekananda and you will not only find the answer, but feel the inflow of a mighty current of strength urging you on to achieve your ideal. Let us not forget that we are Indians, that we are born in the land of Dharma, in the birthplace of Rama the ideal king, and of Sita the ideal woman, in the birthplace of Sankara and Vivekananda, that we are the sons of Vedanta. Our national history was once bright with heroic deeds of our forefathers and our religion has been the most catholic of religions, proclaiming the oneness of existence from the Creator down to a blade of grass. And whatever be the differences time has brought on in social aptitudes between Indian

and Indian, we are sure that a common blood is running through all of us. When we realise this, we can surely find out a way to help every Indian in his onward march. We must remember that this is a work of great sacrifice, but no real work can be done without self-sacrifice. Renunciation is the corner-stone of every great undertaking. Let us, therefore, renounce everything that is dear to our selfish interests. Renounce we must, for we cannot worship God and Mammon at the same time. Let our study bring home to us the truth of the Advaita Vedanta that we are Sat-Chit-Ananda, that we are Brahman, the deathless, the unchangeable. Let us by our lives preach the same to others and make them live in it. If we speak to them in their own language we can convince them that they, too, are divine in their nature and not worm-like as they are made to think.

This is the work entrusted to us by our beloved Swamiji to accomplish,—a work fit for the Devas. Are we ready to accept it? If we refuse, we deprive ourselves of the privilege of being made the blessed instruments, in bringing about the great regeneration that is coming irresistibly upon mankind. Hear the clarion-call of Vivekananda uttered as long as eighteen years ago: "Say not that you are weak. The spirit is omnipotent. Look at that handful of young men called into existence by the divine touch of Ramakrishna's feet..... They are now twenty. Make them two thousand to-morrow. Young men, your country requires it. The world requires it. Call up the divinity within you.....you must give up. Be great.....Bring all the forces of good together. Do not care under what banner you march. Do not care what be your colour,

green, blue or red, but mix all the colours up and produce the intense glow of white, the colour of love." It behoves every true-born son of the Ancient Mother to strive his best to be enrolled in this hallowed band. It is our turn to show that heroism in the field of spirituality, which has ever been our invaluable heritage. It is high time for us to revive our religion, for it is revival and not reform that we want at the present day. Shake off all bondages of the soul once for all whether they be made of gold or base iron. All bondage is sin, all weakness is sin,—there is no other sin in the world. One who does not believe in God may not be a sinner; but one who has no faith in himself is the greatest sinner. Thus says Vivekananda, the greatest interpreter of the Vedic wisdom to the modern world.

Lo, there is a shining star in the clear blue sky! How beautiful, how bright it is, pouring its lustre in all directions! It is a joy to see it. It is the Star of Vivekananda. It has once appeared and will go on increasing in its beauty and splendour till it has fulfilled its mission. Go enter into virtuous, unselfish works, and it will guide you. Resign yourselves to the Lord and take for guide the shining star. And work on till the body—the vehicle—wears off. This is the duty.

"Arise! Awake! and stop not till the goal is reached!" This is the only *mantram* to free yourselves from all earth-born cares.

May Renunciation be our motto, and may we pray always with our whole heart, "Lord, it does not matter even if I take a thousand births, only give me a pure, unselfish mind to work ever for the good of humanity."

A YOUNG ARYAN.

THE INFLUENCE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA IN AMERICA

Extract of a lecture by Mr. Alexander

At the public celebration at Belur Math, Sunday, January 29, on the occasion of the birthday anniversary of the Swami Vivekananda, Mr. Alexander, an American gentleman, delivered an address on the influence of the Swami in America. Among other things Mr. Alexander said:

"The most important fact that must be mentioned in connection with any reference to the Swami Vivekananda is that He was the first Ori-

ental since the time of Christ who deeply impressed the religious consciousness of the West. The full importance of this statement must be borne in mind, for it is the keynote of any just appreciation of the influence the Swami exercised either in America or England.

"From the time He received the thundering ovation of seven thousand persons at the World's Parliament of Religions,—an ovation which few reli-