

# Prabuddha Bharata

उच्छिष्टत 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

### JNANA AND BHAKTI—V.

O.— UNLESS one covers their eyes, the untrained horses will not move a single step. Is it possible to realise God, unless one's passions are kept under control?

Master: Thou speakest of Jnana-yoga, the Path of Knowledge or Discrimination which leadeth to God. The Knowing One saith, 'One must first be pure if one desireth to see God. One must first control one's passions. First Self-discipline, then Knowledge of God.'

There is another path leading to God,—the Path of Devotion (Bhakti-yoga). Once there comes in the human soul the Love of God, once the chanting of His Holy Name filleth the devotee with joy, no effort is needed for the control of the passions. Such control cometh of itself.

Can a man troubled with grief be in a mood to enter into a quarrel, or to join a feast, or to give his mind up to pleasures of the senses?

Doth the "rainy-weather insect"\* seek darkness once it hath seen the light?

\* An ant which develops wings and flies about after or before a heavy fall of rain.

*Doctor* (smiling): O, it doth not,—it will rather rush upon the flame, and perish.

Master: That is not so with the true worshipper of God. The Living Light to which he is drawn doth not burn and cause death. It is like the light of a gem, shining yet soft, cool and soothing. It burneth not but illumineth the heart with Peace and Joy.

VERILY these customers (of the world) seek for *Kolai* pulse (meaning a worthless commodity). It is given to pure souls alone, who have not touched the world, to love God alone—to have One Aim,—to have the mind fixed upon the Lord.

KNOWLEDGE relating to God keepeth pace with faith. Where there is little faith it is idle to look for much knowledge.

(To Narendra): So long as one goeth on questioning and reasoning about God, one hath not seen Him as a Reality.

## TO RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA

Ramakrishna Paramahansa,  
God-intoxicated Sage,  
From the unreal to the real,—  
Lead our souls to Thee, Supreme!

The storm is high and loud the crash  
From crest of wave to rock-bound shore ;  
But, Holy Spirit, safe are we,  
So long as we remember Thee.

Weary of the fever, O Sage,  
Weary are we of the living death ;  
Would that we might rest our souls  
In the Lotus Blossom of Thy Peace.

Thou in bliss and calm serene  
Dwellest in the Deepest Depths ;  
Thou dost know the Voiceless Silence  
Of the Ocean's Secret Life.

Love, all infinite and tender,  
Merge our souls into Thy Soul ;  
What care we for the restless surface,  
What would we with its ceaseless strife!

What would we with the endless ache  
Of desire on desire,  
When Thy Infinite Bliss and Peace  
Can alone suffice our souls ?

Thou alone art Real and True,  
Thou, the Form of all these shadows ;  
Thou, the Essence, Thou, the Bliss,  
For which so anxiously we strive.

Let us see Thy Face Revealed,  
Impart Thy Vision Beatific ;  
Destroy in us all finite life,  
Instil in us the Life Divine.

Before Thee, Lord, all sorrows vanish ;  
Thy Grace makes shadows pale and fade,  
And the Fulness of Thy Glory  
Dispels all falseness, death and pain.

O more than Teacher, more than Sage,  
Verily Thou art divine ;  
That Self in Thee, That Self is God,  
That Inmost Self the Rishis taught.

F. J. ALEXANDER,

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 OCCASIONAL NOTES

**W**E need now more than ever the urge of the religious impulse. Personality, without the religious impulse, reaches, grasps, desires. Personality, with the religious impulse, seeks self-effacement and renounces self.

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The religious instinct is the result of innumerable efforts towards the development of that great method of perceiving life as relative to That which life attempts to but never can express—God—The Infinite. The religious man concerns himself not with the expression but with That which is incarnated

relatively in the expression—and That is the Highest—God.

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The religious instinct is a growth from the beginning and points toward the End-wardness of all things—God. It began with the desire instinctive on the part of unthinkable numbers of struggle from lower forms of mental and sense life upward to the life religious. It suggests the remote and infinite goal towards which the soul is progressing, and that goal is the point to which the utmost educated desire and training of will and mind can

lead the surge of human life—Nirvána—Mukti—Realisation.

The instinct is the idea incarnate; the ideas incarnate of the Bhagavad-Gita were Krishna; those of the Upanishads were Yajnavalkya, were Maitreyi. In so far as the soul expresses the ideal it is one with it, and, in this sense, great teachers are Incarnations because they fully express and livingly interpret the ideal which humanity has conceived of God. In this sense, also, the Guru is God.

Try to understand religion to be a natural fact, not something dissociated from reason and experience, but the highest development of these. It is not abnormal from life; it is the most normal and natural of normal and natural things. As the Swami Vivekananda held, nothing should be accepted as truly religious that antagonises reason and experience. Religion is the fulfilment of life; it is not negative to life, but the positive result of having lived in the widest, deepest and highest ways.

Life is the greatest education; living and experience are the educators of the mind. A man must be judged not by his intellectual standards, but by the depth and purport of his desires. A man may be a fool in technical and academic knowledge and yet a sage in the way he feels and desires.

Go below and find the flame on which personality lives and feels, not on what it thinks. Thinking is light, but living is ponderous and, according to the character of his feelings, are we to judge a man. In this light one understands how Christ, how Buddha, how Sri Ramakrishna were teachers not so much by what they said, but by the glowing and divine example of their lives. To them, as to all saints, religion is the living out of the idea. It is the idea made actual, the subjective transformed into the objective.

Thought is constantly becoming instinct. One's instincts, one's temperament are the composite of the activities of the mind. Beneath the surface of the mind is the heavy undertow of tendencies. These are to be weighed, for these count. Thinking is only describing the ideal; living is expressing it; the former is philosophy, and the latter, religion, and in India, particularly, thinking and living have always been one. In the West this has not been so. Philosophy and religion have, for the most, been considered separately.

“Wouldst thou perceive the Infinite, then loosen thy anxious hold on the finite. Wouldst thou understand the real Self, understand what is the not-self. Be thou able to gaze alone and unafraid into the Infinite Whole wherein all parts are absorbed.”

## PAPERS ON EDUCATION.—II

BY THE SISTER NIVEDITA

**I**N a perfect education, we can easily distinguish three different elements, not always chronologically distinct. First, if we would obtain from a human mind the highest possible return, we must recognise in its education the stage of preparing it to learn, of training it to receive impressions, of develop-

ing it intensively, as it were, independently of the particular branch of knowledge through which this is done. Of the very existence of this phase of the educational process, many are unaware.

Secondly, in all historic epochs, but pre-eminently in this modern age, there is a cer-

tain characteristic fund of ideas and concepts which is common to society as a whole, and must be imparted to every individual, who is to pass, in his mature life, as efficient. This is the element that is supposed in the common acceptance to be the whole of education. It bulks the largest. It costs the most labour. It is the process that it is most obviously impossible to eliminate. And yet it is really only one of three elements. And strange to say it is the very one which is least essential to the manifestation of what we call genius. Never was there a period in the world's history, when this aspect of education was so large or imperative as to-day. 'Geography, history, algebra and arithmetic, all that makes up the worry and fret of childish life,' as some one said, 'are in reality the key to a glorious city. They are the franchise of the modern consciousness. Carrying them, a man has a basis of communication with the whole wide world of educated minds.'

But thirdly, these two elements taken together, in their highest degree (and it is quite possible to be taken as 'educated,' on a very modest allowance of the second, only!) will only prepare the mind for real education. They are nothing more than preliminary conditions. They are by no means the essential itself. Having them, the mind has become a fit instrument. But of what? What shall be its message? What is to constitute the burden of its education? What is it that so much preparation has prepared it for? The third element in a perfect human development sweeps away the other two. It takes note of them only by implication, as it were, in the higher or lower fitness of the mind itself. The man meets his guru, and devotes himself to a perfect passivity. Or he surrenders to some absorbing idea, which becomes the passion of his life. Or he takes up a pursuit, and lives henceforth for it, and it alone. The phase of the one has succeeded to the phase of the many. Regarded as a mind, the man has become a full human organism. He now stands

a chance of contributing to the riches of humanity as a whole.

It is characteristic of India that it is the third and highest of these three elements that she has observed and analysed, allowing the other two to occur by accident. It is equally characteristic of the West that it is numbers one and two that she has observed and analysed, allowing number three to occur by accident!

Yet all three have their science, and certainly the last is not without it. Egoistic response to stimulus, constant mental activity, much restlessness and intellectual change of appetite, loud self-assertion, argumentativeness, and desire to manifest power, are apt to be the characteristics of a healthy second stage. But when the guru comes, or the idea that is to dominate the life is apprehended, there may be a keen initial struggle, but after it there is a period of profound apparent quiet. To see the thing as it appears to the mind of the master, is the one necessity. To serve him, acting as his hands and feet, as it were, in order that that one's mind and heart may be made one with his; to serve him silently, broodingly, with the constant attempt to assimilate his thought, this is the method. Throughout this period, there is no room for rebellion. Eventually the guru emancipates; he does not bind. It would be a poor service to him, if we felt compelled in his name to arrest the growth of an idea. Eventually we have to realise that the service to which he has called us is not his own, but that of Truth itself, and that this may take any form. But in the first place it is essential that we begin where he left off. In the first place, emptied of self, we have to labour to give expression to that idea which has struck root in us through him. In the first place, we must understand that the whole significance of our own lives depends, first and last, on their relation to his life.

(To be continued).

## THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD

**T**HE Presence of the Lord is the only Presence in the universe. His Face is on all sides. His Heart is the Cosmic Heart. And all actions that are performed anywhere and at any time are performed through His Cosmic Will. And all the splendours of the stars and of the waters and mountains are the tracings which He has made with His Cosmic Hand upon the endless canvas of life and all the great and surging thoughts and all the aspiring heights of man are the attempt of the Lord to see Himself visualized through the manifold mirror of His countless myriads of images.

There is nothing but the Lord. The most commonplace and the most divine, the lowest and the highest are specializations of His Own Glorious Nature which transcends all limitations that He assumes for His pleasure. Man thirsts for fame, but he is really thirsting for the Greatness of the Lord. Man thirsts for honours when he is really thirsting to know the Great Name of God. He thirsts for wealth, not knowing that the only wealth is the wisdom which leads to God, Man unwittingly searches for and desires the Greatest at all times. It is only the truly great and the really divine that can ever attract the divine human soul. Man hungers for beauty and longs for the possession of that which attracts, but he is really thirsting for the heart and form of the Lord.

All the pleasures of the senses are but faint shadows of His bliss and all the glories of the intellect but faint refractions of the light of his endless knowledge. All the grandeur in the universe is but a feeble description of the true Greatness of Him. He alone is. As the Upanishads say, "Let us, meditating on Him, forget all other things."

Who is wise or who is foolish? The wise and the foolish are equal when His nature shines forth. His is the only light and the

fool and the sinner stand out in His glory as bright images and the saints and the wise are the suns of His thought. "When He shines everything shines after Him." Than He there is naught. Were He to enshroud Himself in the infinite mists of His Own Being, the greatest and the smallest would fade alike, into nothing. The universe itself would vanish and all the eternities would be lost in the endlessness of Him. Glory to Him Who is eternally the same! To whom shall we offer our sacrifice if not to Him Who is our soul? We truly exist only when we assert His nature. Our existence is then infinitely increased; it is made infinite when we identify our true nature with the nature of Him. Our nature is made glorious through His nature. Our minds are true and our wisdom perfect only when we identify our mental life with the omniscience of Him. Let us say: "It is all Thou, O Lord. It is all Thou." Let us say: "Not unto ourselves, O Lord, not unto ourselves, but unto Thy Great Name be praise," as sang the Psalmist after He had rejoiced in His Presence.

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## SOUL PLEASURE.

Shall worries, troubles and trials small,  
That shadowed my path of yore,  
Improve the blaze of my heart-fire,  
When Death's wand touches the core?

I care not whether 'tis light or dark;  
Whether hot or cold, or sun or frost,  
Steadily I pin my eye to the mark  
Not thinking of what it may cost.

The nearest thing afore me lies,  
To do with all my heart and might,  
Is the pleasure dear to me—  
My craving—and my only right.

I care not what the bearing fruit,  
Whether it will be sour or sweet,  
To-morrow or day after I'll taste,  
My work is to Do and Be and meet.

—D. K. Rele.

## THE SECOND CONVENTION OF RELIGIONS—II

## THE THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

The proceedings of the last day of the All-India Convention of Religions commenced with a prayer by Rai Bahadur Lala Baij Nath. The following papers were read by the gentlemen named :—

1. Deva Dharma, by Pandit Deva Ratan of Deva Samaj, Lahore.
2. Pushti Marga of Vallabhacharya (by Mr. Lakubhai P. Parek, ex-Judge of Ahmedabad) read by Mr. L. Nagardass Shroff of Bombay.
3. Sanatana Dharma, by Pandit Ganga Vishnu Misra Kavyatirtha (in Hindi).
4. Indian Christian's Confusion of Faith, by the Rev. Mr. Rudra of Bengal.
5. Sikhism, by Srimati Panditâ Jeevanmuktiji, Principal, Gunnayya Patshala, Jammu (in Hindi).
6. Hinduism as Universal Religion, by Pandit Ghanashyam Sharma (in Hindi).

Two more papers on Sikhism, by Prof. Jodh Singh and Sardar Nath Singh, and the paper on Jainism, by Mr. M. L. Jaini, were taken as read.

The Convention after adjourning for half an hour met, and the proceedings began with a song sung by Srimati Panditâ Jeevanmuktiji to the accompaniment of the piano. The following papers were then read by the gentlemen named :—

7. Gouranga Dharma, by Mr. Radha Krishna Goswamy of Brindavan (in Hindi).
8. Christianity, by the Rev. Mr. C. F. Andrews of Delhi.
9. Hinduism—Rationale of Symbolism, by Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyer of Madras.
10. Suddhadwaita Philosophy, by Mr. L. Nagardass Shroff of Bombay.
11. Vedic Mantras and Modern Science, by Mr. Bhagat Ishridas of Lahore.

There were many other papers which were taken as read for want of time.

The President then made the following

concluding speech :—

Gentlemen,—Our deliberations for the present have now come to a close, but I cannot let you disperse without thanking you all for your presence at this session of the Parliament of Religions, and for the living interest you have manifested in all its proceedings. Very special thanks are due to those friends who belong to various religious camps, for their luminous expositions of their respective creeds, and for the fine spirit of toleration and sympathy which pervaded all they said.

Many of you have come from considerable distances and at no little personal inconvenience to attend these meetings, but I am sure you will all feel amply rewarded by the kindly welcome you have received, by the new friendships you have formed, and the enlarged views you have obtained by the comparative study of Religions which has been placed before you. We are making progress. I am sure we have attained a higher platform for our spiritual outlook than we did when last we met at Calcutta, and the oftener we meet in the same spirit for conference on these most exalted themes, the more we shall be able to see human life in a truer perspective, and in all the Religions of the world see God's way of revealing Himself to men according as they are able to bear it. I therefore bid you all adieu for the present, trusting that you will all carry away to your homes pleasant memories of our short sojourn in Allahabad—the City of God.

Happy to meet, sorry to part. Happy to meet again.

With a vote of thanks to the President, proposed by the Raja of Hathras and seconded by the Rev. Dr. A. H. Ewing, the Convention terminated.

The delegates were entertained in the evening at a garden party by the Reception Committee of the Convention.

## THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SUMMARY OF MR. A. TALAIVASINGHAM'S SPEECH AT THE FORTY-NINTH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF SWAMIJI CELEBRATED BY THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY OF COLOMBO.

THE speaker first dwelt upon the characteristics and virtues which distinguished such great men as Swami Vivekananda, Buddha, Sankara, and others of the same type. He said: The chief characteristics which distinguish all the great prophets of the world and draw us to their feet in admiration and love are their gift of vision, their power to see the primal mysteries, their ability to perceive, so to say, the heart of the universe a-beating and make us perceive it, and their capacity to be in harmony with the soul of all things, and, above all, to enable us to realise the scheme of the universe. To such men the universe does not bear the commonplace aspect that it bears for us; they see the world transfigured in the all-enveloping radiance of God and, in the words of the poet—

“To them, the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts, that do often lie too deep for tears.”

The speaker then proceeded to explain the cause of which the birth and existence of such lives were the effect. He quoted from the Gita where the Lord Krishna says: Whenever virtue subsides and vice prevails I (the Lord) manifest Myself to help mankind. So in other words, said the speaker, whenever human institutions fail to encompass human aspirations, whenever the ideals of a people are incongruous with the form they are clothed in, the Lord incarnates to restore harmony and to establish righteousness. Such is the cause of which the birth of such great men is the effect. In the history of every nation there are certain epochs in which every branch of human development attains perfection without effort by a kind of spontaneous instinct, and at these divine hours great things come to pass by the co-operation of a thousand hidden forces in which great souls or world-spirits find a flood of admiration and sympathy to sustain them; and it was at one of those privileged and fortunate epochs that Sri Ramakrishna's prayer to God that He should send a fit disciple who will fulfil the noble mission which he had undertaken, as well as that of Vivekananda's mother to the Lord Vireswara that she should have a son, was

answered by the Lord, and the Swami was born on the 12th. January 1863. It was a time when there was a great religious unrest in India and when mushroom religions were springing up on all sides to effect a miserable compromise, as it were, between the two diametrically opposed systems of religious thought which prevailed at that time in the commercial West and in the spiritual East. They had long parted company one from the other—the West in search of the expansion of material and worldly prospects, and the East in the pursuit of spiritual development. It was at such a critical time in the religious history of India that this great world-spirit was born. He was destined not only to confirm the people of India in the beliefs of their own time-honoured and noble religion, but even to effect both in the West and in the New World such a religious revival as to threaten to shake the very foundations of the fabric of dogmas which modern Churchianity had built upon what might be called a comparatively small substratum of truth. He was at the same time able to convince them that the ideal of a universal religion was based upon Infinite Love, Truth and Toleration, which were really the three cardinal principles and essentials of all true religions, and to such a great extent did he succeed in convincing them of this fact, that the oldest philosophy, viz., the Vedanta philosophy, soon became the newest religion among one of the most materialistic nations of the world. Through the Swami's great and untiring efforts, Vedanta Societies at New York and San Francisco were formed, and they have been and are even now doing eminently useful work in promoting the object of the Ramakrishna Mission in the American Continent and have succeeded in gaining many distinguished men to their folds. From the time of his memorable speech at the World's Parliament of Religions down to the day of his passing away, his life was one of extraordinary activity and self-sacrifice which caused such a considerable strain on his bodily frame that it gradually undermined his health, and eight years ago the spiritual

world became poorer by the loss of a great constructive thinker and, as the Americans would call him, 'an orator by divine right,' 'a prince among men.'

The speaker then read the following extract from a letter written by the San Francisco Vedanta Society to the brother-Swamis in Bengal just after they heard that the Swami was no more:— "The sad news of his untimely death comes to us, with all the profound mystery of mortal death intensified to a profound degree. He is to us what Jesus Christ is to many devout Christians."

He also quoted the following poem, which concludes their letter written 'in memoriam' of the Swamiji:—

There is no death! An angel form  
Walks over the earth in silent tread;  
He bears our best loved things away,  
And then we call them "dead."  
But ever near us though unseen,  
The dear immortal spirits tread;

For all the boundless universe

Is life,—there are no dead!

Brother, Companion, Master, Peace and farewell."

These words show the great esteem in which he was held by the Americans, men living in an entirely strange land, and how much they admired his sound exposition of the Vedanta Philosophy. He (the speaker) concluded his speech by remarking that it was to the Swami and his divine Guru that the world was indebted for a correct interpretation of the Vedanta Philosophy. As interpreted by them, it is both a religion and a philosophy, and in its philosophic aspect it deals not only with the problems which relate to the fundamental verities of existence but also with the manner in which man is gradually enabled to adjust his life and conduct so as to be more and more in accord and harmony with those philosophic verities. To him and his Master, religion was realisation. We should cherish the memory of such great and divine persons by acting up to their precepts as far as practicable.

—*The Hindu Organ.*

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## SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA: HIS LIFE AND MISSION.

"Great men are the living fountain which it is good and pleasant to be near; the light which enlightens, which has enlightened the darkness of the world; and this not as a kindled lamp merely, but rather as a natural luminary shining by the gift of heaven; a flowing light-fountain of native original insight and heroic nobleness, in whose presence souls feel all is well with them."—Carlyle.

THERE are periods in the history of national life when peculiar circumstances produce great men of genius who are justly honoured as the saviours of humanity. The character of their glorious mission can, of course, be determined only by prevalent conditions; but whether in the sphere of spiritual instruction or of material advancement, the record of their noble work is bound to prove an unfailing source of comfort and encouragement to those whose lot may be cast in the less fortunate times. Thus were Buddha and Sankaracharya, Christ and Mahomet born to guide by their rare wisdom and clear insight the faltering steps of devoted humanity to the ultimate object of all religions—spiritual

realisation. And among such saviours may be reckoned Sri Ramakrishna whom we must acknowledge as "one of those rare souls born once in an age to raise the world to a clearer understanding of the scheme of things and to make human beings achieve the salvation of their souls."

The account of his life and mission cannot fail to gain in interest and importance when it is remembered that Ramakrishna lived in an age whose progress in material civilisation almost threatened to destroy the struggling element of spirituality. The difficulties in his way were particularly complex, and thus his personality essentially owes its grandeur to the greatness of his achievements.

As all those blessed persons who had the good fortune to come under the influence of this sage are singularly agreed, Ramakrishna may be regarded with admiration as the perfect embodiment of all the virtues but none of the failings of an oriental people.

Ramakrishna was, in fact, the ideal man whom human nature and circumstances can but rarely produce; and to have gained in the short period of



his earthly existence a profound knowledge of sublime Truths for which the world has been yearning for centuries, is certainly a glorious record which, though occasionally paralleled in other ages and countries, can well claim for this modern sage an honoured place among the great teachers whose lives are like beacon-lights in the gloomy ocean of eternity.

Unlike perhaps some of the spiritual benefactors of the human race, he never regarded complete severance from the world and individual communion with God as an adequate compensation for the necessary failure to leave the world "immediately better" than it was found. Thus in the significant simile of the Bhagavad-Gita, his life in the world may well be described to have been like that of the lotus-leaf in the water—surrounded yet untouched by baser elements.

The early life of Ramakrishna furnishes an admirable illustration of the distinct characteristics of true genius of whatever description, and among such may be mentioned with special importance his extreme simplicity and humility which can sufficiently explain his unconsciousness of the nature and value of his glorious achievements. Simplicity, it has been aptly remarked, is the first production in Nature and the last refinement in Art; and this virtue, perhaps because of its rarity, acquires a majesty before which the seeming grandeur of vain foppery naturally pales into insignificance. And the greatness of humility needs no description when we remember that the fragrant violet scarcely obtrudes its presence, and that it has been from among the humble that the choicest flowers of humanity have developed.

That there was in him an earnest desire to promote spiritual comfort and ancient wisdom is strikingly evidenced by the many homely and forcible passages which happily mark the general character of his method of instruction and which lend to all his pithy sayings the aroma of simplicity and naturalness.

And here it may be interesting to reflect how a deep vein of mysticism which makes the subject doubly intricate, runs through the works of some modern poets and philosophers.

Thus Ramakrishna's opinion on the caste-system is expressed in words which can avert many a pre-

mature attempt at the destruction of the social structure of the Hindu community. "When fruit," he says, "becomes ripe and falls of itself from the tree, it tastes very sweet, but an when unripe fruit is artificially ripened or prematurely plucked, it does not taste so sweet: so when one has attained perfection, the observance of caste-distinctions falls off from him, but so long as this exalted knowledge is not reached, one must observe caste-distinctions."

The account of his life indicates, as has been remarked, the development of a remarkable genius and furnishes many incidents of importance to the earnest reader. Born in a village of Bengal during the early half of the nineteenth century and filled from childhood with the spirit of devotion inherited from his parents, young Ramakrishna had ample facilities and great possibilities in the direction of worldly distinction which however never appealed to his essentially religious turn of mind. So, when secular education was abandoned and when financial embarrassments sorely perplexed him, poor Ramakrishna was compelled, though perhaps against his will, to seek employment as the priest in a "Kali" temple. As days passed by, he became seriously absorbed in meditation, presumably to the detriment of his duties as a priest, and he could be seen, as his brilliant disciple tells us, weeping for hours because of his failure to know the truth. He could never bear the thought of living with his wife because he considered every woman as his Divine Mother, and the noble lady who had been married early in life fully sympathised with her husband's aspirations and became a devoted disciple of her blessed lord.

After having perfected himself in religious discipline under a Sannyasin whom he regarded as the embodiment of all wisdom, he got himself initiated into the mysteries of Islam and set his mind on studying the life-mission of Jesus Christ, thus gaining a spiritual culture as catholic as it was indeed comprehensive. The increasing fame of this sage attracted many eminent people who, like busy bees to full-blown roses, flocked to him for religious education and encouragement, and the last few years of his life can be aptly described as "an unceasing ministration to the salvation of his fellow-men."

The mild Hindu will dwell long and lovingly on

some striking incidents, as the cleansing of a Pariah's house with his flowing hair, which reveal to us the sage as a great soul bent on the destruction of the pride of race, wealth or descent. Thus Ramakrishna's work in the direction of social reform still remains as a potent influence underlying the present awakening of the higher classes to a sense of their responsibility towards the depressed classes who, on grounds not only of philanthropy but also of patriotism and economic wisdom, have indeed an eternal claim on their sympathy and support.

His knowledge of the great religions of the world served to create in him the conviction that the outward forms are only the different aspects of one grand religion, and that a universal religion will be within the range of practical realisation when, in the deathless words of Swami Vivekananda, "upon the banner of every religion will be written, in spite of all resistance, 'Help and not Fight,' 'Assimilation and not Destruction,' 'Harmony and Peace and not Dissension.'"

Far greater than his appreciation of worldly Art and Music was his knowledge of—

"That strange Beauty which no eye can see,  
And that sweet Music which no ear can measure."

—a knowledge which enabled him to assert with confidence that "the wretch who saith he is a sinner is verily a sinner," and that mankind should rejoice to be addressed by the sweet and hopeful name, "Children of Immortal Bliss."

His practical realisation of the power of Prayer can well have made him exclaim with the great Victorian poet:

"What are they better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call them  
friend."

Of Ramakrishna it may be said, as perhaps of few others, that "spotless holiness, deep, unspeakable blessedness, unstudied, endless wisdom, child-like peacefulness and all-absorbing love of God were his only reward,"—and what reward more permanent or desirable? He is indeed one of the world's great men who have left behind them—

"Footprints, that perhaps another,  
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing, shall take heart again."

—S. Amraveswar in the *Indiana*.

### WITH SRI RAMAKRISHNA PARAMAHAMSA.

THE anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa will be celebrated to-day at several places in Bengal, Madras and other provinces of India where the Ramakrishna Mission has its associations. We might also commune with our readers to-day over that great life through the "Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna," that charming publication issued by the Brahmavadin Office of Madras. Ramakrishna's life is one long romance of an absolutely disinterested life lived in and for God. His early childhood gave numerous indications of his future, which was to create so potent a religious force among his countrymen. During his childhood, which was spent at Kamarpukur in the Hugli District, Ramakrishna led a pastoral life among the peasants. He imbibed at this early age the virtues of simplicity, guilelessness, independence and straightforwardness from his parents who had a reputation

for their good nature. From the Kathakas, Ramakrishna got his knowledge of the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavata and the Puranas. The little child of five or six years old would often go to hear their recitations and listen to them thoughtfully and, on returning home, would often enact with his playmates the scenes that he had learnt about. Ramakrishna had a good musical voice and would recite the prayers to the Lord in quite an ecstatic manner. Before he had reached his teens, while once walking across a field of waving corn, he fell into a trance in which, as he told his disciples afterwards, he lost all sense-consciousness, and saw a vision of Glory. A few years later on Ramakrishna came to live in a Sanskrit school in Calcutta. When in the school he was disgusted to find that after all the talk of being and non-being, of Brahman and Maya, and of how the soul is liberated

from the material bondage, the teachers never dreamt of practising their precepts in their own lives, but ran after lust and gold, after name and fame. He told the head-teacher who was no other than his elder brother, that he would never care for that kind of learning, the sole aim of which was a few pieces of silver and a few maunds of rice and vegetables. He longed to learn something higher than all this, a knowledge which would give him God.

This was a turning point in Ramakrishna's life. From that moment his thoughts were solely about God and the hankerings of his soul to get Divine Bliss were all the more eager and importunate. A short while after, he accepted the offer of serving as a priest in the temple of Kali at Dakshineshvar. Sincere as he was, he could do nothing from mercenary motives and in his new position of ministering to the worship of the Goddess Kali, he found the true means of leading his soul to Divine knowledge. Sometimes he would sit, after the regular forms of worship were over, at the feet of the Goddess for hours and hours, chanting hymns and talking and praying to Her as to a mother. At other times he would weep and weep till he saw the perfect form of the Mother he wished to see. People thought that he was mad, and some even took him to physicians; but the physicians despaired of curing a 'madness' which was destined to madden the world with the love of the Lord. During all these years, a great religious tornado, as he said later, raged within him and made things topsy-turvy. About this time Ramakrishna was married to Saradamani Devi, a tender girl of five years. His spiritual tribulations grew more and more as his yearnings after the Mother grew intenser, till at last a Bráhman lady who was herself versed in religion quieted his troubled soul by proving on Shastric authorities that he had reached the highest state which had shown itself in the *Asta-Sátvic Vikáras* of Sri Radha and Chaitanya. Later on he met a Sannyasin who gave him the knowledge of Vedanta. Ramakrishna, whose soul was already purified by his worship of the Mother Kali, then practised Yoga, and attained perfection in it very soon. Having tasted of the Absolute, Ramakrishna thought of doing away with any sectarianism that might have clung to him; and as he worshipped Kali of old, so he

now worshipped Rama, Krishna, Mahomed and Jesus Christ. Thus he realised the One Absolute through all these varying creeds and tenets. During all these years of spiritual realisation, Ramakrishna entirely forgot that he was married. Saradamani Devi, who had by this time grown up into a woman, hearing conflicting reports about her husband, went to the Dakshineshvar Temple to see him. There she found him a religious devotee who lost his self in God. Ramakrishna received her very kindly but told her that the old Ramakrishna was dead and the new one could never look upon woman as other than mother. He worshipped her with flowers and incense as a mother, and was lost in a trance. His wife, fully worthy of such a saint, felt herself doubly blessed in her husband and was thenceforth with him, learning religion at his feet and ministering to his comforts as his beloved disciple. Ramakrishna afterwards went on a pilgrimage to Benares and Brindavan. After his return he lived at Dakshineshvar till his soul left its mortal coil.

Ramakrishna used to say: 'When the rose is full-blown the bees swarm round it of their own accord.' This was precisely true in his own case. As his soul being filled with Divine Bliss gave out its sweet scents, clusters of men swarmed round him, to catch the fragrance. The homely wisdom, the child-like simplicity, and the joy overfull of this God-intoxicated man soon drew people around him. There were men of the old and new schools of thought, young men fresh from colleges and schools, old pundits vegetating in their learning, social reformers, public men, among those who flocked to Ramakrishna. Those who had been in his company, felt a constant yearning of the soul in them to see him again and again to have a sip of the ecstasy which enrapt him. Ramakrishna's influence in his own time, was undoubtedly great. By his own life, which seemed to be an ecstasy all through in which he realised God everywhere in Creation, Ramakrishna taught people how to live a pure and godly life. He had among his followers Pundits like Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Brahmo-Samajists like Keshav Chandra Sen, poets like Michael Madhu Sudan, besides young and robust boys like Narendra (Vivekananda). When the attacks of foreign missionaries were shaking the popular faith in Hinduism, by the holy influence he spread around, both among the populace and

among the elite of the time, Ramakrishna reinstated it firmly in a degree which could scarcely have been attained by outward remedies. It was at Ramakrishna's feet that Vivekananda imbibed the spirit of robust freedom and independence of the Vedic times, which characterised him all through. The great work of installing Hinduism in its proper place among the religions of the world which Vivekananda did in his life, had its inspiration from Ramakrishna. And if the national and religious awakening which the teachings of Vivekananda have brought about in India, is to be traced to its fundamental source, it must be deemed to flow from the life of this Paramahansa Saint of Dakshineshvar.

Throughout all his life Ramakrishna taught Bhakti Yoga, which, he held, was the best way for salvation in Kali Yuga. He was himself an embodiment of renunciation, which is the essence of Bhakti. Ramakrishna had so great a renunciation for gold that even in sleep the mere touch of the metal would disturb him, and his body would grow distorted and would writhe until it had shaken off the metal. He was constantly advising people to do their work, but not to be attached to it. Instead of consuming a large amount of book-learning, Ramakrishna would say: "Say 'Gita,' 'Gita' ten times, that is sufficient. For, said ten times, it comes to be 'tyagi,' 'tyagi.' Now Tyagi meaneth a person who has given up the world for the sake of God. The ideal Sannyasin will give up the world both outwardly and from the mind. The ideal householder will give up the world from the mind i. e. he will give up the fruits of all works for the sake of the Love of God." To every householder he would say, "Do all thy duties with thy mind always fixed upon God." Work, said Ramakrishna, is the first chapter of human life, God is its conclusion. To work unattached is exceedingly difficult in this world of ours where the senses are worshipped. Therefore Ramakrishna would say, Live with and for the Love of the Lord. Practice and work are inevitable in the elementary stages. "The term of rituals and ceremonials is over as soon as tears are visible in the eyes and the hairs stand up in joy at the name of the Lord." "Sandhyá loses itself in Gâyatri, Gâyatri loses itself in Om, Om in the end loses itself in Samadhi (pure God-consciousness)." Spiritual awakening is a question of time. "In

the sea of the world are the crocodiles—passions and desires. Rub thy body with turmeric pounded to a pulp, if thou wishest to bathe in that sea. For then these crocodiles will do no harm to thee. The turmeric is discrimination i. e. knowing of the real and unreal, and non-attachment. Along with this another thing is wanted—intense devotion to God." Fortified thus, man might live a happy family life. Ramakrishna said, "Thou mayest see God if thy love for Him is as strong as the three attachments put together, viz., the attachment of a worldly man to things of the world, the attachment of a mother to her child, and the attachment of a chaste and devoted wife to her husband." As imperfect men, it is our duty to find out the easiest path that leadeth to God. This path, said Ramakrishna, was Bhakti Yoga, Communion by Love of God. What is meant by the Path of Devotion is, that work is simplified by devotion. "This Love of God reduceth the quantity of one's work by fixing one's mind upon one's Ideal (God). It again helps one to work unattached." Work is only a means to an end. "So march on and never halt till you have come up to the great ideal of your life, which is to see God."

With all his teachings of Bhakti and charity, Ramakrishna was aware of the necessity of warding off evil by resistance. "A person living in society should make a show of the spirit of resisting evil for purposes of self-defence. At the same time care should be taken to avoid paying back evil by evil." He held that by love one could conquer all things. He very strongly insisted on people giving up the habit of thinking that they are sinners, that they are weak, powerless and doomed. Cherish the idea, said he, that you are strong, and free, and you will be surely so in course of time. Ramakrishna Paramahansa had the wonderful gift of satisfying all those inquirers who came to him; and his God-intoxicated personality seldom left unpurified those that came in contact with him. Like Chaitanya of Nadia, Ramakrishna lived in continued ecstasy, and to all those around him he was joy and sweetness incarnate. The life and teachings of Ramakrishna, like those of all great world-teachers, present a mirror in which we can see the dross elements of our nature in comparison with its crystal clearness. Their value consists in the self-introspection which they suggest. Rama-

krishna's life was the one radiance of the composite luni-solar light, as he would say of the Avatars, of the moon of the Devotee's love, and of the sun of Divine knowledge. As Vivekananda, his greatest disciple, puts it, "Jnanam is all right, but there is

the danger of its becoming dry intellectualism. Love is great and noble, but it may die away in meaningless sentimentalism. A harmony of all these is the thing required. Ramakrishna was such a harmony."—*The Mahratta*, March 5.



THE SEVENTY-EIGHTH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY STOTRA OF  
SRI RAMAKRISHNA

श्रीरामकृष्णदेवस्याष्टसप्ततितमजन्मोत्सवस्तोत्रम् ।

लीलार्थमाच्छादितनित्यमूर्ति  
युगे युगेऽभूद् भुवि योऽवतीर्णः ।  
कामारखाते क्षुदिरामधाम्नि  
पश्यन्तु तं बालकमद्य जातम् ॥१॥

शीतद्युतौ शुक्लकलायुगस्थे  
दिक्षु प्रसन्नासु च सौम्यवारे ।  
रसाशुगाद्रीन्दुमिते शकाब्दे  
यः प्रादुरासीज्जयतीश्वरोऽसौ ॥२॥

हित्वा महैश्वर्यमुदग्रलीलं  
माधुर्यसान्द्रं श्रित आत्मभावम् ।  
कैवल्यरत्नं वितरन् समन्ता-  
जातस्त्विदानीं भुवि रामकृष्णः ॥३॥

रामस्य कृष्णस्य च विग्रहो यो  
वालये सुकली रुचिरं ननर्त्त ।  
आजन्मसंसिद्धविरागवृत्ति-  
र्नामानुरक्तो विषयेष्वरक्तः ॥४॥

ससोदरः प्राप्य च दक्षिणेश्वरं  
लोकानुशिखाव्रतमास्थितो मुदा ।  
मुक्तिप्रसादां भवतारिणीं हि ता  
मुद्बोधयामास जगद्धितेच्छया ॥५॥

त्यक्तातिदूरं कनकश्च कामिनीं  
रराज योऽसावकलङ्कचन्द्रवत् ।  
लीलां समागम्य च नाकलोकत  
श्चकार भूधर्मसमन्वयाय वै ॥६॥

TRANSLATION

1. Behold Him—who with His eternal Form hidden for the sake of Lila (Divine sport), incarnated Himself on earth from age to age,—born as a boy, this day, in the abode of Kshudiram at Kamarpukur!

2. May Victory be to Him, the Lord, who was born when the quarters were propitious, when the moon was on the second digit in the bright half of the month, on Wednesday, in the year 1756 \* of the Saka Era!

3. Laying aside the dazzling sovereignty and the exalted sports of His Divinity in Heaven, and betaking Himself to His real Essence, of sweetness compact, Ramakrishna is now born on earth to distribute the treasure of Kaivalya (final Emancipation) all around.

4. He, who is Rama and Krishna, in another Shape, who, master of mirth, regaled everyone by His sweet dances in childhood, who even from birth was perfect in Renunciation, who was devoted to the singing of the Name of God, and was averse to sense-enjoyments.

5. Coming to Dakshineshvar with His brother, and embracing, with joy, the vow of illumining humanity by first practising religion Himself, He through the desire of doing good to the world, quickened the image of Bhavatārini,† whose favour is Mukti, into a living Presence.

6. He who, throwing far, far away all ideas of Woman and Gold, shone as the spotless moon, and descending from the Spheres of Heaven incarnated

\* This is a peculiar old method of describing a date, to be read out in the inverted order. In the compound word here, the terms *Rasa*, *Asuga* (*Vāna*), *Adri*, and *Indu*, are symbolical expressions for the numbers 6, 5, 7, and 1, respectively. Read from right to left we get the year as above.

† *Lit.* She, Who takes one across the sea of the world. The name of the image of Mother Kāli at the Temple of Dakshineshvar.

सञ्चार्य्यं शक्तिं निजसेवकेषु  
 चापाङ्गभङ्ग्या भवतापहारी ।  
 यः प्रेरयामास विधूतपापान्  
 सिहोपमेयान् दशदिक्षु शिष्यान् ॥७॥

स्थिरासनं यस्य श्रीदक्षिणेश्वरः  
 प्रसादधन्यश्च वेलूङ्गमन्दिरम् ।  
 वेदान्तसिद्धान्तितब्रह्मतत्त्वकं  
 हस्ते स्थितं चामलकं नु यस्य भोः ॥८॥

तद्रामकृष्णस्य शुभाङ्घ्रिपङ्कजे  
 भक्तद्विरेफोन्मदमत्तभङ्कते ।  
 गीर्वाणगन्धर्व्वगणोन्द्रसेविते  
 अहैतुकीं भक्तिमयश्च याचते ॥९॥

श्रीरामकृष्णाङ्घ्रिशुभाब्जयो मे  
 भृङ्गायतां चिन् मकरन्दलिप्सु ।  
 स यच्छतूद्यन् भवभीमसिन्धोः  
 सुधानिधिः शान्तिसुधां सदेन्दुम् ॥१०॥

इति श्रीमत्परमहंसपरिव्राजकाचार्य्यश्रीवि-  
 च्चेकानन्दस्वामिपादशिष्येण श्रीशरच्चन्द्रदेवशर्मणा  
 विरचितमेतत् श्रीरामकृष्णदेवस्याष्टसप्ततितम-  
 जन्मोत्सवस्तोत्रं समाप्तम् ।

Himself, verily, to establish the harmony of all religions on earth.

7. He who was potent to destroy the misery of life even with a mere wink of His eye, who having transmitted His Spirituality to His own disciples sent them in all directions,—purged of all taint, as lions among men.

8. He whose permanent Seat is the holy Dakshineshvar, and blessed by whose favour the Temple of Belur is consecrated, to whom the Supreme Truth of Brahman Itself, as arrived at by the Vedanta conclusions was, verily, as much a matter of direct perception as the proverbial myrobolan in the palm of one's hand!

9. At the holy lotus-feet of that-Ramakrishna, resonant with the rapturous hum of joy-intoxicated black-bee-like Bhaktas, and worshipped by the Lords of Devas and Gandharvas and Ganas, I crave that pure Bhakti-without-reason.

10. May my mind, thirsting for honey, be a bee at the holy lotus-feet of Sri Ramakrishna. May He, the ocean of Immortality, who raised himself above the dread sea of the world, constantly confer on Indu † the nectar of Peace.

Here ends the hymn composed on the seventy-eighth birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna, by Sri Saratchandra Devasarman, a disciple of Sri Swami Vivekananda, the Paramahansa Parivrâjaka and Teacher.

† A pseudonym assumed by the writer.

## SRI RAMAKRISHNA BIRTHDAY FESTIVAL—I.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH, BELUR.

LIKE the rising sun which reveals more and more of its all-pervading light as it gradually ascends towards the zenith of its splendours, so is the rising greatness of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Whose Name and Whose Grace are becoming more and more known with the flowing years, aye, and Whose Presence is being felt more and more as the Message He bequeathed is being spread rapidly over the face of this land.

The seventy-eighth birthday anniversary of the Great Sage was publicly celebrated with ceremony and great enthusiasm on Sunday, March 5, at Belur Math, the home of the Ramakrishna Mission and of the monks who are the sons of the Master.

Thousands upon thousands of persons\* came on that blessed day to testify to the greatness of Sri Ramakrishna Whom they regard, with love and veneration, as a veritable Incarnation of the Supreme. Throughout the entire day, from the earliest hours of the morning until the late evening, massive steamers plied from the city of Calcutta and adjacent stations to the spacious grounds of the monastery. To say that the boats were crowded would not suffice. To be accurate, they were literally jammed with men, women and children, dressed in their festive garments and filled with an intense festive spirit,—but, above all, with deep devotion for Him

\* About 50,000 people assembled.

Whose Presence and Fame the day commemorated. It seemed as if the great boats groaned with their burden of human freight, as they raced along almost too deep below the surface of the river.

It was a grand and memorable spectacle, for those thousands upon thousands, one could plainly see, were imbued with that special spirit of the Indian Genius which has made the Indian masses kneel with intense devotion at the feet of those Sons of Men Who are revered as Teachers and Saviours the world over. And, here, particularly, those thousands were to kneel this day and be blessed at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna, Who was, most recently, the Son of Man.

On the open field which lies to the south of the monastery, a huge Durbar tent had been reared and at one end of this tent a shrine had been erected as the abode of the Master. The likeness of Sri Ramakrishna shone upon the throngs of devotees from out a great canvas portrait that resembled Him most faithfully. But it was not the canvas that attracted, or its likeness to the Sage;—it was the Living Presence that touched and breathed Its Self into that portrait for the benefit and bliss of those who love and follow Him.

Before this Presence songs of devotion and prayers of triumph and incense and flowers were offered. Many sang and danced before the great altar,—for in India the day of a Saint is also a day of festivity and joy. The Holy Name of Sri Ramakrishna rent the air the day throughout, and it resounded across the river and the adjoining grounds as if to comprise the entire land of Ind,—aye, and the whole world, too.

There were other tents scattered here and there across the wide expanse of land and here also was worship and song and rejoicing. There were sacred orchestras over the whole place and, every now and then, one saw marching choruses reciting the glories of Sri Ramakrishna and proclaiming, in melodious strains, verses of that Teaching which He gave the world. It was inspiring and soul-stirring to hear these strong voices, singing with great religious fervour. It told of the wonderful depth of the Indian soul, of its great capacity to serve and adore and love the Most High. The singing was especially interesting and devotional in the brick-floored space just to the rear of

the monastery. Here a band of zealous youths, garbed in the sacred costume of the Indian Yogi, with streaming hair and bodies covered with ashes, played on sacred instruments and recited, in song, the ideals of the soul as they have been seen and interpreted by the sages of this land.

In the early morning, service had been offered to Blessed Sri Ramakrishna and great quantities of choicest food, which were to serve as a gift of hospitality to the visitors, were likewise offered to the Master and blessed. This food was partaken of by the thousands who had come, for food offered to the Lord is considered holy food, and, as such, has a spiritual influence upon him who devoutly partakes.

There were many holy men from other places in India who had come to pay their respects to Sri Ramakrishna Whom they knew as the most holy man India had known for centuries. These holy men or Yogis repaired to the beautiful chapel where the ashes of the Master have been deposited, and bowed there, and worshipped, and meditated. The chapel was crowded during the time it was open to devotees. For all who came were eager to see the chapel, both because of its beauty and its sanctity.

The Math grounds were a revelation in decorative art. Banners and streamers were visible everywhere and in all colours. And over the top of the monastery, and over the huge tent, waved the ensign which the Brahmacharis had designed for the occasion. There was, also, a great Gerrua banner streaming from the highest portion of the building, significant of the place, and of the monks, but above all of the Great Spiritual Ideal of India,—the Gerrua, the ochre colour of the Sannyasin, for countless generations.

The Swamis of the Math proved themselves great entertainers. They were everywhere, it seemed, welcoming the newcomers and spreading the spirit of the day. Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj, the President of the Math, was the busiest and the happiest of all, inspiring everyone with his presence and his devotion. It has been said, that Blessed Sri Ramakrishna regarded him, of all others, particularly as His spiritual child and thus, naturally, the presence of Maharaj was sought by all who knew or had heard of him.

The river entrance to the Math was particularly

well decorated. Flowers and banners were visible here also, and another great tent to protect the arrivars from the heat.

The second story of the Math gave one a favourable view of the great masses who swarmed everywhere. As far as the eye could take in, the grounds were literally covered by men of every caste and creed attesting to the cosmopolitan character of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, above all caste, Who had realised the Ideal through different creeds and methods and Who embraced within Himself all forms of religious aspiration wherever and however they may be expressed. It was an occasion wonderful and never-to-be-forgotten. It all proved the greatness of the Master and that His coming into this world has meant salvation and bliss for countless numbers of men.

F. J. A.

Thursday, the 2nd. of March was the Tithipuja Day, and throughout the whole day and night, the worship went on without a break at the chapel of the Math with proper Vedic rites, and terminated in the early parts of the dawn with a grand Homa ceremony which lasted for four hours.

The Birthday Anniversary was celebrated with great devotion and enthusiasm at the following Centres :

AT THE SANGAM, SITABALDI, Nagpur.

Addresses were delivered in Hindi, English and Bengali on the Universality of Faith and Spiritual Experiences of Sri Ramakrishna, which, according to the speakers, is to form the broad base of the future Church of the whole world. Besides Bhajana and Kirtana, poor people numbering a thousand were sumptuously fed.

AT THE MATH, MUTHIGUNGE, Allahabad.

Programme: Puja and distribution of Prasada 7 to 12 a. m., Bhajana 4 to 7 p. m.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, Dacca.

The Tithipuja was duly observed with Bhoga, Aratrika, and Homa ceremonies. An image of Sri Ramakrishna was placed on an altar raised under a newly-planted Panchavati grove, round which songs and Sankirtan went on. On the public celebration day Sri Ramakrishna's picture was placed in front of a canvas depicting the scene of the Temple-garden

of Dakshineshvar, and the following programme was gone through: From 7 to 12 p. m.: An invocatory\* song. Goshthalila Kirtan. Readings from Sri Ramakrishnapunthi and Sri Ramakrishnakathamrita. From 12 a. m. to 12 p. m.: Sankirtana. Singing the devotional songs of the Saints. A lecture on Sri Ramakrishna Tattva. Sankirtana &c.

AT THE R. K. ORPHANAGE, Murshidabad.

Half a mile from the Orphanage, on the high bank of an old tank, under the spreading branches of a still older Banian tree, within the recesses of its tall roots which formed stately pillars, as it were, of a mansion, was placed the portrait of Sri Ramakrishna adorned with sandal-paste, flowers and garlands. The whole of the Tithipuja night was spent in offering oblations to the Sacred Fire and singing of Bhajana. On the public Day, the students of the Berhampur College and the inhabitants of the surrounding villages assembled and spent the Day in Kirtana. The poor people of the lower classes numbering about a thousand were fed by Swami Akhandananda and his friends with equal care and regard with the gentlemen assembled. A thousand shouts of joy and thanksgiving arose from the poor as they had their hearty meal.

AT THE R. K. ADVAITA ASHRAMA, Benares.

The Tithipuja Day was observed with special Puja, Sri Ramakrishna's picture being decorated with a profusion of flowers and garlands. The Bhaktas attended the Homa ceremony which was very impressive, and were entertained with Anna-prasadam &c. The ceremonies closed with music and Bhajana in the evening.

On the Public Day celebration, nearly 1500 poor people were made to sit on the adjoining spacious grounds of the Ramakrishna Home of Service and were handsomely fed with Loochies, Halooa &c. from 1 to 8 p. m. in many batches. The Sankirtan enlivened the occasion with enthusiastic shouts of "Sri Guru Maharaj ki jai." In the afternoon Swami Paramananda read a paper on the Life of Sri Paramahansa Deva in Hindi. The festival was brought to a close with music, Bhajana, Rama Nama Sankirtan and distribution of Prasada at 8 p. m.

AT HABIGANJ, East Bengal.

A correspondent writes:—Habiganj celebrated the Ramakrishna Anniversary with great eclat.



Over two thousand people assembled on a spacious maidan, on which Sankirtan party after party came and mingled in a scene of wildest enthusiasm. Never had Habiganj seen a sight like this before. Hundreds were simply inspired with joy. Some twenty people and a boy of eight years got trance. Prasad was distributed after dusk. The celebration concluded with especially composed Sankirtan-songs.

#### AT THE RAMAKRISHNA HOME, Madras.

Programme : 1. Bhajana, 8-30 to 10-30 a. m. 2. Feeding the poor, 9-30 a. m. to 2 p. m. 3. Hari-katha—"Sita Kalyanam," 2-30 to 4 p. m., by M.R. Ry. M. K. Thatbachariar, Avl., B. A. 4. Lecture on "Sri Ramakrishna, His Toleration and God-Love," at 5-30 p. m., by Mr. S. Gopaldaswamy Iyengar, Avl., B. A., B. L. We hope to publish a detailed report of the festival in our next issue.

The Birthday anniversary was also celebrated as usual, at the Ramakrishna Sevashrama Kankhal; The Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati; The Ramakrishna Math, Bangalore, and in all the other centres of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and abroad.

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## THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CELEBRATION—II

WE have received the following further reports of Swamiji's 49th. Birthday celebration :

#### AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, BANGALORE, 26th. February.

In the morning the Swamiji's Portrait was placed in a well-decorated miniature palanquin and was taken round the main streets accompanied by Sankirtana parties of various sects reciting holy and spiritual songs. The services of the Indian Brass Band and Nagaswaram music were also rendered free by the local Mangala musicians who headed the procession. Swamis Nirmalananda, Vishuddhananda and Somananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Basavangudi, also followed the procession. Here and there in the streets the Bhajana parties were served with some light refreshments by several well-known citizens. The procession finally returned at about 1 p. m. in the Sabha School Hall where after reciting Mangala Stotram to Swamiji, all the Bhajana parties were entertained with Pongal

Prasadam, fruits &c. At 11 a. m. the feeding of the poor was commenced. The young students and other gentlemen joined in serving about a thousand of the poor with the Prasad.

The meeting commenced at the School Hall at 4 p. m. with music, both vocal and instrumental, and at 6 p. m. when the above-named Swamis arrived the hall was full to overflowing to hear the discourses. The first address was by Mr. Narayanaswamy Pillay who spoke in beautiful and simple Tamil impressing on the audience the work and life of Swamiji—laying a special stress on the gospel of self-help and social raising up which the Swamiji preached. The next item was a paper read by Mr. M. N. Srirangachar who mentioned many new and interesting facts regarding the early life of the great Swami. The purpose of the Swamiji's Sannyas, he pointed out, is to rouse India to her self-consciousness and make her the spiritual Guru of the nations of the world. This is the central purpose of her (India's) life. He exhorted the audience to create the ancient mind to solve modern problems. The third lecturer, Mr. K. Ramiah of the Vokaligara Sangha, addressed the audience in Canarese. He impressed on the minds of his hearers the importance of following out the great teachings of the Swami in practical life as the Swamiji was ever interested in the welfare of the masses of India. The last speaker was Mr. S. R. Narasimhaiya B. A., who delivered his address in a beautiful and powerful voice. After the usual vote of thanks the proceedings were closed at 8 p. m. with Mangalam and Arati to Swamiji, and distribution of fruits &c., to the audience.

#### AT MADURA, 29th. January.

The Sourashtra Club celebrated Swami Vivekananda's Birthday with much *eclat*. The club was up on that day from 2 p. m. There was a Kalakshepam by Brahmasri Balu Phantha Bhagavathar of the Sourashtra community on "Kuchelopakhyanam." Then there was a lecture on the Life of our Saint Swami by Mr. Venkatarama Sastri. At 8-30 p. m. the gathering adjourned to the spacious Mandapam across the Vaiga where a grand feast was given to about 500 people.

#### AT CALICUT.

The Birthday was celebrated with great rejoicings. After the morning Bhajana, four hundred poor people

were fed. A public meeting at the Girls' School was held in the evening, Mr. Krishnaswamiyer, Principal, Zamorin's College, presiding. The celebrations terminated with a procession accompanied by sacred music, vocal and instrumental.

#### AT THE YOUNG MEN'S INDIAN ASSOCIATION, LALGUDI, 30th. January.

An interesting programme was gone through. Mr. N. R. Sundaram Iyer, B. A., L. T., gave an instructive lecture on the Life and Teachings of the Swami. The proceedings ended with the distribution of *pan*, *supari* etc. Much enthusiasm prevailed all through.

#### AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY'S ANNIVERSARY ON THE BELUR MATH GROUNDS.

The anniversary celebration held on 5th. Feb. was a signal success. The meeting was presided over by Swami Brahmanandaji and opened with a song by Mr. Pulin Behari Mitra. A short report of the Society's work for the last two years was read by Dr. J. Kanjilal. A Stotra especially composed for the occasion by Mr. Sarat Ch. Chakravarti was chanted. Then the following papers were read: On Visishtadvaita by Pandit Aditya Kumar Bhattacharya; on Advaita (in Bengali) by Pandit Pramotha Nath Tarkabhusan; and on Dvaita (in Bengali) by Mr. Sarat Ch. Chackravarti, B. A. A short but most beautiful and impressive address was given in Bengali by Swami Turiyanandaji in which he eloquently dwelt on the three aspects of the Vedanta philosophy and said that though each system had its own theories, each nevertheless laid great stress on prayer as the first step towards the Goal. He was followed by Mr. Alexander who on being requested spoke on the influence which our Great Swami has exerted on the American people. In the course of his short but lucid and interesting speech he said that none except Christ Jesus effected such a revolution on the mind of the West as did the Great Swami. The meeting was attended mostly by college students and youngmen numbering nearly a thousand. After the meeting was over, Mahavira Puja was performed, followed by Sri Ramanama Kirtan, the latter being led by Swami Brahmananda and the Brahmacharins of the Math. The distribution of Prasad and tea brought the proceedings to a close.

### THE MAYAVATI CHARITABLE DISPENSARY: AN APPEAL

In reviewing the Seventh yearly Report of the Mayavati Charitable Dispensary in the December no. of Prabuddha Bharata 1910, we brought to the notice of our kind readers the urgent need of a separate Dispensary Building in our Ashrama premises. On the strength of several years' experience we noted as follows: "Using a corridor of the Ashrama building as the dispensary, as we have to do at present for want of rooms in our compound, the doctor finds it too inconvenient to examine the patients in a proper way, or to house them for a few days for treatment under his direct care and nursing. To remove these long-felt urgent needs we should have at least (1) a separate dispensary room, (2) an examining room, (3) a room for accommodating indoor patients, for whom we can at present make but very poor arrangements, and (4) some furniture for the above, such as almirahs, tables and bedsteads &c." For the knowledge of many of our charitably disposed new readers, as well as for reminding our old generous subscribers, we reiterate here the appeal we issued: "On behalf of the diseased people of Kumaon, whose remoteness from the haunts of civilisation bars them from modern improved means of aid when they fall ill, we earnestly make this appeal to all our kind readers who may deem it their generous duty to mitigate human sufferings in this region of the Himalayas ever sanctified with holy associations, for funds to enable us to construct the above mentioned building with three furnished rooms, on a modest scale, so as not to cost more than two thousand rupees (about £134). We have every reason to hope that the sympathy and practical co-operation of our friends and well-wishers who will realise what disease means to ignorant and indigent people in a backward province, will readily show themselves in removing these desiderata."

A statement of the total number of persons treated, together with one of the total receipts and disbursements during the whole period of the existence of the Charitable Dispensary is reproduced below, a glance at which will convince our readers of the usefulness of the work as also the kind support we have all along received from the public.

#### Statement of total number of persons treated during the last seven years:—

From Nov '03 to Oct. '06	Europeans	Mahommedans	Hindus	Total
	53	123	2918	3094
" Nov. '06 to Oct '07	3	13	572	588
" " '07 " '08	2	35	615	652
" " '08 " '09	0	55	296	351
" " '09 " '10	0	54	413	467
Total—Nov.'03 to Oct.'10, 58		280	4814	5152

Average no. of persons treated annually:—736

## Statement of total Receipts and Disbursements during the last seven years:—

	Public donations and subscriptions			Advaita Ashrama & P. B. Office, Mayavati			Total Receipts			Total Disbursements		
	Rs.	As.	Ps.	Rs.	As.	Ps.	Rs.	As.	Ps.	Rs.	As.	Ps.
From Nov. '03 to Oct. '06	409	10	9	1030	11	9	1440	6	6	1440	6	6
" " '06 " '07	166	7	6	0			166	7	6	86	4	6
" " '07 " '08	110	0	0	0			110	0	0	119	15	0
" " '08 " '09	187	12	0	0			187	12	0	102	11	6
" " '09 " '10	97	11	0	0			97	11	0	135	10	0
From Nov. '03 to Oct. '10	Rs. 971	9	3	Rs. 1030	11	9	Rs. 2002	5	0	Rs. 1885	0	0
Balance left	Rs. 117-5	As.										

Beyond Rs. 228-8 as. received in aid of the building fund as published in the Feb.—March No. of P. B. we are glad to acknowledge with thanks the further donations of Rs. 100 from a German Friend, Rs. 100 from Mr. Hari Charan Das Dutt, Asst. Inspector of Schools, Jullundar, and Re. one each from Mr. P. N. Deshpande and Mr. Deshmukh, thus making up the total of Rs. 430-8 as.

As we cannot begin the building operations until more than half of the money needed reaches our hands, and as the matter is an urgent one on which

depends the comfort and happiness of hundreds of the poor suffering humanity, we earnestly hope and believe that our present appeal will meet with a quick and ready response. Donations to the above and contributions to the general expenses of the dispensary, however humble, will be welcomed with thanks and duly acknowledged by the undersigned in *Prabuddha Bharata*.

SWAMI VIRAJANANDA,  
President, Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati,  
Dt. Almora, Himalayas.

## NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

(CULLED AND CONDENSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

It is claimed by General Booth, on behalf of the Salvation Army that it now preaches in thirty-two different languages.

Sir Earnest Cassel has bought one gramme of radium for £15,000 from the Austrian Minister of works as a gift from him to the London Institute for Cancer Research.

THE total Mahomedan population of the world is 222,342,599; out of which under Christian rule it is 161,060,870, under non-Christian rulers other than Moslem it is 23,976,500; under Turkish rule it is 15,528,800. Under other Moslem rulers it is 22,400,000. Thus the greater portion of the Mahomedan population is under the Christian rule.

THE Village of Remhorn, in the mountainous region of Taunus, in Germany, possesses a linden tree which is said to have reached the age of 1,200 years. In summer the tree is magnificent, and its foliage offers shade to 200 persons. The trunk is

39 ft. in circumference. It has been hollowed by time, and a dozen persons can stand in the cavity.

THERE are flying-frogs as well as flying-squirrels and flying-fishes, and all use an aeroplane for making short flights. The flying-frog of Java is usually a beautiful green in colour, with a white belly, and orange-yellow soaring membranes between the fingers. It is like the chameleon, however, as its colour changes. It feeds on insects, remains quiet in bushes by day, and when disturbed glides away to a quiet distance.

ORSON, a town in Sweden, is probably the only municipality in the world which has ordinary city expenses, but which imposes no taxes. Moreover, the local railway is free to every citizen, and there is no charge for telephone-service, schools, libraries and the like. This happy state of affairs is due to the wisdom of a former generation of citizens and rulers of Orson, who planted trees on all available ground. During the last thirty years the town authorities

have sold no less than \$5,000,000 worth of young trees and timber, and judicious replantings have provided for a similar income in the future.

“THE whole of Hinduism,” says Sister Nivedita in the *Hindustan Review*, ‘is one long sanctification of the common life, one long heart, and relating of soul to the world about it, and the love of pilgrimage and the quest of sacred shrines speak of that same desire to commune with nature as the village-feasts. The holiness of nature is the fundamental thought of Hindu civilisation. The hardships of life in camp and forest are called austerity. The sight of grass and trees is called worship. And the soothing and peace that come of a glimpse of a great river is held a step on the road to salvation, and the freeing of the soul.’”

CONTRIBUTIONS of £200,000 for the world-wide expansion of the Young Men’s Christian Association, £108,000 of which was given by John D. Rockefeller, were announced at the recent conference of the Y. M. C. A. workers in the East Room of the White House, Washington.

Mr. Rockefeller’s gift, offered on the condition that a like amount be raised, was met by contributions from many prominent laymen interested in the movement, among them John Wanamaker, Cleveland, and H. Doge of New York, who pledged funds for two buildings in the Levant; S. W. Woodward of Washington, £7,000 for a building at Kobe, Japan; James Stokes and an unknown donor, £20,000 for a building at Moscow; John Penman of Paris, Ontario, £10,000 for a building at Hankow, China; John W. Ross, for the Montreal Y. M. C. A., £8,000 for a building at Canton, China; Dument Clarke, Jr., funds for a building at Bangalore, India; and the citizens of Buffalo, £7,000 for buildings in Tokio. Mr. Wanamaker offered to erect another building in China in addition to five foreign association buildings already given by him.

GEOLOGISTS and physicists have differed for many years in their estimates of the geological age of the earth. As a rule geologists have placed their estimates at 300,000,000 years, while the physicists deduced principally from thermodynamic condi-

tions, the comparatively short age of 20,000,000 or 30,000,000 years. Professors Frank Wigglesworth Clark and George F. Becker, of the United States Geological Survey, say its age is “not over 70,000,000 nor below 55,000,000 years.”

The more recent men have given their opinion on the age of the earth as follows:—

Lord Kelvin, in 1862, 20,000,000 to 40,000,000 years, with a probable maximum of 98,000,000 years. Clarence King and Carl Barus, in 1893, 24,000,000 years. Lord Kelvin in 1897 revised his figures to 20,000,000 to 40,000,000 years. De Lapparent, in 1890, 67,000,000 to 90,000,000 years. Charles D. Walcott, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, in 1893, maximum age, 70,000,000 years. J. Joly, in 1899, age of the ocean, 80,000,000, to 90,000,000 years. W. J. Sollas, in 1909, age of the ocean, 80,000,000 to 150,000,000 years. Some time ago Strutt deduced, from the proportion of helium found in thorium ores, a lower limit of 240,000,000 years for the age of the earth.

ON 11th. Nov., the Chemical Society entertained at dinner its past presidents who had attained their jubilee as Fellows of the Society, among them being Sir William Crookes, who in the course of the proceedings made a remarkable speech. ‘The Daily News’ says:—

After sketching rapidly the steps by which he was led to the discovery of radio-activity, Sir William observed that in the highly rarified regions of present-day speculation our progress is so rapid as to take the breath away.

‘It seems,’ he went on, that no law is more certain than the law of change. A bit of radium that would go into a thimble has suddenly shaken our belief in the conservation of substance, the stability of the chemical elements, the undulatory theory of light, and the nature of electricity, has revived the dreams of alchemists and the preservation of perpetual youth, and has cast doubts on the very existence of matter itself. For physicists are beginning to say that, in all probability, there is no such thing as matter; that when we have caught and tamed the elusive atom, and have split it into seven hundred little bits, these residual particles will turn out to be nothing more than superimposed layers of positive and negative electricity.’