

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

VOL. XVII]

FEBRUARY & MARCH 1912

[Nos. 187 & 188

SAYINGS OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA—VIII

Everyone makes shipwreck on the rock of a would-be Guruism, except those souls that were born to be Gurus.

Man is a compound of animality, humanity and divinity.

The term "Social progress" has as much meaning as "hot ice" or "dark light." There is no such thing, *ultimately*, as "Social progress"!

Things are not bettered, but *we* are bettered, by making changes in them.

Let me help my fellowmen; that is all I seek.

"No," said the Swami, very softly, in answer to a question in New York, "I do not believe in the occult. If a thing be unreal it is not. What is unreal does not exist. Strange things are natural phenomena. I know them to be matters of science. Then they are not occult to me. I do not believe in occult

societies. They do no good, and can never do good."

There are four general types of men,—the rational, the emotional, the mystical and the worker. For each of these we must provide suitable forms of worship. There comes the rational man, who says, "I care not for this form of worship. Give me the philosophical, the rational—that I can appreciate." So for the rational man is the rational philosophic worship.

There comes the worker. He says: "I care not for the worship of the philosopher. Give me work to do for my fellowmen." So for him is provided work as the path of worship. As for the mystical and the emotional, we have their respective modes of devotion. All these men have, in religion, the elements of their faith.

I stand for Truth. Truth will never ally itself with falsehood. Even if all the world should be against me, Truth must prevail in the end.

Wherever you see the most humanitarian ideas fall into the hands of the multitude, the first result you notice is degradation. It is learning and intellect that help to keep things safe. It is the cultured among a community that are the real custodians of religion and philosophy in their purest form. It is that form which serves as the index for the intellectual and social condition of a community.

“I do not come” said Swamiji on one occasion in America, “to convert you to a new belief. I want you to keep your own belief; I want to make the Methodist a better Methodist; the Presbyterian a better Presbyterian; the Unitarian a better Unitarian. I want to teach you to live the truth, to reveal the light within your own soul.”

Happiness presents itself before man, wearing the crown of sorrow on its head. He who welcomes it must also welcome sorrow.

He is free, he is great, who turns his back upon the world, who has renounced everything, who has controlled his passion, and who thirsts for peace. One may gain political and social independence, but if he is a slave to his passions and desires, he cannot feel the pure joy of real freedom.

Doing good to others is virtue (Dharma); injuring others is sin.

Strength and manliness is virtue; weakness and cowardice is sin.

Independence is virtue; dependence is sin.

Loving others is virtue; hating others is sin.

Faith in God and in one's own self is virtue; doubt is sin.

Knowledge of oneness is virtue; seeing diversity is sin.

The different Scriptures only show the means of attaining virtue.

OCCASIONAL NOTES

BENEDICTION rests on these days in which we celebrate the birth of the Swami Vivekananda, the Apostle of Hinduism to the West, the Prince of Disciples of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, the Apostle of Neo-Hinduism to the East, the Champion and Exponent of the Vedas and the Vedanta, the Founder of the Ramakrishna Order of monks, a modern Sankaracharya as Builder of monasteries and as Teacher and Preacher of the Highest Truth. Verily was he the Resurrection of Hinduism and, next to the Master, the Guru-in-chief of Gurus.

His words were the Peal of Thunder that has awakened the attention of the world to the glories of the motherland. How he loved India! To him, as he himself has said, it

was the Tirtha of the world. Aye, even its dust was holy to him! Behold how he traversed the length and breadth of the land struggling to understand the problems of the country and struggling to find a solution! Behold him crossing the seas to beg bread for the poor of the land! Verily he is the Sun of life and strength to the Needs and Spirit of modern India.

Let us celebrate with exultation the birth-festival of this Hero! Let us remember the greatness and the meaning of his message! Let us soar into that higher world of vision and strength, the world in which he lived within himself and within his personal Illumination and at the Feet of the Lord.

True manhood and true womanhood were his ideals for the peoples of India. Strength and courage, fearlessness and service, with the Lord as the magnet of all work, were his ideals. Utmost renunciation, renunciation even to the giving up of life, this was his ideal. Blessed be his memory with us! Verily is he still in our midst in the wonder and the greatness of his teaching. And he is eternal in the Spirit of India, because verily was he a Child of the Mother.

What self-abandonment was his! Everything he was he gave freely to the peoples of the East and West. When he passed away it was because he chose to do so and because he had given his message. Do we not still hear his words, wrung from him with pain and in his final illness: "I have given them sufficient for five thousand years," meaning thereby the fullness of his message to all peoples.

Let India be proud of this Hero, this Bull among the Herd, as the Vedas speak of kingly souls,—this moon among men! Let her rejoice and be exceedingly glad! Let the shout of triumphant praise ring again and again from the lips of the gathering of disciples:

"Jai Swamiji Maharaj ki Jai!!!"

Our searching must take us beyond all searching. In whatever the direction, finding must be the sure end. Sometimes it is freedom for which we strive; at other times it is knowledge, but though we may not attain the full measure of our desire, we do progress. The greatness of all human progress is the overcoming of bondage and the overcoming of ignorance. The summum bonum of the Vedanta is contained in this, the consciousness of a growth in the direction of freedom and knowledge for the soul.

Freedom and knowledge are the ideals underlying all human effort and all human aspiration. They underly all human realisation as well. Knowledge IS power. Knowledge IS freedom. Therefore Vidya, wisdom, has been called the goal in the Vedanta. Avidya or ignorance is one and the same as bondage. Yes, knowledge IS freedom; ignorance IS bondage.

A man should fight to the utmost against conditions, in pursuance of his own ideal, but not against others who disapprove of his methods. The opposite method of those from whom he differs, he must not seek to destroy. He must be content to ignore. Freedom of opinion is to all. We may explain our idea, and do our best to make it known. We must never attempt to enforce it. We may always fight for a cause. To do so is our duty. But not for ourselves. That is the defeat of the true hero.

No act should be performed in the public service without a great principle consciously held and expressed in it.

The perfect compatibility at the same time of opposite truths is the crowning perception and assertion of Hinduism.

The worship of the Terrible does not lie in the thirst for slaughter, but in the thirst for death. Not to kill, but to be killed, is the ideal, in the cause of the Mother.

FRAGMENTARY NOTES FROM A LECTURE ON THE RAMAYANA

BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Worship Him who alone stands by us, whether we are doing good or are doing evil; who never leaves us even; as love never pulls down; as love knows no barter, no selfishness.

Rama was the soul of the old King ; but he was a King and he could not go back on his word.

—+—

"Wherever Rama goes, there go I," says Lakshmana, the younger brother.

—+—

The wife of the elder brother to us, Hindus, is just like a mother.

—+—

At last he found Sita, pale and thin, like a bit of the moon that lies low at the foot of the horizon.

—+—

Sita was chastity itself, she would never touch the body of another man except that of her husband.

"Pure? She is chastity itself," says Rama.

—+—

Drama and music are by themselves religion ; any song, love song or any song, never mind ; if one's whole soul is in that song, he attains salvation, just by that ; nothing else he has to do ; if a man's whole soul is in that, his soul gets salvation. They say it leads to the same goal.

—+—

Wife—the co-religionist. Hundreds of ceremonies the Hindu has to perform, and not one can be performed if he has not a wife. You see the priests tie them up together and they go round temples and make very great pilgrimages tied together.

—+—

Rama gave up his body and joined Sita in the other world.

—+—

Sita—the pure, the pure, the all-suffering!

Sita is the name in India for everything that is good, pure and holy ; everything that in woman we call woman.

Sita the patient, all-suffering, ever-faithful, ever-pure wife! Through all the suffering she had there was not one harsh word against Rama.

Sita never returned injury.

"Be Sita!"

THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN

(Continued from page 8)

LIFE is a series of evolutions, a constant solution of problems, a constant growth from the death into the more complete life of things. It is the sum-totalising, in so far as it is possible in our present limitation of soul and thought, of the Infinite. Who can sound it? Who? Aye, even the worm shall, in the due course of the Divine Unfoldment.

Our quest is beyond the stars. Our quest is beyond the moon. It is deeper than the sun. The radiance of the sun is but a shadowing of the glory of our quest. We are in search after the God of our hearts. Alternately do we call that God matter, then we call Him the senses ; now the intellect, now the body ; now the all-permeating life, now the cosmic intelligence ; now the Sakti or energy of the world ; but after all are not these things descriptive, are they not names of our own Self? Is not that Self infinite? Then is it not everywhere? Where does it not reside? What are its limitations? It is the Great Human and the Endlessly Divine Self. That is the glory of man. It is the moon and the sun ; yea, it is the world of man. Open thy floodgates, Oh Time, and thou, Oh Space, yield the endless depths of Thee. Yet all the eternities and the greatest heights and the most penetrating depths are naught, for they cannot comprehend nor encircle the vastness of the Self. The Self is not metaphysical, but equally it is not physical. It is beyond. It is always beyond. It is beyond the categories of existence. It is beyond and past all description. It is the Omega. It is always the Omega. It will always be the Unknowable Omega.

Who shall sing the greatness of man? Shall we decry that greatness? Lo, we have made that greatness! It is ours, and it is ours by the right of the divinity of things. It is ours

and it is always ours. For the greatness of man is only the greatness of the Infinite God. Who even knows His greatness is shadowed as man, and man is God and God is man? Yea, the whole universe is a vast, unthink-able, cosmic, world incarnation. The cosmos is God and God is the cosmos. He is the macrocosmos. He is also the microcosmos. He is everything. That Self which is in the sun is also in the moon and in the farthest star. It is the height of the mountain and the rolling of the plains. It is the murmur of the rivulet and it is the dash of the cataract. It is the roar and the moan of the ocean. It is the sob and the sunshine of the sea. It is at all times present as the infinitely Sublime. It is always and at all times present as the perfume of the rose and the silence of the night, as the mirror of the brooklet and the sands of the sea. It is the snow-capped peak. It is the pit of fire of the volcano. Above all, it is the heart of man. There is nothing but the divine. Who has ever seen anything but the divine? Lo and behold, the divinity that we have been seeking always, that we have been praying to the gods to unfold to us, that we have been searching the universe for, that divinity is here, closer to us than anything that we may see or hear.

Man is the incarnation. Let us understand the incarnation. The abstract is too far-reaching. It has soared into the infinite expanse. Who can trace it? Leave off, man! Thy abode is beneath the empyrean. Learn first the divinity of things in and about thee! Learn first the divinity of the physical body, of the mind! Learn that both the body and the mind are nothing, but faint shadows of the superlative greatness of thy soul! Behold thy soul! Man, hast thou ever seen thy soul? Hast thou ever come into contact with the blissful soul which thou art? Thou art not the body. Who has declared this stupidity unto thee, "thou art the body," save thy own ignorance! Arise

and awake! Stop not till a higher goal, stop not till the great goal is reached. Let us lift the heavens and the earths in our search after the divinity that shapes our destiny, the divinity that will mirror itself in a series of unfoldments and in a glory of development the like of which no one has ever seen or heard. Oh, life after all is a great play and we are searching for the Greatest Thing in the world. Let us believe this at all times. Let us know this always. Let us thunder it and voice it to ourselves endlessly and ever. Let us say to the sun that he is small and to the moon that her beams are borrowed from the greatness and the effulgence of the soul of man, which is the Soul and Self of God.

TO THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

IS HE, the Lord, less mighty, formless than with form? Is it, now, that disembodied, He is less one-d with That He knew and preached as "OM TAT SAT"?

Freed from the binding fetters of this mortal life He grasps with mightier power the Imperishable Truth, and in that Changeless and Deathless Consciousness He is more than one with That thy inmost soul e'er seeks.

Strength is His and the Luminousness thou worshippest as God—with That he has become inseparably united. What is Higher than the Highest—That He knows; what is Vaster than the Vastest—That He is. With the Highest Self of selves—know,—He is forever and forever one.

Thou knowest that the setting sun doth sink to rise into and make another day;—e'en thus hath that Soul of Him ascended, through seeming death, to Life Eternal and Divine. The Effulgence of His Soul is with thee now and the Deathless Purpose of His Will doth break all bonds to find its Way.

It worketh as it listeth and with surety and might.

Trust in the Greatness of the Master's Teaching. He saw what vaster is than all the world. He sensed the Power that shatters worlds in fragments, the Timeless Power that holds the world in place.

When thou ponderest o'er His Message, grow strong in its World-Transcending Strength. When thou callest Him by name remember that He knew where thou but searchest and know That What thou searchest, yea, verily He is.

F. J. A.

DISCOURSES ON THE VEDANTA

(Continued from page 6)

ALL of us are, as it were, using hammers with which we would hew out from the unqualified substance called Life various images according to our understanding and capacity in expression. Some of us hew out miserably small things; some of us hew out the form of God.

Life is a homogeneity. It is we who would change the homogeneity into heterogeneous forms. Differentiæ do not exist in life, but in us. Life is unqualified. It is we who qualify it. Life is unlimited. It is we who limit it. Life is nameless and formless and free from all conditions of bondage. It is we who clothe it in name and in form. Life is the infinite. It is we who make it the finite. It is we who perceive relations where there is nothing to which Life or the Infinite can be related.

The secret of life would be mastered could we sense life as it is in its Self, not in relation to our limited selves. The world in its Self is superior to the world in its relations. Life in its Self is the Transcendent, whether

in thought or in expression, because in potentiality it is more than the sum-total of any possible or actual thought or experience. Life in its Self is greater than its revelations. It is the Infinite.

Life is the same single Fact. We interpret that Fact multiformly. It is we who make distinctions in the Eternally Same. We modify the Unmodified by mistaking the appearance for the fact. We mistake the relation for the thing.

The Infinite can never be explained by the relative. The one precludes the existence of the other. The Infinite and the finite, summarily considered, must, in the supreme sense, be but relations in thought and in experience to our own highest Self. It is the Self beyond the Infinite and finite which is the Great. The Infinite and the finite are only adjectives. Self is the Supreme Name describing the Supreme Thing.

The Infinite is the Eternally Potential. Self is beyond both the potential and the actual. It is the unconditioned. The finite is the experienced and the actual as compared with the Subjectively Supreme. It is the Self in us to which these two—the Infinite and the finite—stand in constant relation. The Infinite is the Unexperienced and the Unexplored, the Unmanifested in us—also the Secret and Meaning and Essence of any possible future revelation of ourselves. The Infinite is that which has not been nor can be modified. It is the reflection of the Eternally Unmodified in our Self.

The eyes cannot see the eyes,—but that is the paradox in Life. We the Infinite Self are content to behold the reflection. That satisfies us. We identify ourselves with the reflection and forget the Infinite Self of Life and souls.

The Infinite is the Last, the Representative Fact with regard to the most visible and actual objective expression about us. The thing in itself always escapes us. It is in

everything and yet nowhere. It is everywhere in the Infinite Fact as the one universal, infinite subjective Existence,—one with the infinite and subjective in our selves.

The fact that we can perceive this intellectually is of great importance. If we could reach in feeling where we reach in thought—we should have attained the goal.

Life can be meaningful, in the sense of progress, only as it concerns the individual. Once life is explained all occasion or need of further progress ceases. Only the individual can ultimately understand,—never the race as such.

Progress is the chase after the unattainable. The ideal must ever precede the actual,—so it seems,—so far as the race is concerned as a whole. The Supreme Individualist touches the Idea, and the actual no longer expresses itself.

Civilisations and world-religions are only faint outlines of the realisations of a few comparatively small groups of persons. Only the few can sense the Great at any one time. The Infinite must reveal itself to us in some tangible, objective way. Man has always felt this. So he has made religion, which gives him a chance to touch the Infinite both in the world and in himself, through the avenues of the spiritualised senses, particularly those of sound and sight, and also of the spiritualised mind.

We are human personalities. Therefore the Infinite, if it can ever mean anything to us as men and women, must do so through its influence on our emotions, making them so superior to their ordinary experiences and expression, that they transcend even their artistic and poetical climaxes and become religious and divine. When the Infinite reveals itself to our objective and personal consciousness, we speak of God. It is the highest term we can apply to the Supreme Personal Aspect of the universe. Otherwise we speak of the Absolute. Realisation is

the proof, and the pragmatic sanction, of theory and religion, therefore, is the concrete expression of philosophy. Religion is the synthetic path by which the whole man, his entire emotional, mental sense and spiritual nature are related to the Absolute. Religion is the synthetic path by which the relative points to the Highest Relation it (the relative) can have to that which, finally speaking, is beyond the relative.

Emotion is to an idea, what life is to form. We must look for the incarnation. A divine incarnation is the embodiment of a world-idea and gives the world-impulse. All of us are incarnations, but of what?—mostly of very vague and limited and selfish ideas. We must expand even to the Infinite, says the Vedanta.

The world is a wave on the Ocean of Life. Yea, it is only a ripple. The Ocean knows only its own life,—the Life of the Unlimited, the Life of the Eternally Expanded. It knows the Infinite above all sequence and precession, above all relations, conditions, limitations. The Ocean of Life is Being in relation to Nothing. It is Being as Being. It is unrelated Being vast, infinitely illimitable, above the world, free of all relations,—One and Only. The ripple of the world must break. The wave of relativeness must dash to pieces. The Shoreless Ocean of Life is Unchangeable. It never breaks. It has neither ebb nor flow, for it is not bounded. It is eternally pacific. The motion of its Being is soundless. There can be no surface tumult.

Man is a wave on the Subjective Sea of his own and the world's Self. This Self he personalizes and calls God. Drown the objective in the subjective. Release the Self from the superstitions of relations. When we are forever transplanted from our limited nature to the nature of the unlimited Self, then the world fades from view. We know ourselves no longer as men or women, but as some-

thing infinitely superior to humanity, and to our conception of God. See God,—not men, not the world, but God. Once He is sensed, the dream of the world-illusion falls asunder and man arises free and eternal, more than the image of God,—yea one with God, and co-substantial with God. That is our Eternal Salvation,—seeing not the relatively Great but the Permanently Great,—God. Progress ends in realisation. The Soul of progress is beyond. We are that Soul.

(To be continued).

F. J. ALEXANDER.

MAYAVATI

Ancient the path that winds
 About the heights and vales
 To Thy celestial Peace
 O Mayavati mine!
 Lined is the winding path with
 Ruined glories of an ancient time
 Dating back to that period
 Immemorial of the Pandavas,
 Sri Krishna Vasudeva and
 The Mahabharata.
 Within Thy vision rises
 A great embattled height
 Where victors fought and reigned
 Whose names are lost to mind.
 Not far is Champavat
 Of Chandragupta fame.
 There, also lie,—dismantled,
 Glories of an ancient race.
 Thy heeding Soul hath heard
 The tramp of marching hordes.
 Thy mind hath memories
 Of the day when Hastings
 Fought and lost and won
 The battle with Thy reigning Lords.
 Thy mind doth go e'en farther,
 Back to the age unknown
 When Nirvana-questing souls
 Did seek Thy many Silences

To ponder on that Self
 Which fashioned gods and men.
 In this more modern age
 Again Thou knewest Peace.
 Only Thy Calm dwelt here,
 O Mayavati mine,
 Alluring man with splendours
 Of Thy Harmony and Life.
 Then came a Light Divine
 Born of the rolling plains
 But resting now in God.
 It spread its Shining Lustre
 O'er Thy Gracious Form.
 That Saint in earnest sought
 The Inmost Self of selves
 In contemplative life.
 Now Thy forest-covered height
 Is crowned with newer glory ;
 Now rises silent 'midst Thy scene
 The Gerrua Banner
 Of vast Advaita Thought
 With its Advaita Ashrama.
 Semicircling Thee, O Mayavati,
 As if sheltering Thy Peace,
 The highest mountain heights
 Rear their ice-bound heads
 In great and solemn blessing :
 Kedar Nath and Badri Nath,
 Nanda-Devi, Pancha-Chuli
 And other snow-clad peaks,
 Sacred to the soul of Man,
 Stand facing Thee sublimely.
 They, too, are of those Destinies
 That Master-Will had planned
 To be fulfilled beneath
 The Shades and Calm of Thee,
 O Mayavati mine !
 Thus live on. Fair Goddess
 Of this beauteous retreat
 'Midst the snows and heights
 And Peace and scattered ruins
 Of most ancient days
 Fulfil Thy Destiny of Soul.
 Thou makest for the Sage's
 Peace and Light and Life,

THOUGHTS ON SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S LIFE AND WORK

ALMOST a decade has slipped away since the passing of the great Swami Vivekananda whose teachings have brought in a revolution among the younger generation of Indians. Swami Vivekananda was the very incarnation of *Jnanam*—he is, in fact, the Sankaracharya of the present Yuga, who has shed a new light upon our Scriptures. It is impossible to do justice to his manifold teachings in a short thesis like this. My object is to notice some of the most salient features of the Swami's message so that it may awaken in the minds of the readers a spirit of enquiry to know more about him and his teachings, by the study of the works he has left us.

That which strikes us most in reading his works is the stress he lays on the divine origin of man—"Ye are the children of God, the heirs of immortal bliss, holy and perfect! Ye are divinities on earth! Sinners? It is a sin to call a man so. It is a standing libel on human nature. Come up, O ye lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep—you are souls immortal, spirits free and blest and eternal, ye are not matter, ye are not bodies. Matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter." This divinity of the human soul, the cardinal theme of Advaitism, Swami Vivekananda kept dinning into our ears all through his life. What tremendous hope and strength it pours into our sinking hearts! We shake off all lethargy and gird up our loins to call forth our latent powers of the soul into being. We disdain to listen to the whispers of weakening agencies—this exalted notion of our real nature is the most potent counteractive against the seductions of the evil spirit. These words of hope and courage inspire us to strive to awaken the indwelling *Brahman* within us. What the world, and especially our Motherland, wants to-day is this message of strength. Swamiji says, "People sometimes get disgusted at my preaching Advaitism. I do not want to preach Advaitism, or Dvaitism or any *ism* in the world. The only *ism* that we require now is this wonderful idea of the soul—its eternal might, its eternal strength, its eternal purity, and its eternal perfection." Again

he says, "Who will give us strength? Let me tell you, strength, strength, is what we need. And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the teachings of the Upanishads and believe that 'I am the Soul.'" Thus in trumpet-voice he has exhorted us to have Shradhbâ or faith in ourselves. The loss of this Shradhbâ Swamiji used to deplore very much, and to this he traced the root-cause of all our miseries. He it was who first opened our eyes to the sublimity and the mighty mission of the Hindu Religion. The influx of occidental ideas made us imbibe materialistic habits of thinking. Scoffing at everything sacred became our besetting sin. We began to look up to the West as the sole repository of all that is good and grand in life, not knowing what profound truths are enshrined in the Upanishads and the Gita, before which the acquisitions of occidental faiths and philosophies pale into insignificance, like fire-flies before the sun. To-day the world stands in awe before the mighty spiritual achievements of the Aryan Rishis. It was Vivekananda who, by presenting before our eyes the serene effulgence of the gems of Vedanta, dispelled the scorching glamour of Western civilisation. With what lion's strength he has called upon us to hold fast to Vairagyam (Renunciation) as the highest ideal of our religion. He says, "Vairagyam or Renunciation is the very beginning of religion. How can religion or morality begin without renunciation itself? 'Give up,' says the Vedas, 'Give up!'.....Through renunciation alone immortality is reached.....Renunciation, that is the flag, the banner of India, floating over the world, the one undying thought which India sends again and again as a warning to dying races, as a warning to all tyranny, as a warning to all wickedness in the world. Aye, Hindus, let not your hold of that banner go. Hold it aloft. Even if you are weak, and cannot renounce, do not lower the ideal."

The next great thing done by him—the *magnum opus* of Swami Vivekananda's achievements, that which entitles him most to our love and gratitude—is that he first brought home the greatness of Hinduism to the occidental peoples. Vivekananda,

standing before the Parliament of Religions at Chicago and carrying the vast audience with him, by his magnetic personality, eloquence and marvellous exposition of Hinduism, reminds us of Sankaracharya. Prior to that the interested Christian missionaries and the prejudiced Western historians were the only source of information on Indian subjects in the West, and the former spared no opportunity to pour forth the vials of slander upon the devoted head of poor India, and felt no scruples to paint her in the blackest colours. Their garbled delineation of Indian institutions represented Hinduism as a string of nonsensical mummeries associated with a number of hideous idols. It was the mission of Swami Vivekananda not only to stamp out this wrong notion from the Western mind, but also to promulgate the true message of Hinduism to the world. He has shown that the Hindu civilisation is pre-eminently spiritual, that in spite of the Westerner's marvellous achievements on the material plane he is yet to be initiated into the mysteries of the spiritual domain by the Aryan Sages. He has shown us that we must not forever be sitting at the feet of other nations as pupils, but we also have got something to teach them. Swamiji says, "Spirituality must conquer the West. Slowly they are finding it out that what they want is spirituality to preserve them as nations. They are waiting for it, they are eager for it. Where is the supply to come from? Where are the men ready to go out to every country in the world with the message of the great sages of India? Where are the men who are ready to sacrifice everything so that this message shall reach every corner of the world? Such heroic souls are wanted to help the spread of truth. Such heroic workers are wanted to go abroad and help to disseminate the great truths of the Vedanta. The world wants it; without it the world will be destroyed. The whole of the Western world is on a volcano which may burst at any moment.....They have drunk deep of the cup of pleasure and found it vanity. Now is the time to work for India's spiritual ideas penetrating deep into the West." The grand conception of "A Dynamic, Aggressive Hinduism" having for its plan of campaign the conquest of the whole world by Indian thought, is entirely our Swami

Vivekananda's. He says: "I am an imaginative man, and my idea is the conquest of the whole world by the Hindu race. There have been great conquering races in the world. We also have been great conquerors. The story of our conquest has been described by the great emperor of India, Asoka, as the conquest of religion and of spirituality. Once more the world must be conquered by India. This is the dream of my life, and I wish that each one of you, who hears me to-day, will have the same dream in your mind, and stop not till you have realised the dream."

Swamiji's gospel was one of love and sympathy. He cursed none, abused none. Again and again he has warned us not to interfere with anyone's free growth, but to render him as much help as we can to let him grow in his own way. "Help and not fight" was his watchword. And well might it be, for on Swami Vivekananda's shoulders fell the mantle of the Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, who exemplified in his wonderful life that all religions lead to the same goal. Here we must also speak of Swamiji's burning love and sympathy for the poor and the down-trodden, whose sufferings stirred the inmost depths of his heart. India's regeneration, according to him, depends upon the regeneration of what we now call the "Depressed classes." We can no more leave them out in the cold with impunity. Their condition must be ameliorated if we mean to ensure the preservation of the Hindu race. In one of his letters he says, "In India there is a howling cry that we are very poor, but how many charitable associations are there for the well-being of the poor? How many people really weep for the sorrows and sufferings of the millions of the poor in India? Are we men? What are we doing for their livelihood, for their improvement? We do not touch them, we avoid their company! Are we men? Those thousands of Bráhmans—what are they doing for the low, down-trodden masses of India? 'Don't-touch,' 'Don't-touch,' is the only phrase that plays upon their lips!.....Wherein does our religion lie now? In "Don't-touchism" alone, and nowhere else! I came to this country (America) not to satisfy my curiosity, nor for name or fame, but to see if I could find any means for the support of the poor in India." Again he says, "Remember

that the nation lives in the cottage. But, alas! nobody ever did anything for them. Our modern reformers are very busy about widow-remarriage. Of course I am a sympathiser in every reform, but the fate of a nation does not depend upon the number of husbands their widows get, but upon the *condition of the masses*. Can you raise them? Can you give them back their lost individuality without making them lose their innate spiritual nature? Can you become an occidental of occidentals in your spirit of equality, freedom, work and energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts?... Sympathy for the poor, the down-trodden, even unto death—this is our motto!" Swamiji would not even care for *Bhakti* or *Mukti*, he was ready to go to a hundred thousand hells if he could only relieve the poor and the distressed. The highest form of religion, he says, is to serve the poor *Nārāyanas*:

"These are His manifold forms before thee,
Rejecting them, where seekest thou for God?
Who loves all beings, without distinction,
He indeed is worshipping best his God."

Another thing which does not fail to impress even the most superficial readers of Swamiji's works, is his intense patriotism. We can safely aver that India has not seen a greater patriot than him. A Sannyasin of Sannyasins he, indeed, made the whole world his home, but India was the special object of his love. In his ideal of patriotism he has laid down three most important steps. The first step is to feel, feel from the inmost core of the heart; feel till you are restless, sleepless, almost mad; feel till you have "forgotten all about your name, your fame, your wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies.....I did not go to America, as most of you know, for the Parliament of Religions, but this demon of a feeling was in me and within my soul. I travelled twelve years all over India finding no way to work for my countrymen, and that is why I went to America. Most of you know that, who knew me then. Who cared about this Parliament of Religions? Here was my own flesh and blood sinking everyday, and who cared for them? This was my first step."

"You may feel, then; but...have you found any way out, any practical solution, some help instead of condemnation, some sweet words to soothe their miseries, to bring them out of this living death? Yet that is not all. Have you got the will to surmount mountain-high obstructions? If the whole world stands against you sword in hand,.....if your wives and children are against you, if all your money goes, your name dies, your wealth vanishes, would you still stick to it? Would you still pursue it and go on steadily towards your own goal?..... Have you got that steadfastness? If you have these three things each one of you will work miracles." Young men, how many of us are ready to fulfil this ideal of patriotism held before us by this patriot-sage of the Nineteenth-century India? Let there be twenty such patriots, and the country's salvation will become an accomplished fact.

The material and social needs of India did not escape the attention of Swami Vivekananda. Suffice it to say here that no Indian problem has been left untouched by the all-embracing genius of Vivekananda. He has dealt with these problems with the insight of a Yogi, and laid down the most eminently practical plans and effective remedies which, if adopted, are sure to expedite the salvation of the country. Anyone willing to have a full knowledge of all these is referred to "The Complete Works of the Swami Vivekananda, Mayavati Memorial Edition," published by the Prabuddha Bharata Office.

Young men of Hindusthan, to you Swami Vivekananda has especially addressed his words. Fail not to lend a ready and enthusiastic response to them. It was his firm conviction that out of the younger generation would spring the builders of the future India. He was confident that the future India would be greater, brighter and grander than what she had ever been. I quote his words: "Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct; all moral perfection will be extinct; all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct; all ideality will be extinct, and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest, fraud, force and competition its ceremonies, and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be." Young men, read the signs of the time. Such bold

words, such sincere words, such practical remedies, such exhortations of strength and courage, you will find nowhere else. If your eyes cannot catch sight of this mighty ocean of divine ideas, blind, blind, indeed, you are; and if catching its vision you cannot plunge yourselves into it whole-heartedly, then vain, vain, indeed, is your life. Ye that aspire to be true sons of the Motherland, listen, listen to what this messenger of God is thundering forth—

“India will be raised—not with the power of the flesh, but with the power of the spirit; not with the flag of destruction but with the flag of peace and love, the garb of the Sannyasin; not by the power of wealth, but by the power of the begging bowl. 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 of Bengal, your country requires it. The world requires it. Call up the divinity within you, which will enable you to bear hunger and thirst, heat and cold..... you must give up. Be great. No great work can be done without sacrifice. Lay down your comforts, your pleasures, your name, fame or position, nay even your lives, and make the bridge of human chains over which millions will cross this ocean of life.....I do not see into the future; nor do I care to see. But one vision I see clear as life before me, that the ancient mother has awakened once more, and is sitting on her throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than ever. Proclaim her to all the world with the voice of peace and benediction.”

This is but an extremely insufficient enumeration of the great works and ideals of Swami Vivekananda. At a time when a blind pursuit after Western civilisation was threatening our national life and national religion with dissolution, we had by the divine dispensation of Providence, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and his messenger, Swami Vivekananda. The greatness of Hinduism has once more been vindicated, the eternal truths of the Vedanta have once more been verified in the life of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Once more they have shown us which way to steer our national bark in order to reach the goal of life.

Shall we sit idle? Shall we pull at the oars with the anchor set fast in the muddy bottom of the sea? I leave it to be answered by you, my dear countrymen.

Rabindra Nath Bandyopadhyaya.

PATIENTLY WAITING.

By John Burroughs.

Serene, I fold my hands and wait,
Nor care for wind, or tide, or sea;
I rave no more 'gainst Time or Fate,
For lo! my own shall come to me.

I stay my haste, I make delays,
For what avails this eager pace?
I stand amid the eternal ways,
And what is mine shall know my face.

Asleep, awake, by night or day,
The friends I seek are seeking me;
No wind can drive my barque astray;
Nor change the tide of destiny.

What matters if I stand alone?
I wait with joy the coming years;
My heart shall reap where it hath sown,
And garner up its fruits or tears.

The waters know their own; and draw
The brook that springs in yonder height;
So flows the good with equal law
Unto the soul of pure delight.

The stars come nightly to the sky;
The tidal wave unto the sea;
Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high
Can keep my own away from me.

Serene, I fold my hands and wait,
Whate'er the storms of life may be.
Faith guides me up to heaven's gate,
And love shall bring my own to me.



EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*Extracts*)

I

Auntpur,*
February, 1888

Dear M.

I thank you a hundred thousand times, Master! You have hit Ramakrishna in the right point.

Few, alas, few understand him!

Yours

Narendra Nath.

P. S. My heart leaps with joy—and it is a wonder that I do not go mad when I find anybody thoroughly launched into the midst of the doctrine which is to shower peace on earth hereafter.

II

Baghbazar, Calcutta,
July 6, 1890

Dear S—— and K——

Your letters have duly reached us. They say Almora is healthiest at this time of the year, yet you are taken ill! I hope it is nothing malarious. * *

I find G—— the same pliant child with his turbulence moderated by his wanderings, and with a greater love for us and for our Lord. He is bold, brave, sincere, and steadfast. The only thing needed is a guiding mind to which he would instinctively submit with reverence and a fine man would be the result.

I had no wish to leave Ghazipur this time, and certainly not to come to Calcutta, but K——'s illness made me go to Benares and Balaram's sudden death brought me to Calcutta. So Suresh Babu and Balaram Babu have both

* Auntpur is a village in the Hugli Dt. It is the native place of Swami Premananda. Swamiji, 'M.,' and many fellow-disciples were at this time staying as guests at Swami Premananda's village home.

gone! G. C— is supporting the Math.....I intend shortly, as soon as I can get my fare, to go up to Almora and thence to some place in Gharwal on the Ganges where I can settle down for a long meditation. G— is accompanying me. Indeed it was with this desire and intention that I brought him down from Kashmir.

I don't think you ought to be in any hurry about coming down to Calcutta. You have done with roving; that's good, but you have not yet attempted the one thing you should do, that is, be resolved to sit down and meditate. I don't think *Jnana* is a thing like that of rousing a maiden suddenly from sleep by saying, "Get up, dear girl, your marriage ceremony is waiting for you!" as we say. I am strongly of opinion that very few persons in any Yuga attain *Jnana* and therefore we should go on striving and striving even unto death. That's my old-fashioned way, you know. About the humbug of modern *Sannyasi Jnana* I know too well. Peace be unto you and strength! D— who is staying at Brindaban with R—, has learnt to make gold and has become a pucca *Jnani*, so writes R—. God bless him and you may say, amen!

I am in fine health now and the good I gained by my stay in Ghazipur, will last, I am sure, for some time. I am longing for a flight to the Himalayas. This time I shall not go to *Pavhari Baba* or any other saint,—they divert one from his highest purpose. Straight up!

How do you find the climate at Almora? Neither S— nor you need come down. What is the use of so many living together in one place and doing no good to one's soul? Don't be fools always wandering from place to place—that's all very good—but be heroes.

निर्मानमोहा जितसंगदोषा

अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः ॥

द्वंद्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञै-

र्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् ॥

(Gita xv. 5.)

“Free from pride and delusion, with the evil of attachment conquered, ever dwelling in the Self, with desires completely receded, liberated from the pairs of opposites known as pleasure and pain, the undeluded reach that Goal Eternal.”

Who advises you to jump into fire? If you don't find the Himalayas a place for Sadhana go somewhere else then.

So many gushing inquiries simply betray a weak mind. Arise, ye mighty one, and be strong. Work on and on, struggle on and on. Nothing more to write.

Yours affly.,

Narendra.

A PARABLE OF PROPHETS

BUDDHA AND VIVEKANANDA

IN the lives of great Souls that have worked wonders in their ages, we observe generally a close similarity. The Lord says in the Bhagavad-Gita, “Whenever virtue subsides and vice prevails I come down to help mankind.”

The birth of Buddha was a blessing to the country when ignorance hung like a cloud of darkness over the land, when there was an unrighteous distinction between man and man and when the people had brutalised their own religion. Vivekananda came as a prophet of New India, when the occidental materialism and agnosticism had taken possession of the popular mind, when people had lost all faith in themselves and in their religion, and when “Don't-touchism” became the prevailing religion.

Gautama being a prince had luxurious palaces to live in, costly dresses to put on, thousands of

attendants were ready to meet even his least desire; but in the midst of his high position and wealth, he felt a secret yearning after something higher which neither wealth nor position could satisfy. And so in the silence of one night, he left his parents and palace, renounced forever his position and power, his princely dignity, and more than all, the love of a young and devoted wife, and a sweet child, roamed about as a homeless wanderer in search of Truth, and retired into the forests to gain the final goal of life, the reaching beyond all misery. He came out Enlightened and preached the Religion of Compassion and Desirelessness to one and all. Vivekananda, the son of an attorney-at-law, himself a graduate of the Calcutta University, after the passing of his master Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, at whose feet he learnt his great lesson, left his home renouncing all his bright prospects of life—for he would have adorned any profession he might choose,—and travelled unknown for several years with his begging-bowl and no possession save the Gita, in the secluded haunts of the Himalayas and all over India, with the sole thought of gaining realisation and with the burden on his shoulders of how to help humanity and raise his countrymen to their former glory. And he finally attained the great mission of his life in an unprecedented way.

Like Mahátmâ Gautama Buddha, Swami Vivekananda's righteous and benevolent soul bankered to help the poor, the lowly and the oppressed. To him, as to Buddha, the Chandala was a brother. The rich and the poor were the same to him, for he looked upon all with an equal eye.

Gautama's pious life, world-embracing sympathy, unsurpassable moral precepts, gentle and compassionate character, made all castes united together in the communion of love. Vivekananda's child-like simplicity, purity of character, and all-inclusive love for humanity have made the whole world his kin and have united the East and the West with a common tie of love. His eyes, as those of Buddha, always beamed with a fire of unworldly love and spirituality.

Vivekananda, like Gautama, worked for the masses, his message was for the masses, he was for the millions.

Under Buddha's banner everybody was allowed to march; never was there any distinction of caste, colour or creed. Vivekananda had also disciples among all castes, sects, and nationalities. He never rejected anyone who came to him for help, either material or spiritual. Vivekananda, like Buddha, laid down his life in the service of humanity. Both were great world-renouncers, as renunciation is the background of all religion and morality. The message that Vivekananda got from his Master to convey to the world, was as universal as that of Buddha. Both have preached the common bases of religion: "Do not care for doctrines, do not care for dogmas or sects or churches or temples; all existence is one; criticise none; show by your lives that religion does not mean words or names or sects, but that it means spiritual realisation; only those can do good to others, who have *felt*; only those who have attained Realisation can communicate it to others, can be great teachers of mankind. They alone are the powers of light."

Oldenberg writes about the daily life of Gautama as follows:—"In the days when his reputation stood at its highest point, and his name was named throughout India among the foremost names, one might day by day see a man—before whom the kings bowed themselves—with alms-bowl in hand, through streets and alleys, from house to house and without uttering any request, with downcast look stand silently waiting until a morsel of food was thrown into his bowl." And Vivekananda had done the same.

The ideas and goals of both these great saints were as lofty as the heavens and as wide as the earth; the messages of both of them were the same in spirit. If there be found any difference in the ways of working of these two great reformers of India, it is because the needs and circumstances of the ages in which they appeared are not the same.

Indeed the soul that was Buddha, was born again as Vivekananda, only the distance of time in the case of the one lends a greater enchantment to the view.

Harshad Roy Mehta.

EDUCATION IN ANCIENT INDIA

We take the following from the last Convocation address of the University of Madras, delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. V. Krishnaswami Iyer, whose recent death we deeply deplore:—

A mercantile view of education is inconsistent with the traditions of this country. Learning in this land has always had an exalted place. It marked out a whole class for pre-eminent honour and distinction. *Arthakarika vidya*, learning which brings in gain, has doubtless been one of the aims of life. But a higher ground for the acquisition of knowledge was the Upanishadic teaching, "Whatever one does, if done with knowledge, yields greater results." The transcendental ideals of the Indian systems of philosophy which scorn the delights of a material world, the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation dominating Indian thought and life, which reconcile the student to the indefinite postponement of all recompense for labour, and the overwhelming accumulating of ritual as a part of religion, have assigned to learning and its votaries a place in national life almost unapproached in the history of other ancient lands. The early period of life, extending over twelve to twenty-five years, was, in the case of every man of the regenerate castes, ordained for study with the teacher. The sciences and the arts were open to all, though on the Sudra their cultivation was not binding. The goddess of learning, wife of the Creator in the Divine Trinity, has an annual festival in her honour, observed by all Hindu castes and communities. "Knowledge for knowing's sake and not for the gain it gets, the praise it brings and the wonder it inspires," has been held aloft as the highest end and aim of education. Let not modern conditions of life darken the splendour of the ancient ideal of learned poverty, before which even the diadems of kings have rolled in the dust.

The University as a community of teachers and scholars and a nursery of lofty ideals and large aspiration is not a modern idea or one peculiar to the West. The *Parishads* of post-vedic times like the one in which Svetaketu Aruneya was, according to the Brihadaranyaka, confounded by King Pravahana's question propounding problems of

philosophy, the priestly congregations, in *Sangharamas* of Buddhist days like the great halls of Nalanda spoken of by Hiuen Tsang, the *Sangams* of the Tamil country whose fame lasted many centuries and the last of which sang the praises of the immortal *Kural*, the Mutt organisations of more modern times dotted all over the country, were all gatherings of the most learned and thoughtful men of the day, engaged in religious, philosophic and scientific studies or discourses, and centres of the highest culture.

Religion has always fed the lamp of learning. Cathedral and monastic schools pioneered the way to the mediæval *studia generalia* of Europe, parents of universities like those of Bologna and Paris. So in India the premier class and the monastic orders in their quest of God and their search into the mysteries of the universe, gathered in groups in forest or mountain solitudes to learn and to teach. The temporal power stood aloof for many centuries from the cloisters of learning in Western lands. But it was the privilege and the boast of Kings in India to make their courts the arena of intellectual combat amongst the learned of the land and to proclaim themselves the patrons of poets, philosophers and sages. It often occurred that Brahmins who had sought retirement and Kshatriyas who had renounced their sceptre, *Vardhakyē munivrittayah* in the words of sweet Kalidasa, attracted the disciples by the boldness of their speculations and the sanctity of their lives. It has also happened that individual teachers of great personal sanctity and renown established themselves in historic places of pilgrimage and gathered students around them from various parts of the country, who lived with their teachers and served them in humble ways during the period of studentship. Benares, of all cities the most sacred in the world, with a longer record as centre of thought and learning than Athens, "the mother of arts and eloquence," or Imperial Rome, long the seat of unparalleled temporal and ecclesiastical power, or historic Paris, of varied interest and widest culture, or London, the gate of the world's commerce,—Benares has exercised the most powerful charm on the Indian mind for ages, not less for her illustrious roll of teachers than for her being the gateway to heaven for the pious Hindu who heaves his last

breath on the holy ground enriched with numerous temples. The tragedy of King Harischandra's life which has indelibly impressed upon the hearts of Indians the Vedic formula that there is no religion higher than truth, *Satyat nasti paro dharmah*, was enacted there. Gautama, the lord of the Sakyas, abandoning his royal heritage, sought within its precincts the way to salvation through all the learning of the age gathered on the spot which marked the confluence of the Ganges with the Asi and the Varuna. Sankara, perhaps the most profound of philosophers, ancient or modern, carried to Benares his daring speculations and the truths he saw "with vision divine" for the approval of the mighty in intellect. Learning and knowledge have for centuries shed their radiance around from other famous seats as well, like Madura and Navadvip. The inheritors of a past so glorious, the descendants of generations to whom the cultivation of knowledge was a religious dedication, can need no other incentive to literary, scientific or philosophic pursuits than the conviction that knowledge is its own reward.

The curse of intellectual barrenness is not upon us. But you cannot seek repose on faded laurels. The land that has produced in the realms of poetry, Valmiki, Vyasa, Kalidasa, Tulsidas, and Kamban, to name only a few, in the region of abstract thought, Kapila and Kanada, Sankara and Ramanuja, and in the practical sciences, Panini and Patanjali, Charaka and Susruta, Aryabhatta and Bhaskara, the land on whose breast have walked the blessed feet of Krishna and Buddha and a host of lesser saints and sages, has no need to fear comparison with any quarter of the earth's surface. The illustrious roll is not exhausted. The fruitful womb may yet bring forth children of genius, the stalwarts of coming generations. The mighty stream of master minds which filled the land with plenty may in a season of drought have thinned to a tiny channel, but signs are not wanting that it may swell again to a flood.

The contribution of the East to the world's thought, the world has, however, not fully realised. In the words of Professor Macdonnel, "The intellectual debt of Europe to Sanskrit literature has been undeniably great. It may, perhaps, become greater still in the years that are to come."

We seem to be in the throes of great births though the process is slow that brings them to the light of day. The summons has gone forth in every direction calling upon all to rise to the full height of their manhood. The greatest book of wisdom yet known to the world, the Mahabharata, which threw out the bold challenge, "what is not here is nowhere," has said that even Scriptures are not Scriptures if they cannot stand the test of reason. Some of you may take your place amongst the glorious band that with uplifted torch illumine the recesses in which the treasures of nature lie buried. Let your motto be what the Emperor Asokavardhana proclaimed, "Whatever I

understand to be right, I desire to practise." With brains enlarged and hearts expanded, with character ever more valuable than intellect, with trained capacity greater than knowledge, "go ye, O brethren," in the language of the Mahavagga "and wander forth for the gain of the many, the welfare of the many, in compassion for the world, for the good, for the gain, for the welfare of men." Go where you may and do what you will, treasure in your hearts that priceless refrain of Hindu sacred literature thrice repeated on every occasion to secure its virtue on three different planes of human endeavour,—Peace! Peace! Peace! (Shantih! Shantih! Shantih!)



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The Song of the World-Gods.

THEN there arose in my soul a dead thoughtlessness; and in that thoughtlessness there came in radiance and might the power divine to hear the Sound beyond Life's din.

In stupendous awe my inmost soul did heed the song of Those Who rule the world of life and form, though changeless in their Self, the Formless and Eternal.

First heard I Brahma's world-entrancing song; then heard I Vishnu's life-bound, life-free voice; then, drowning the music of the ancient spheres came Shiva's Life-scattering, Death-embracing song.

THE SONG OF BRAHMA—THE ETERNAL.

For inconceivably numerous eternities lived I in the Twilight of My Own Being while the world slumbered in the Ancient Depths.

For inconceivably numerous eternities did I, busied with the Infinite, forget the world

and it slumbered motionless within Mine Own Being.

For inconceivably numerous eternities did I commune with Mine Own Being and all the laws of life and all the forms of the universe, forgotten by Me, were inactive, breathless,—lifeless.

For inconceivably numerous eternities did I watch the Great Glow of the Morning-Star of Mine Own Soul and the whole world lay at My Feet,—a Thing Inane.

Then did I descend from That Great Meditation wherein I contemplated the Prodigiousness of the Infinite to Whom even I, Brahma, must bow down in adoration. I stepped from out the House of the Great Supreme and saw the world lay at My Feet.

It seemed small inconceivably. I touched it; it was dead. I lifted it in My Great Cosmic Hands and pressed it lovingly to My Cosmic Heart. I remembered it. I loved it; and My Love breathed into it a Supreme Life. It stirred and out of the Small Thing I first

saw there arose a Force Great, seemingly, as Mine Own Soul and there arose a Form as Great, seemingly, as Mine Own Formless Presence.

I knew it was the World revived by My Love. I watched its Changing Shape weave out the Gorgeous Soul of Light. I saw its Changing Shape weave out the Worlds which whirl into the Spaceless Distance. I saw the Oceans flow from out its Mouth and saw the Stars shoot from its Eyes. All this I saw and wondered for a while; but then Wonder left me. I realised the World to be but the Reflection of My Descent from the Nameless Secret and Depth of the Soul that fashioned e'en My Soul of Souls,—which was and ever is My Soul of Souls.

I am the Ishvara of the World, the Great God Whom all adore. I saw the flaming suns first hurl themselves into thundering form. From My Throne did I watch the flowing of the Milky Way from out the Sourceless Height of the Mountain of the World.

I am the Ishvara, the God Supreme and Sun from Whom all Beams of Being are. I saw the birth of the Morning Star and first saw the broad, White Light of Day; I saw the Night's first lustrous pall hung o'er the great wide earth.

I am the Ishvara, the Shining God, Who first did hear the Atomic Dust sigh in Space till worlds were formed; 'twas I Who first did hear the Ocean's loud and thundering call. 'Twas I, the Ishvara of all Life, Who first did see the Mountains belch from out Caverns of the Waters Deep.

I first beheld the Soul of Man; I first beheld the Upward Flight of Form; from out My Self I weaved the Forms which Gods and souls of men and every soul, inhabit.

'Tis I Who know Life's Deeper Secret, 'Tis I Who have sounded the Soundless Depth. 'Tis I Who am the world's Great

Keeper; 'tis I Who hold the Keys of Life and Death.

I am the God Whom man adores, the Great God, Infinite as the Azure Canopy above the Earth; I am the God Whom man adores under a myriad names and myriad forms. I am the Growth and Death of Things; from out Mine Eyes I send the Day; from out Mine Mouth I send the Word which forms all things; from out Mine Nostrils I breathe the Law which builds all life and life destroys; from out Mine Ears I send the Sound Which makes all Poetry and Sonorous Harmony.

I am the Height and Depth of Life; I am the All-pervading Substance; I am the Tropic, Terrible Heat; I am the Cold of the Icy Poles. I am the Sun and Moon and Stars and the Suns that whirled before the Sun. I am the Moon beyond the Moon and the Light of all the Stellar Lights. I am the Molehill; I am the Sky. I am the Worm; I am Greater than the Greatest God, I am the Smallest of the small and still larger than the Whole World's Form.

I am Life when It is born; I am the Atom and the Sun. I am Life when It is done. I am throughout, above, in and beyond the World.

I am Brahma, the First-Born. I am Brahma, the Eternal. I am Brahma, the Reflection of the Infinite. I am Superior. I am the Infinite. I am "The Blue Soul" of the World,—the Highest, All-embracing Self.

Man, I am your soul's own Soul. In Me the Soul is the Pure and Holy, the Great Divine, the One and Only Self. In Me there breathes neither High nor Low, neither Sin nor Virtue, neither Form nor Spirit. I am Brahma, the World-Soul. I am Brahma, the Forever. I am Brahma. I am beyond the World. I am the Great, Great Brahma beyond the World.

THE SONG OF VISHNU—THE PRESERVER.

Then came the thundering voice of Vishnu. The seven worlds heard it. Its cosmic echo rang o'er suns and stars.

I am Vishnu, All-pervading. I am Vishnu, the Preserver. Lo! I am prodigious height and depth most fathomless. Behold Me! Life and death in My right hand I hold and o'er My Face and Presence have I put the veils of Shadow and of Night.

Vishnu am I the All-pervading; Vishnu, before Whose constant vision the world sweeps onward and to death while I am stationed, changeless, everywhere, and see with calm the birth and growth of life and see with calm its certain end.

Vishnu am I and My abode the Sun; Vishnu am I All-striding and All-surrounding, before Whose world-wide Self the days unravel into nights and nights unravel into days.

Vishnu am I and My foot-stools are the stars. The Milky Way is the Pathway to My Presence,—yea, and My servant is the Moon. Vishnu am I and watch with rapture uttermost of soul the dreams of men and watch them whom men declare divine.

Lo, I am the Virgin Peak among the towering mountains' heights, the strength of rolling, verdured plains. I am the mirth of rivulet and soul of scented rose and warbling bird; yea,—and I am Orion's violent splendours and the august brilliance of Arcturus. I hold in check the speed of the luminous Great Bear that prowls among the wilds of stellar space. Lo, I am the Glow of the Morning Star, the Peace of the Star of Eve.

Lo, I am Life; I am Life. E'en in Death I am Life; I am Life.

Before My Vision sweep in cosmic orbits the cycles of existence and of death. I discern the Rise Inscrutable of Endless Things; I have scattered myriad worlds into

atomic dust; yet as many worlds do I rebuild. I am He, blessing with august creeds and august thoughts the yearning hearts of them who seek the Vast Undifferentiated Self.

I know the Soul that turns the Cosmic Wheel by which the worlds, their myriad souls with Life, whirl on to ceaseless good or ill. I am Vishnu, the motion of the world, the world's own wondrous form, the world's own wondrous soul.

I am the Impetus Eternal. I am the Song and Whirl of Life. I am one with the speed of the clouds and the seas of life as they sway with the hurrying winds of soul and thought.

I am the Ominous and Tremendous Silence of which Life stands in hopelessness and fear. I am the Death-like Silence which is Death to form. Yea, I am Death, the Chaos and the Vortex from which Life repeats itself and draws its breathing forms.

Behold Me! I am one with Brahma. In the Atman I am free. I move the Form of Life, lend it wings of myriad forms, and of My Spirit give it soul and mind.

I am the Gods. I am all Sentient Life. I am to man as Infinite Life and Death. I am Vishnu, All-pervading,—one with Brahma, the Eternal.

I am Vishnu. I shroud myself in all the Mysteries of Life and o'er My All-pervading Self I cast the Radiance of the Stars. I am robed in Substance Universal and with Equal Soul I sway from Cosmic Life to Cosmic Death;—Life and Death are only Vishnu's Will.

Myriad the worlds in which I live and grow from things primeval into thought and soul. In every age I am born to resuscitate the world, shouldering the burden of Life's myriad forms from Endless Birth unto Nirvana's Height.

THE SONG OF SHIVA—THE DESTROYER.

Then arose from beyond the apparitional worlds the chant of Shiva, the Destroyer.

I am Shiva, Yogananda. I am Shiva, World-renouncer. Death-defying, Life-defying, I am the Slayer of Desire. I am the Death of Life, the Death of Death, the Harbinger of Things Beyond. Lo, I am Shiva Whom Brahma and Vishnu know!

Fixed in the Omniscient, all Super-sentient Life of God, I spurn the world, a lump of useless clay. I loathe its traffic and its restless strife and see the nothingness of all its dream,—for I am Shiva, moon-crowned, moon-horned Shiva, Conqueror of all that leads to life.

I am Shiva, Atman-pondering. I am the August Self beyond the craving mad and fearing mad that drives the soul from love and form to hate and death and ever on. Lo, e'en while the gods dream their dream deific, Shiva thinks of Death Eternal.

I point to the Pathway that commences with the stretch of death, the Pathway paved with bones of form and thought. I am the Scorpion's Sting to Life and drink with eagerness and mad delight the Poisonous Dregs left by the weak of soul who cannot drain the Bitter, False and Death-set Cup of Life.

I love the Holiness of God, the Regions Vast of Peace Eternal. Of what is life I am the World-o'ertoppling Consciousness and challenge Death throughout the whole, wide world. Yea,—I am set with might divine in the Grand Aloofness of the Over-Soul.

Shiva am I, Ashen-covered Yogin, with skulls of world-souls, subject of My thought. I sit upon Himalaya's highest height in Meditation Infinite and Pure. My eye ne'er opens to the Light of Life or that of golden days. In the midnight of all life I dream the Deathless Dream and see in Bliss Divine Him, More Ancient than the world,

I know what the world desires and know what it ne'er can gain through Desire's hopeless strife. I am the Secret of the Inmost Self of Life and knowing Self as Self, in Bliss of Self forget both life and form.

I am formless and eternal, beyond the sun and moon and stars. I linger not in life, for I am Death. Lo, I am Death. I am Death. I am Death to form and thought.

I am the Guru of Sannyasins, the Motive of their world-renouncing; in Me do World-redeemers dream their saving dreams. In Me sink also those who, hating life, welcome with open soul the Death Supreme of Deaths.

Wherever monk with skull and crossbone yearns with strength to save his soul from Maya's chains, there am I present and My bliss impart. Wherever monk, renouncing life and form, doth call on Me with steadfast mind and heart, there do I speed with ardour and delight.

Know Me as the Soul of all religions, the Hope that rises out of Tombs; Master of Compassion, I am the Saviour of Them who stricken are with ignorance and woe. Despised by men, but loved by me are these. I am the God of Sinners and of Lives Deformed and from the ocean of My saving Tapas they rise eventually to God.

I am Shiva and embodied is My Spirit in the world-renouncing monk. His dream of Life's Great Vanity is verily My dream. Worship Me as Shiva's holy monk and worship Me as Mahadev. "Renounce! Renounce!" is Shiva's cry.

Brahma and Vishnu know the torrent of My Thought. They know My hatred fierce of all that is within Their wide domain of life and form. They know that Shiva's Silence meaneth Death to Life. They know that Shiva reigns when They who rule the spheres of life must loose their hold when Brahma's Day is done.

Great are the Princes of the world! Wide

is Brahma's cosmic sway! Great is All-pervading Vishnu, Preserver of the Dream of Life! These know with Me the Formless, Thoughtless Kingdom of the Self and at My bidding tear the world in shreds. For I am the Death of Dreams, the Pole-Star of the Soul of God and at the lustrous shining of My Sacred Moon of Soul the World-God Brahma shrouds Himself in Peace.

THE LAY DIVINE

Then sang the Three the Lay Divine which only those can hear who have died the Last of Deaths to Life and Form.

It came with world-sonorousness :

Empowered with omnipotence We dream a moment's dream, then break the dream at will and scatter it to naught.

In the cosmic sea of Maya We gaze, Narcissus-like, in love with that reflection of Our Self, called Life and Death and Change. We dream of bondage and of freedom both, knowing that Dreams are Dreams and Self is ever Self. Where is there aught of bondage or of freedom when there is naught to bind and naught to free?

O Dreams are Dreamers and Dreamers Dreams and Aught is Naught and Naught doth come of Aught. We are that Self in which e'en thought of Self doth flee and whither Dreams and Dreamers flow as rivers into sea.

O Brahma's Dream is false and Vishnu's Dream is false and Shiva's Dream with emptiness is fraught, for who creates, preserves, destroys when Dreams are Dreams and there is neither Aught, nor Naught?

Arise, Awake and break the chain of Dreams from deepest bondage to eternal Mukti's flight! The goal is neither here nor there. Dream not! It is not anywhere, but in the Dreamer's Inmost Dreamless Self.

This do We know,—We Brahma, Vishnu,

Mahadev—and in this knowledge are We three but One and of That One it can alone be said: "It is not this; it is not that, nor aught. And yet art thou that inmost Self, O Soul!"

F. J. ALEXANDER.

TO THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA,

Though thou hast the frame forsaken,
Still art Thou within our midst,
Thou art with us in devotion
To that One of all ideals.

Thou art with us as before,
Ready with Thy Helping Hand.
Thou art with us, Blessed Master,
In the Spirit of Thy Teaching.

Weary travellers here we dwell
In this vale of stress and tears.
Thou, beyond the highest regions,
Art at Oneness with the Lord.

From the place of Bliss Divine
Send Thy Spirit's Love and Light,
From the brighter realms of life
Send Thy Blessings and Thy Peace.

With the eyes of Faith we see Thee
Through the Vision of the One,
And Thy Teaching bids remember :
"Death and change touch not the soul."

Though the veils of time and space
Cloud the view from plane to plane,
Love outmeasures time and space
And sees through veil, and veil, and veil.

Thus we see Thee; thus we know Thee;
Thus Thy Presence still inspires,
And Thy Heart in Love enshrines us
And our hearts respond to Thine.

—A Disciple.

A WESTERNER'S EXPERIENCE IN HINDUISM

[Being a lecture given before the annual meeting of the Vivekananda Society at the Ramakrishna Monastery at Belur, Sunday, January the Twenty-First, by Mr. Francis John Alexander.]

UNTIL recent times the world has had a very provincial outlook. Because of this there has been much prejudice and much misunderstanding and suspicion between the nations of the earth. The cause of the whole trouble was that they were not acquainted with each other. Travelling was not then as it is now, nor were there the facilities for travel that now exist. Railroads were a curiosity. Steamships that sail from one end of the earth to the other were not dreamt of. Consequently people did not know each other as they do now. Consequently they did not understand each other as they do now. But with the advantages of present-day methods of travelling, with the advantages of the daily newspapers and with the improvements in postal services all these difficulties are being overcome. The world is becoming more and more at unity. The nations of the earth are coming to understand one another better, so that if anything praiseworthy is noticed in the culture of any one nation the other nations of the world praise and adopt it.

Seventy years back to take a trip to India was the undertaking of a life-time. If a Westerner came to India it meant that he would be here for years. Consequently there was comparatively little going to and fro between Europe and India. Now it is a matter of a fortnight to reach the Far East from London. For this reason the possibilities for understanding the life and ideals of the Far East are increased a thousandfold. With the development of these opportunities and with the opening of these possibilities we find that a great exchange of the ideals of the

East and West has been and is being brought about. That which the West has realised is coming to the East. That which the East has realised is coming to the West. Both have much to give; both have given much. The desired end would be the mutual exchange of the very best and the very finest between both. When the West and the East first came into close contact it was natural that there should have been many elements of grave misunderstanding and even of violent disturbance between them. However, with the deepening of the relationship between the West and the East all friction is gradually passing away. Finally, it is bound to pass away entirely.

The world is one; and the history of the present exchange of ideals between the two hemispheres is proving this. The world, as a whole, knows, now-a-days, that in all of its parts there has been going on the struggle for the expression of great ideals and that there is the constant endeavour, as well, to perceive new and higher ideals. The best people in the world are aware that every nation has a special message to impart. For this reason we have found Easterners acquainting themselves with the scientific methods of the West as applied to modern demands, and we have found Westerners equally desirous to become familiar with the literary and spiritual treasures of the East. It is significant of the coming-closer-together of the various parts of the world that we should find eminent scientists in India and eminent Oriental scholars in the West.

The West is affecting the material side of Eastern life and the East is affecting the ideals of the West. The West has always specialised in practical things. It has always been matter-of-fact. During the last hundred years it has, indeed, become too much matter-of-fact. The East has always specialised in ideal things. It has been the mother of philosophies and religions. It has always

been ideal. Indeed, it may be said that it has been too much ideal, and yet when the Western culture began to bear too strongly upon the Eastern world, it is good to find in India an attempt to preserve the vision of Hindu ideals. One gladly witnesses the rise of great spiritual men and organisations to stem the tide of Western invasion on Hindu culture. There was danger some years ago of the East becoming too much like the West. Of course this is not desirable. In the contact between the East and the West it should not be that either the East or the West lose their separate individuality. That would not be an exchange of ideals. It would be exploitation. Unfortunately it appeared some years back that the East was in danger of being exploited by the West. Coming closer to the subject in question there was every danger of Hinduism losing its balance under the sway of Western civilisation. That danger has been averted now because Hinduism has had opportunities of becoming self-conscious as to the greatness of its own culture. Ramakrishna was born in the hour of the greatest need. From all that the West has heard, his life was a living example to the world of the powers and greatness and realisations of the Hindu consciousness. That is why thousands upon thousands of Hindus regard him to-day as an Incarnation of God. Vivekananda, his disciple, having familiarised himself with the knowledge and ideals of the West, sat later on at the feet of Ramakrishna and became re-Hinduised thereby. He became the apostle of Hinduism, both to the Hindus themselves and to the peoples of the West. He taught the Hindus that there was no need for them to apologise to the world, as they had done and as some are still doing, for having entertained the highest outlook that man can have on life. For in the eyes of Vivekananda, after he had traversed the whole world and had penetrated into the very bottom foundation of that which was Western civilisation

he returned to his own land, filled with the consciousness that India was "the place of pilgrimage," because here in India the highest knowledge of man had been evolved and realised. Even he, as a young man, had come under the spell of the belief that the West was superior to the East; in fact, even he had believed that if the East should go ahead it could only be by adopting Western methods altogether. In the later period of his life he thought very differently. His years with Ramakrishna had made him conscious of the possibilities of Hinduism. After having seen the varied civilisation of the world he admitted that Hinduism might stand in need of certain changes to suit the necessities of modern life, but he denied, forcibly, that it had any apologies to make, that Hinduism had been a great racial blunder. He held that whatever changes were to be brought about must not come from a denunciation of Hinduism as had been the custom and is still the custom of reformers who have caught the spirit of their reform methods from Western peoples. Any social changes that were necessary should result from an organic growth from within.

With these ideals in mind he founded the Ramakrishna Mission that should be universal in its effort to see the ideal, accepting all that is great and good in Western culture and retaining all that is beautiful, glorious and good in the India of old. His plea was for enlightenment in all directions. If enlightenment meant retaining certain old customs and traditions, well and good; did it mean that others that are antiquated and a hindrance to the fulfilment of modern need must go, well and good. Thus the Ramakrishna Mission and the Math, which represent his ideas, stand midway between the orthodox extremists who want everything retained in orthodoxy merely because it is old and orthodox, and the modern extremists in reform who want to sweep everything away simply because it happens to be old and orthodox. It is very

difficult to understand Vivekananda. If one understands him, one, indeed, understands the whole of India, one understands the solution of its complex problems and is brought to the feet of Ramakrishna who was the synthesis of Hinduism. The Westerners saw Vivekananda as the prophet of the Upanishads and as a gigantic intellect and spiritual man. The East saw in him the interpreter of Hinduism, the inspired teacher of the Vedanta, the lover of the poor and the prophet of Future India. A Westerner coming to India, who has only understood Vivekananda as the author of Jnana Yoga, finds it difficult to see in him the great lover of his Guru, the ardent champion of Hinduism and the Hindu saint he was, simply because Hinduism is foreign to him. Before he can understand Vivekananda synthetically, that is, indeed, before he can understand the whole man Vivekananda, he has to understand India and Hinduism, and, above all other things, he must understand Ramakrishna. Before the world can understand itself the East and the West will have to come into the closest and most friendly proximity. Before a Western person can understand a man like Vivekananda who had a message both for the East and the West, and was such a great factor in bringing about an intellectual and spiritual exchange between the two, he must have lived here in the East and have accepted the Hinduism of which he was such an eloquent exponent and spiritual representative. First of all, because Vivekananda came out of the heart of India. The Indian traditions were behind his realisation. The Indian blood was in his veins. The gospel of his Guru was an Eastern gospel and an Eastern realisation. The intellectual elements of his spiritual convictions were of an Oriental philosophy, the Vedanta.

If the East desires to learn science it will have to come to the West. If the West desires to learn spirituality, it will have to come to India and to him. At first a Westerner is bound to find it difficult to understand

the ideals of Hinduism and make them his own. He will have to live with Hindus and his Western body and Western mind will find difficulty in adjusting themselves to the new environment. Particularly will it be a mental struggle to understand, for Hinduism offers such a different outlook on life, and life itself is lived here so differently. If the Westerner has only familiarised himself with the philosophy, if he has only a scholarly consciousness of the Vedanta, if he has only seen the logic of it he will find himself at a loss in India, because in India the Vedanta is not an intellectual factor, but the living experience of the people. Though the people are comparatively silent in the intellectual expression of the Vedanta, their lives are the witness of their consciousness of it. But Hindu life would seem to be the last fact to a Westerner from which he would hope to find out further of the philosophy of the Upanishads, because a Westerner conceives of philosophy as intellectual. So he would rather go to the pundit or to the university professors, but in the end he would find that the peculiar feeling of exaltation that came to him in reading Swamiji's works,—if his inspiration had been Swamiji—was not heightened by knowing the logic of the Sankaracharya school. Perhaps he would come to the Math and converse with the brothers of Vivekananda. Even then he might leave dissatisfied, but the fault of misunderstanding is not with India, or the monks, or the philosophy. It is with himself. The reality of Vivekananda's message, he finally discovers, is not in words, or in conversation, or in an intellectual apprehension, but in the silent lives of the people. In India philosophy IS life. When this dawns upon him it gives him a new perspective of Vivekananda. He sees him as the embodiment of Hindu life. His message was the expression of his own life and all that he saw in Ramakrishna and that which he realised as existing in the ideals of Hinduism.

The Western student, then, accepts the

life of Hinduism as the best proof of Vivekananda's teachings. Eventually he finds that behind every single custom, behind each and every tradition of Hinduism, behind every single Hindu life, as the very meaning of Hindu living, is the spirit of the Vedanta philosophy, the struggle to see divinity, the struggle for freedom from all bondage. He will witness the ideals of the Vedanta in the traditions of the Hindu household, in the cradle tales that are told to the children, in the Brahmacharin life that is mapped out for young men, in the ideals of husband and wife and throughout the entirety of life, even unto the burning-ground. The monastic life he will see as the fulfilment of those ideals of which the householder dreams. He will see Hinduism and Hindu life as the very embodiment of the Vedanta. He will accept the gods and the goddesses of Hinduism because he will have come to understand that these gods are the vision of great ideas that are related, each of them, to that Absolute Truth and to that Absolute Consciousness that Hindus call Brahman. In this light he will see Ramakrishna and understand him. He will see why the ideal of Kali is related to the ideal of Brahman, because the meditation upon that which is Kali, time, death and destruction, makes the soul conscious of Siva and Brahman which are beyond the touch of time, death and destruction. He will worship Kali even as the Hindus worship Kali and even as Vivekananda worshipped Her. The very difficulty that a Western person has to understand Hinduism of itself proves the greatness of Vivekananda, for he was the prophet of no common message, even as his Guru was no common saint. And in all things he will come to understand the realisation of Ramakrishna, the message of Vivekananda.

Just as the science of the West requires studious attention and years of intellectual labour from the Easterner, even so does the

Hinduism of Vivekananda and the message he preached and the life of Ramakrishna, which IS Hinduism, require years of studious attention and serious and sincere effort. It has been said that Hinduism offers no opportunities for the man of a practical turn of mind, that the philosophy of the Vedanta is diametrically opposed to the Western consciousness of life. After deep study of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda one learns that their lives were of enormous practicality and that both were learned, not only in religion but in many other ways. Vivekananda spoke of Ramakrishna as the greatest intellect and the greatest artist he had ever known, and those who knew and saw Vivekananda say of him that his knowledge was greater, as one professor of America remarked, "than the knowledge of all our learned men put together."

There are two words that are most intimately related in Vivekananda's writings and these are "Shiva" and "Sheva." They are the keynotes to the ideal and the practical elements in the teaching he gave. "Shiva" is the ideal of meditation. He emphasised this ideal to the West which stands most in need of the possibilities of the spiritual life. To India he preached the ideal of "Sheva" and emphasised it, because India stands most in need of a public life and of service to its poor and to its afflicted. That is why one sees the Ramakrishna Mission fulfilling the two ideals both of "Shiva" and of "Sheva." It is because of the synthetic greatness of Vivekananda that a Westerner can hope to understand India and Hinduism and be taken into the fold of Ramakrishna. A year's stay in India with Hindus enables a Westerner to see many things. It makes it possible for him to realise that Vivekananda did not only speak philosophy but was also the living reality without which all philosophy is useless metaphysics. A year's stay in India enables a Westerner to see that because of the message of Vivekananda to his own people, have

they a right to be proud and righteously so. They have every right to be self-conscious of themselves, of their own power and greatness and of the ideals for which Hinduism has stood in the past and stands at present. They have every reason to hope for the future of Hinduism and India because he has shown how and in what way the spirit of Hinduism, though ancient in experience, can

reconstruct itself to meet modern needs, WITHOUT LOSING ITS OWN INDIVIDUALITY. Finally, a Westerner having had the privilege of a year's stay in India has had the opportunity and the advantage, as well, of understanding the whole man who was Vivekananda, and it is for this that a Westerner, who has caught a glimpse of his message, has come.



THE SEMI-CENTENARY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

AT THE BELUR MATH

DEATH cannot silence the message of a great soul though it lay the body low, nor can it touch the spirit that has given birth to the message though the body be turned into dust and ashes. The message grows into the realisation intended and the spirit that has given it dwells within that realisation.

How wonderful is the spreading of the great gospel of the Vedanta as uttered and interpreted by the Swami Vivekananda! It is now some ten years since he threw off the body as one throws off a worn-out garment, and entered into the state of the highest Samadhi. Yet it appears that the force of his personality and the vivifying and resurrecting power of his teaching are with us more than ever. Aye, even the very presence of the Master seems nearer and nearer with the increase of the scope of his message. Death has not touched the eloquence of his preaching, nor has it touched the great embodiment of that realisation which was his during life and which he bequeathed to India, and to the world in which he now dwells,—verily which he now is.

No surer sign of this can be had than the interest which increases with each year in the public celebration of the birthday anniversary of this saint and prophet. Each year brings added numbers of devotees and admirers of the Master to the monastery of the Ramakrishna Mission by the Ganges at Belur, where the festival is held. Each year, also, seems filled with a deeper and more wonderful sense of the presence of the Master on the great occasion and one realises that the spirit of the message he has given unto the world is spreading and spreading. The spacious

grounds of the monastery are literally crowded on this day. The immediate compound of the monastery buildings is covered with people of every description and of every caste and creed. But that which is the touching beauty of these masses is that most of them are of the poorest poor. It is on this day that they are fed, because it is the birthday of him who loved the poor of his land and befriended them as much as he could. It was his great love for the poor of his motherland that took Swami Vivekananda from the boundaries of his country to the strange land of America, there to see what could be done in interesting Americans in the condition and in the relief of India's poverty-stricken. It is on his birthday that they are fed by the thousands by the monks of the monastery to whom provisions and money are given by the disciples of the Swami and by the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna, whose chief disciple the Swami Vivekananda was.

Many interesting things occur at the monastery on this day. In the early hours of the morning the younger members of the order busy themselves decorating the buildings with standards and bunting. Older members supervise the preparations for the feeding of the poor. Others entertain the large number of guests who come from the early morning and throughout the day and late at evening to visit and join in the spiritual exercises of the festival. The river is studded with boats carrying passengers for the festival. But the most interesting of all happenings of the day is the feeding of the poor. These have come from villages far and near by having heard of the good tidings of the day when the drums were made to be beaten in the village lanes by devotees

of the Master. They came also from Calcutta. There were thousands of them, men, women, children, and happiness was written on the faces of each and every one of them. It was inspiring to hear them call out in praise the name of the Swami and that of Sri Ramakrishna.

The hour of the feeding of the poor was in the middle of the afternoon. This hour was fixed so as to allow those that came from a distance of ten or twenty miles ample time to reach the monastery. Tears came to the eyes of many of the spectators when they saw the large assembly of the poor sit down to their food. Many of those that partook of the food are accustomed to but one meal a day, and that a scanty one. It can be readily imagined with what an appetite they surveyed the delicacies spread before them. And there were delicacies. "We are sometimes given feasts," said the poor, "but not like this."

His Holiness, Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj, the abbot of the monastery, himself supervised the feeding. He saw to it that all were well fed. It was a band of volunteers that served the poor, and they were kept busy. They were a band of boys devoted to the teachings of the Swami. The feast of the poor continued for several hours, but even at night and even on the following morning there were those of the poor who came and were fed.

As for the other features of the celebration, they were varied. In the early morning worship was offered both to Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji. The room which Swamiji occupied in his lifetime was tastefully decorated with flowers and garlands of flowers. The pictures were likewise adorned. Just to the rear of the building there is a *Vedi*, an open worship-place, covered only by a small tent-like roof. It is more in the nature of a shrine. Here a large-sized portrait of the Swami was installed with religious ceremony and before this hundreds of people paused in reverence, prostrating themselves before the Master. Across the length of the monastery grounds there is a small chapel which has been erected over the very ground on which the dead body of the Master was consigned to the flames. A marble altar is there, and upon it was a portrait of the Swami in meditation posture. It was decorated with flowers. Here, also, many persons came to receive His blessings and to meditate.

The whole day long there were singing parties who sang songs dedicated to the various Incarnations of the Lord. An atmosphere of ecstasy pervaded the place. One knew that the Master was there. He was in the thought and in the hearts of everyone present.

On the previous Thursday had been celebrated the private festival which is held on the very day

of birth. The public festival is held on Sunday for the convenience of the devotees and of the poor who cannot come, for business or other reasons, on the week-days. The whole of Thursday night was spent in song and prayer and meditation and in other religious exercises. Those who personally knew the Master were there in large numbers. The day was spent in devotion and in recreation and the whole topic of conversation was the life and memories of the Master. Many and happy and blessed are the memories of Swamiji's birthday, but most happy and most blessed are those of the poor whom he loved. That the poor should be happy—that was among the greatest of the longings of the heart of the Swami Vivekananda.

Here is the very embodiment of the Swami's teaching, a beautiful admixture of the highest philosophical and spiritual realisation with the highest ideals of service,—the ideals of Shiva and Sheva made one. The following is the text:

"He who sees Shiva in the poor, in the weak, and in the diseased, really worships Shiva; and if he sees Shiva only in the Image, his worship is only preliminary. With him who has served and helped one poor man seeing Shiva in him, without thinking of his caste or creed, or race, or anything, Shiva is more pleased than with that man who sees Him only in temples."

"The unselfish man says, 'I will be lost, I do not care to go to heaven, I will even go to hell, if by doing that I can help my brothers.' This unselfishness is the test of religion. He who has more unselfishness is more spiritual and nearer to Shiva."

"He who wants to serve Shiva must serve His children—must serve this world first. It is said in the Gita that those who serve the servants of God are His greatest servants."

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA MATH, Madras

In the morning there was Bhajana. After 11 a. m., a large number of the poor were fed in which the boys of the Ramakrishna Students' Home took an active part. In the evening, at 5-45 there was a lecture by Professor K. B. Ramanatha Aiyar on "Some Aspects of the Swami's Teachings," the Hon'ble Justice P. R. Sundara Iyer presiding. The following are extracts from Prof. Ramanatha Aiyar's speech:—

The great and memorable service that the Swami did was to win for Hinduism a position that it had not enjoyed hitherto. The expositions of its leading tenets given by the Indian apostle to the West, made the cultured men and women of America revise the notions they had of Hinduism as one of obscure Heathen cults. Hinduism was—so far

as the first propagandists of the movement were concerned—only one of the mystic religions of the East and the chief attractions of the religion were its pathological developments. The Swami was an apostle of the religion, one of ourselves, and he was whole-hearted in his devotion to the sane and normal aspects of the cult. What profound impression was produced on his hearers and what following he had may be gathered from the record by a disciple of the inspired utterances of Swami Vivekananda during his seven weeks' stay at Thousand Island Park.

Like his Master Ramakrishna, the Swami was a sympathetic student of the Christian religion and his writings show an intimate knowledge of the Gospel and the Old Testament. Of the Swami it may be truly said that he is a product of Western Education and his exposition of Hinduism is a resultant of the rationalising influences of the West on the Hindu faith. Readers of his writings will see how zealous he is to make the tenets of Hinduism acceptable to his hearers by showing that the latest scientific thought cannot find anything to object to in the scriptures as expounded by him.

I am not concerned now with the question how far his interpretation is in consonance with orthodox canons of exegesis. But I value his teaching as vindicating for us a right to re-interpret the scriptures. He was not guilty of 'Bibliolatry' making fetish of the written word. (See Inspired Talks p. 63). Again he is not afraid of assimilating new truths. Nor is he afraid of giving up beliefs that had served their purpose (*Ibid* p. 254). He believes that God can be relied on to guide and inspire men now as in the days of old. "If God spake to a man in the deserts of Arabia two thousand years ago, He can also speak to me to-day, else how can I know that He has not died?" Though there are utterances of the Swami to the effect that the Vedas are eternally true, there are passages in his writings showing he did not attach importance to them except as records of intimate experiences of the seers. (See Complete Works, Vol. I, p. 19—"We talked.....sweetness of it.")

There is in the writings of the Swami a spirit of catholicism and charity which is in refreshing contrast to the rigid formalism and illiberal literalism of the Pandit expounders of the Hindu scriptures. If in this spirit of catholicism and charity all religious systems be studied and if in this spirit our old scriptures be studied and be re-interpreted to us, the spirit of the teaching being seized and the shell being given up, how much more genuinely religious would our people become and how much easier would be the path of social progress!

That religions grow and adapt themselves to the growing needs of the human spirit, and that the

forms and the schemata of doctrines that served their purpose must not be cherished so as to strangle new developments, are facts familiar enough to students of thought. Another fact equally well-known is that in cases where institutions are given a quasi-permanency by unchanging tablets of the law or by the inspired word of God, the interpreters of law and of religion re-interpret the inelastic data and make law and religion meet the needs of the times. Dispassionate students of the Hindu law and of Hindu religion know this to be so. Where people will make out certain institutions to be divine they must be prepared to recognise the divinity of the best and wisest human agents who show the way to modify the God-given institutions. A consistent Advaitin must recognise that God permeates all human actions through and through, and there need be no distrust of what is usually relied upon in our daily life, the discerning intellect, the chastened will, the educated conscience.

The last passage I quoted from the lecture on Soul, God and Religion, is significant also in this way. It lays great stress on the personal experiences of the soul realising God. Swami Vivekananda sees that the impregnable foundation of religion is the need of the human spirit and its experiences and its intimate communings with God form more irrefragable testimonies than scriptures or demonstrations.

The history of our faith is pretty much the history of other faiths. If the Christians show broad-mindedness enough to recognise Hinduism as more or less on a par with their religion we can with the Swami recognise our religion falling into line with Christianity and see how far it shares in the fortunes of all the faiths of the world. All these, roughly speaking, have three stages of development. (Cf. Pratt's Psychology of Religious Belief, p. 75.) There is the first stage, the Religion of Primitive Credulity, the Religion of Thought or Understanding is the second stage, and last comes the Religion of Feeling. In the childhood of men and of races the first type of religion flourishes. Belief in gods is based largely on the fact that one has been so taught and that one sees them one cannot disbelieve. But the Religion of the Understanding soon supersedes this phase of Faith.

The next phase of Faith is presented by the Upanishadic teaching. The mystic experiences of the realisation of the oneness of the individual with the Brahman are to be properly brought under the third head of the Religion of Feeling. It is the last phase that Swami Vivekananda dwells upon and in this he shows the discernment of the religious leader. "When I was a child I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child,

but when I became a man, I put away childish things." To give as little offence as possible, I quote from a sympathetic student of Religious Belief, (Pratt, p. 284), some observations on Christianity. They are of wider application: "Most of our beliefs are based on authority. And it is quite fitting that this should have its influence on religious beliefs as well as on others. With the spread of the critical study of the Bible and of Church dogma, however, authority in Religion will lose its absolute and dictatory character. The day will never return when the Bible can be considered as authority—an absolute and unquestionable authority. There are no longer any absolute authorities. On the other hand the day will never come when the Bible will cease to be an authority—and a most powerful one—in the second sense of the word. The insight of its writers and its heroes has been too profound for that, its pages are too glowing and too luminous with spiritual light, the sources of its streams too deep in the life of the race, for it ever to fail in its ministrations to the passing generations of mankind.....But authority in matters of religion has ceased to be confined to the Bible or to any book or church or explicit formulation, and is becoming in reality, a general argument from the experience of all those whose spiritual life has been deep and influential, whether in the Bible or out of it.....arguments from authority such as this will draw all their strength ultimately from the affective experience." Substitute Hinduism for Christianity and the Hindu scriptures for the Bible, and the above accurately represents the position of the most thoughtful and earnest seekers of truth in the Hindu fold, and the Swami is seen as their most eloquent spokesman.

One distinct service Swami Vivekananda has done for Hinduism and that is to take from it its ethnic character and to place it on a par with the religions that claim to be universal. Dr. G. W. Knox in his article on Christianity in the Encyclopedia Britannica, the 11th. Edn., claims for Christianity an absolute character, because it does not preclude development but necessitates it. I see nothing in the Hindu Religion as expounded by the Swami preventing its assimilation of all truths, and rivalling Christianity in adaptability to new conditions of existence.

Whatever differences of opinion there may be on the teaching of the Swami, I presume there can be none as to the present degrading practices tolerated in the name of Hinduism. Our temples and religious foundations are managed in a manner that does not reflect credit on the community. Cannot the enormous treasures held in mortmain be utilised to spread enlightened views of religion, and cannot the temples be made more edifying

every way by the ministers being made more alive to their responsibilities? Cannot the most injured class of women be rescued gradually from their present position of degradation by working the laws in a vigorous manner, society co-operating with the administrators of law, or by the enactment of fresh laws if the existing enactments are unable to cope with the evil? Except some cranks and evil-doers all Hindus worth the name may be expected to help in the removal of these corruptions of the faith.

What is needed for the Hindus is a sort of new orientation, a new attitude to life. He must not be too anxious to escape from the burdens of life. To bear them manfully by trustfully working is quite consistent with the tenets of Hinduism as has been expounded by Swami Vivekananda. His message may be described as a gospel of work, of strenuous activity, of persistent, energetic pursuit of ends. "Stop not till the goal is reached" was his motto. He did not wish the Hindus to be such nympholepts of their own past as not to leave a worthy past themselves to the succeeding generations. You will find pregnant hints of this message of his in various parts of his writings and speeches. Organise and work and don't chatter, he was very fond of saying to his disciples. It is a man-making religion, he preached. And before I close let me call your attention to certain items of social reform which have been before the Hindu public for some time. The Swami expresses himself in no uncertain manner on the side of progress. According to him Hinduism can see nothing objectionable in such reforms whatever the Pharisees and the blind leaders of the blind may say on the matter.

As regards the position of women, the Swami is at one with the most advanced party. He would have even women missionaries go to foreign lands to teach the truths of Hindu religion. As regards travel to foreign countries, the Swami was a great advocate of it. The Swami was quite sympathetic in his speeches with the aims of the reformers. He only said that their method was not right. He blamed them for their fanfaronade. These men would not grudge the Swami his fling provided he helped on the cause of progress. Nobody can arrogate to himself omniscience, and the reformers know and recognise their limitations. We have all the weakness of accepting whole-heartedly what flatters our vanity and of turning away from the teaching that is most necessary and wholesome but not flattering our vanity. No doctor is popular with children. We are children. The great teacher whose birthday you are celebrating wanted you to become men. Are you going to be men and put away childish practices?

The Chairman in his concluding remarks said

that on that occasion of rejoicing they had the feeling of much sorrow that they had lost the bodily presence in that place of Swami Ramakrishnananda. Swami Ramakrishnananda's services to India and particularly to Southern India and to Madras were great. He was in the habit of going out to various parts of that Presidency for doing service to his fellow-men. In this connection he could not forget also to make a reference to the death of another—the late Mr. V. Krishnaswamy Aiyar who with an all-embracing heart was full of love for the great teacher Ramakrishna Paramahansa, for the revered Swami Vivekananda and to all who were connected with that Mission, who appreciated the work of self-sacrifice and of public utility that the Mission was doing in the various parts of the world, and who contributed freely out of his purse to help the work that was being done in Madras. He exhorted the audience to remember the powerful and stirring teachings that Sri Swami Vivekananda with his ever-cheerful face used to pour forth from day to day in the city of Madras while he was staying there immediately before his journey to America. He had only to go to America to be appreciated by the whole world. His name would stand out foremost for ever as one of those who contributed to the recognition of the highest teachings of Hinduism by the Western people both in America and in England. He, the speaker, would not attempt to make even a brief reference to his teachings on the various subjects all of which he made completely his own. One thing that stood out foremost in his mind was, that Swami Vivekananda was not only a great religious and spiritual teacher but he was also an intensely zealous patriot. He had the highest faith in the Mission of India to spiritualise the whole world.

Speaking about the Ramakrishna Mission, the Chairman said that the members of that Mission were not ascetics in the old sense of the term but they were patriots of a real self-sacrificing spirit. The various directions in which that Mission served this country were sufficient proofs of it. They were working for the enlightenment of the highest as well as the lowest in society. They were engaged in moral and religious teachings, they were working for the distressed and the sick, and, in short, there was no department of public service which the followers of that Mission were not prepared to undertake. That Mission enabled one to identify himself with his fellow-men and to serve them as much as he would serve himself. It was his earnest hope that as time rolled on the Mission might not find it difficult to get new recruits. Those who joined the Association now were by no means less fitted for the work of the Mission than those who joined it during the time of the great Bhagavan Ramakrishna Paramahansa himself. Swami Vivekananda, the foremost member of that Mission,

expressed himself with equal confidence on religious, social or other questions, thus showing the catholicism of the Mission. Swami Vivekananda would always remain to them as an energetic and an earnest teacher who impressed people even against their own will and compelled them to reflect their inner self on others. In conclusion, the Chairman said that both Sri Swami Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Paramahansa were watching over their proceedings and sympathising with their efforts to lead a better and higher life and that they would do everything they could to impress their spirits on them in their efforts for self-improvement.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA ADVAITA ASHRAMA, Benares.

The hall of the Ashrama was tastefully decorated with garlands, festoons and ferns. A picture of the Swami in standing posture was beautifully placed in a floral frame on a raised platform which was gracefully embellished with flowers, vases and garlands. The principal feature of the day was the feeding of the poor. Over a thousand beggars were sumptuously fed from 2 to 4 p. m. Nearly seven hundred gentlemen attended the public meeting which was opened with a song in praise of Swamiji. Then Srijut Kaliprasanna Chattopadhyaya, late Editor of the "Amrita Bazar Patrika," addressed the audience for full one hour in his elegant and stirring Hindi, on the Life and Teachings of Swamiji, and kept the audience spell-bound, so much so that many were moved to tears. Then Srijut Aghore Chandra Chakravarti, the famous musician, entertained the audience with his charming songs, accompanied with instrumental music for nearly an hour. The ceremony was closed with the distribution of *prasad*. The following is a summary of the above speech:—

Brethren,

In order to understand the life and teachings of a *Mahapurusha* like Swami Vivekananda, it is necessary for us who are steeped in worldly matters to attune our minds to the pitch of harmony which rings in his soul. It is impossible to touch upon all the multiform aspects of his life in the course of a single lecture. I shall therefore confine myself to only three main lines of his life-work, viz., his purely patriotic work, his religious work and his social work. It may be noted here, that these three currents of work, though separate, ran side by side and combined in a holy confluence in him. His manifold activities should make him entitled to everlasting gratitude at the hands of his countrymen. He it was who for the first time brought home to the hearts of the people in different parts of India, that they were one people.

Madras, Bombay, Bengal, Rajsthan, Punjab, all were tied together, as it were, with the common string of his love. He was a Bengali, but it was Madras that sent him on his mission to America. The Raja of Kshetri and the Raja of Ramnad were his devoted disciples and the Maharajas of Mysore and Kashmir as well as the Maharaja Dev Samsar Jung of Nepal were his Bhaktas. In the Punjab, I remember what a flood-tide of enthusiasm there was when he visited that province. He it was who made the Indians realise for the first time, that they were the inheritors of spiritual treasures, which were to shed beneficence on the West, that they were not sheep, as they had come to regard themselves, but really cubs of lions. Thus he roused India religiously, socially, and in all other directions.

Dealing with Vivekananda as a patriot, the eloquent speaker quoted some of the Swamiji's inspiring utterances as recorded by his beloved disciple, the Sister Nivedita, to show how deep was his love for his country and how great was his faith in her future. "For my own part," the Swami used to say, "I will be incarnated two hundred times if that be necessary to do service to my people by the work I have undertaken." Continuing the speaker said: Oh! how vast was his heart! Once he cried, "I would go to hell forever, if by that I could really help a human being." Such was his love for humanity, and one can conceive what his love was for his country. I shall not multiply such quotations, illustrating his love of the motherland. I would conclude by giving his ideal of our country's future. "It never occurred to him" writes Sister Nivedita, "that his own people were in any respect less than those of any other nation whatsoever, being well aware that religion was their national expression. He was also aware that the strength they might display in that sphere would be followed before long, by every other conceivable form of strength." A very deep thing this! That strength in one direction may be transmuted into strength in every other conceivable form, is a truism of science. But how very few understand it! There are, for example, heat, light and electricity, different manifestations of force, but they are really one and inter-convertible. Similarly if we go through a *Sadhan* whole-heartedly, the power thus acquired may be transmuted into any other power if required. Even if you can stick to your determination to give a glass of water to the thirsty on hot noons for six months, in spite of all obstacles and disinclinations, you will find in the end that you have by this apparently trivial *Sadhan* acquired the great spiritual virtues of steadfastness, perseverance, spirit of charity, feeling for sufferers and so forth. Is it not a fact that *Fakiri* and *Badshahi* are the obverse and reverse of the same coin? A true

Badshah can only be a true *Fakir*, and a true *Fakir* a true *Badshah*. Let us then realise this great truth preached to us by the Swami, and by single-minded *Sadhan* acquire the capacity for the display of every other conceivable form of strength. In going to serve our country we are appalled by the magnitude of the task and the multiplicity of the needs of reform before us. But let the words of the Swami give us courage and hope.

I now pass on to dwell on Swamiji's religious work. He stood not as an original teacher or founder of a new religion, but an interpreter. He never claimed to put any new doctrine or system of worship or *Sadhan* before the world. His mission was, he said, to demonstrate the harmony of the Vedas, the Vedanta, the six systems of Philosophy, the Puranas and all the other elements which go to make up the whole of the *Sanatan Dharma*. No teacher so lucidly, so vividly and so rationally brought out the spirit of harmony that runs through the apparent diversity of the Hindu Scriptures. In the West, he preached pure Vedanta and the Upanishads, and to his European disciples he showed how these transcendental teachings were not really at variance with popular Hinduism, but that they also harmonised with all other 'isms.' He showed how the different creeds were merely the different paths leading to the same goal, or as he said, "The various fragrant flowers forming a garland." To realise the extent of his sacrifice for us, we must bear in mind that he was a *Sannyasin*, that his was the *Sannyasin's* soul, the true *Sakshi* (witness). Imagine how he must have suffered in coming down from his high *Sannyasin* ideals of living in the contemplation of the Paramatman, into the turmoils of the world, so that becoming one of us, as it were, he might show us how to live the practical Vedanta in everyday life.

As the lecturer could not finish his subject for want of time, it was arranged at the earnest request of his hearers to hold two other meetings at the same place on 21st. and 28th. January, when the same gentleman delivered two other lectures in Hindi on 'Swamiji as a devotee,' and 'Swamiji as a social reformer,' before a large audience.

AT BANGALORE

Sunday the Jan. 14 saw the depressed and the downtrodden, the high and the low, the rich and the poor join together in paying a respectful homage to that great master of the new era in India, Swami Vivekananda. The morning began with a procession of the Swami's picture through some of the City streets to the Ramakrishna Ashrama situated in Bull Temple Road, accompanied by Bhajana etc. In the afternoon there was a Harikatha performance, and towards evening larger number of people came in. As a respected

gentleman of the place remarked when he came in, 'we are all one,' this particular spirit of unity that the great Swami preached has been the chief welding force in India at the present day. Mr. K. P. Puttanna Chettiar presided over the evening functions. The Shamiana put up for the occasion was full to overflowing, and by about 5-45 p. m. Mr. K. H. Ramiah B. A., the indefatigable Secretary of the Vokkaligara Sangha addressed the audience in Kanarese in his usual effective manner. Then followed a long address in Kanarese by Mr. M. A. Tirumalachar, retired Assistant Commissioner, and another in English by Mr. Varada Raja Iyengar, retired Sub-judge. Mr. Puttanna Chettiar delivered a short but sweet concluding address. He began by saying that they were all met there that day to adore the life of their Guru, Swami Vivekananda, on his fiftieth birthday. Swami Vivekananda was an ideal. What was the life, the mission of that great man? His friend the previous speaker had said that the Swami Vivekananda's mother was a very pious lady, and that she prayed before Vishveshwara that she might have a God-like son. Swami Vivekananda was Vishveshwara Himself incarnated in this world. He was highly spiritual and an ardent advocate of the Hindu religion. He astonished the whole world when in America he proclaimed the Universality of the Hindu religion before the most cultured gentlemen in the Parliament of Religions. Till then the Hindus were considered worshippers of stones and trees, mere idolators, steeped in barbarism. The Westerners had merely a garbled idea of the Hindu religion as gleaned from the Missionaries. It was when Swami Vivekananda spoke face to face with the Westerners, that the superiority of the Hindu religion began to be acknowledged. Swami Vivekananda was the greatest of the Teachers in the 19th. or in this century. What was his great teaching? He showed to the world the fallacy of sects, clans, creeds or colours. Behind them all there was a uniform surface. Advaitism, Visishtadvaitism and Dvaitism were merely different expositions of the same truth. They all led to the same goal. Taking a physical example, the Sivaganga hill presented four different aspects looked at from the various directions, but nevertheless the hill was the same. Castes, creeds and colours must meet on the same platform. That day people of all castes and creeds had met to sing their praise of Swami Vivekananda who was a great unifying force. Vivekanandas, he said, are seldom born and the large audience bespoke the reverence for him. He hoped year after year people would muster strong to pay their reverence at the feet of the great Guru.

Mr. M. A. Narayana Iyengar, Registrar of Co-operative Societies in Mysore, thanked all the speakers and all those who had helped in any way to make the meeting a success that it was, on be-

half of Swami Nirmalananda. Then Prasada was distributed and the happy function came to a close with the benedictory 'Arathi.'

AT CUDDAPAH

The members and sympathisers of the Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Memorial Free Reading Room, celebrated the birthday of the Swami Vivekananda with great *eclat*, on the 14th. Jan., in the premises of the Local Theosophical Society, Bhaktalayam. The District Judge, M. R. Ry. Varanasi Subrahmanyam Pantulu Garu, B.A., B.L., presided on the occasion. The proceedings began with the feeding of the poor who numbered 230 persons.

The public meeting commenced at 5 p. m. An enlarged portrait of the Swamiji which was kindly lent by one of our friends, M. R. Ry. M. Balasundaram Mudaliar Avgl., Artist and Photographer, was placed side by side with that of Sri Krishna and decorated with garlands. The meeting was a great success, almost all the educated people of the town being present. The proceedings began with a prayer. M. R. Ry. Vavilacolalu Seshagiri Row B. A., a member of the Free Reading Room, read a paper on "Swami Vivekananda's Life and Teachings" which was much appreciated by all. He tried to remove many of the misconceptions which some of the Theosophists had in their minds regarding Swamiji's attitude to the Theosophical Society and Mrs. Besant. The meeting was brought to a close by an eloquent and thoughtful address by the President, who repeatedly drew attention to that letter of the Swamiji from Japan wherein he asked his countrymen to go out of their narrow holes and see how nations were marching on the vanguard of progress and civilisation. He laid stress on that aspect of Swamiji's life which had bearing on the social problems. He reminded them that every educated Indian was a trustee of the welfare of the masses because he was educated at the expense of the masses. He said that no society was healthy unless all its parts were healthy. He then referred to the importance of bringing into healthy coalition the best in the East and the West. He impressed strongly on the audience the great benefits that would be derived by foreign travel, social unification and by the recognition of caste by *merit* instead of caste by *birth*. He said that a strong and healthy public opinion should be formed and sustained, so that it might be of help in the conduct of our own affairs. The meeting dispersed at about 6-45 p. m.

The proceedings of the day were closed with a Bhajana in the premises of the Free Reading Room which lasted till 10 p. m. Photos of Sri Krishna,

Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Sister Niveditâ were arranged in a row and garlanded.

AT KAITY, OOTACAMUND

At the Mahatma Vivekananda Association the Puja was performed by the members. After the Bhajana Swamiji's photo was brought out in a procession, which went through all the streets of the town of Wellington. People of all castes and creeds joined the procession. Then Mr. Pannuswamy Pillay, in a lecture in Tamil, dwelt on the Life and Teachings of Swami Vivekananda very ably, pointing out the various ways in which Swamiji's life was noteworthy to-day. The Chairman, Brahmastri L. Sethu Iyer Avgl., Stationary Sub-Magistrate, spoke a few words in introducing the next lecturer, Moulana Moulvi Mohomed Abdul Huyee, B. A., a Moslem Missionary of Bombay. He spoke on the universal aspect of the Vedanta religion, and explained the life and teachings of Swamiji in an admirable manner, which won the attention of all those who were present. The public were so pleased with his lecture that they requested him to give another lecture which was arranged for, the next day in the same place. People of all sects, especially Mohammedans, attended the lecture. There were 500 persons present. Finally there was distribution of "Pansupari" and flowers.

AT YELLAMANCHILY

The birthday anniversary was celebrated on the 14th. and 15th. of January. In the evening of the 14th., there were Bhajana and procession. On the next day more than 200 poor people were fed and some 50 were clothed, and a meeting was held with Mr. N. Balaramadas Pantulu Garu B. A., B. L., as the President. Mr. S. Subbarao Garu and Mr. B. Venkatanarayana Naidu Garu spoke briefly on the life of the Swamiji and his teachings.

AT MANDHATA LODGE OF WALAWANAD

Under the auspices of the above branch of the Theosophical Society, was celebrated on the 14th. January the 50th. birthday anniversary of the Swami Vivekananda of blessed memory. The premises of the home of the Society were tastefully decorated. There was a large and enthusiastic gathering of many of the admirers of the Swami. The celebrations commenced with the feeding of the poor and the reading in Malayalam of a short account of the Swami's life. A short paper on "The Swami and His Mission" was read by one of the members of the Society. Prayers were offered to the Swami whose portrait was placed in a conspicuous place, and Sankirtans sung with music and its accompaniments, with great devotion. The distribution of Prasada, Chandan and Pansupari brought the celebrations to a satisfactory close.

Great enthusiasm prevailed throughout the day.

AT BANGALORE CANTONMENT

The Vivekananda Society celebrated the birthday anniversary at the premises of Chaturveda Siddhanta Sabah School, on 21st January. The programme observed was as follows: 1. Feeding the poor 11 a. m. to 3. p. m. 2. Bhajana and music 3 to 6 p. m. 3. Rathotsavam with Sankirtana, 6-30 p. m.

AT VANYAMBADY

The Swami Vivekananda Sankam observed the anniversary on the 28th. of January with the following programme: 1. Puja and Bhajana 6 to 8 p. m. 2. Feeding the poor 10-30 a. m. to 2 p. m. 3. Sankirtana Bhajana by the Ramakrishna School-boys 3 to 4 p. m. 4. Distribution of Prasada.

AT THE ARYABALA SAMAJ, Mysore

A number of pictures of Hindu Deities and a large photo of Swami Vivekananda, were adorned with wreaths of flowers. At 6-30 p. m. the celebration commenced. The Secretary in his speech on the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda observed that the Swami was an inspired personage, that in the course of 8 years he did more than anybody else to raise India to its present condition not only socially but also morally and materially, that he carried the torch of Vedanta to the remotest corners of the world, that he did in this short period of time more than what Mrs. Annie Besant and others have succeeded in doing, that his moral and material lessons have been awakening the Indians to a sense of their duty not only to themselves but also to the whole of the Indian community. He further observed that the teachings of the Swami had commenced to bear fruit and that they would before long scatter not only peace but prosperity all over the land. The Chairman, Mr. A. G. Swami, explained what the Secretary had said about the life and work of Swamiji and pointed out how in depth of learning, sanctity of life, profundity of wisdom, and colossal intellectuality, he bore a close resemblance to Bhagavan Bhashyakara Sri Sankaracharya, Ramanujacharya and Madhvacharya. He dwelt upon the profound wisdom of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the Guru of Swami Vivekananda, and stated that these two eminent Yogis might be regarded as the practical expounders of Vedanta as applied to the affairs of this world in modern times. He said that the celebrations of the lives of such holy men had the effect of making their own lives sublime. He told the audience that the works of the Swami Vivekananda were replete with doctrines, which if read and reduced to practice, would raise India to a footing of equality with the most enlightened and favoured

nations of the world and he advised the members of the Samaj to follow the ideals of the Swami to the best of their abilities. With the performance of Mangalarathi the meeting was brought to a close.

AT VIJAYAPURA, Tanjore Dt.

The birthday anniversary of Sri Swami Vivekananda was for the first time celebrated on the 11th. February at the residence of Mr. K. R. Krishnamurthi. The premises were beautifully decorated and a photograph of the Swamiji in meditation posture was placed under that of His Guru Sri Ramakrishna in the centre of the pavilion for worship. At 10 a. m. the Puja commenced with Vedic Brahmans chanting the Vedas, and a Bhajana party performing the Bhajana. When the Arathi was over the Vedic Brahmans including all present were sumptuously fed. The deserving poor were also fed with Prasada. After an entertainment of playing the Naga-suram the meeting began at 5-30 p. m. with Mr. C. V. Krishnaswamy Aiyar, Dt. Munsiff as President. A Hymn on the Swamiji in Sanskrit was read by Mr. Narayana Vajappaiyar the senior Pundit of the L. B. H. School, and its translations in Tamil and English were read by Mr. K. R. Krishnamurthi, the Sanitary Inspector, who has been disseminating, in his humble way, Vedanta philosophy in his native district. Mr. Visvanathaiyar, the Sub-registrar, exhorted the audience to be practical and steadfast in all things pertaining to their duties. Mr. Palayavallam K. Subbaiyar, a great Sanskrit scholar, dilated on the evils that continued to exist in the Hindu society but were losing strength day by day. He earnestly spoke on the need of raising the condition of the masses, and called upon the learned, the higher officials and the richer classes to come forward and really feel for their downtrodden brothers. M. R. Ry. Seyanur Ramaswamy Sastriar Avgl. of Ramayana and Bhagavata fame, profoundly impressed the audience by his lecture on Bhakti, and added that he had come to appreciate the greatness of Swamiji through hearing his lectures read to him by Mr. Krishnamurthi. Lastly the President dwelt in brief on the true significance of the life of Swamiji and that of his Jivanmukta Guru, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva. He emphasised much the need of *practicality* and unity among ourselves which could only be achieved by everyone really feeling that another's suffering, poverty, health and interests were his also. He also dwelt much on the need of raising our masses, and on the education of our women on national lines. Mr. Krishnamurthi then proposed that a special meeting might be convened to formulate plans of action for the welfare of the masses. The meeting terminated with Mangalarathi and distribution of Prasada.

AT THE RAMAKRISHNA SOCIETY, Rangoon

The Janma Tithi of the Swami Vivekananda passed off with Puja and a devotional service on the 11th. of January. The celebration of the event on the following Sunday (14th.) was one of the grandest the Indian public of Rangoon had had for many years past. From morning to evening the premises of the Hindu Social Club were the scene of unprecedented attractions and the hall was completely full with sympathetic visitors and enthusiastic members. The plantain trees and mango-leaf festoons greeted the spectators at the gateway and beautiful ferns and evergreens adorned the walls of the hall. Acharya Vivekananda's portrait looked charming in the midst of a bower of banana plants and sweet-smelling flowers and garlands. The walls were studded with photos of the co-workers of the Swami. The intense fervour of the assembled Bhaktas proved how the Swamiji was held dear in every heart. The Puja ceremony was performed with great solemnity and devotion, and was followed by soft and sweet melodies of two Madrased Sankirtan parties. Two Bengalee Bhajan parties, who arrived a little later, were characterised by their marked fervour and intense devotion. For over three hours the Bhajan lasted, and the guests were served with Chandan, Tambul and sweets. Meantime rice was distributed to the poor. The morning service ended with an admirable recitation, by two young children of one of the members, of certain inspired hymns of the great South-Indian Sage, Sri Ramalinga Swami.

The programme for the evening commenced with playing some mellifluous airs on a harmonium and entertaining the audience with select Gramophone records suitable to the occasion. At 4-20 p. m. Mr. Siva Arunagiri Moodaliar, in his simple and lucid speech in Tamil explained most convincingly that all religions led to the same goal. Mr. Moodaliar was profuse in his quotations from the Upanishads. The Secretary then read his essay on the Life of the Swami Vivekananda in which he dwelt chiefly on the landmarks of his life and the essence of his work. His statement that Vivekananda's relation to the Paramahansa was identical with that of Arjuna to Sri Krishna was most apt and was well appreciated by the President, Mr. D. N. Palit M. A., B. L., and the audience. The object of the Ramakrishna Mission—an extract from a leaflet published by the Swami Brahmananda—was printed and freely distributed. The appeal made by the President of the Ramakrishna Mission for funds to perpetuate the name of the Swamiji by completing the Memorial Temple in the grounds of the Belur Math, was read aloud to the people assembled and they were especially requested to contribute any sum for it. Some 150 copies of this address were typed and distributed.

Flowers, Pansupari and sugar-candy were distributed before the audience dispersed.

It was a source of sincere gratification to the members of the Ramakrishna Society, Rangoon, that the name of the Swami Vivekananda worked like a charm on the hitherto indifferent Hindu residents of Rangoon, and that their feeble efforts had been crowned with success surpassing their most hopeful expectations.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA VEDANTA SOCIETY

The members of the above Society celebrated Swamiji's Fiftieth Birthday Anniversary at the Chikitsak Samuha School, Girgaon, Bombay, with a varied programme which included the following items, beginning with a song in Canarese:—

(1). Recitation from the Vedas and Rudrabhisheka by Vaidiks from 8 to 10 a. m. (2). Distribution of rice and pice to the poor who numbered about a thousand, from 9 to 10-30 a. m. (3). Pooja ceremony from 10-45 to 11-45 a. m.

(4). The meeting of the members and admirers from 4 p. m. to 6 p. m. presided over by Mr. Anandrao R. Dhume, the Retired Mamlatdar of Baroda, and an ardent admirer of the Swami. He dealt specially on the urgent necessity of having a permanent society on a sound basis, and entreated the audience to subscribe to his proposition. A life-sketch of the revered Sage was read by Mr. N. A. Kamath. Mr. M. P. Kini who followed, read two papers. The one was from the pen of Mr. R. B. Kamath from Rutlam, on co-operation, in which he lucidly pointed out the tremendous power of co-operation, and urged the same of friends and enemies for the sake of good acts, by the illustration of the "Samudra Manthana," where Amrita was obtained by the mutual co-operation of Devas and Asuras. Mr. H. Deva Row, the President of the Society, spoke on the practice of unselfishness, which was the only true inspiration of success, and called for co-operation of the hearers to make the newly-started Society a success. Many enlisted themselves as workers. The Mangala song on Swami Vivekananda was sung by Mr. Sheshagiri M. Kamath who composed the same specially for the occasion. The meeting then dispersed after the distribution of Prasada.

(5). Evening Pooja ceremony with prayers. (6). From 9-45 till 11 p. m. the assembled people sang Bhajanam. The occasion came to a close with loud shouts of Jai Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva, and Jai Swami Vivekananda.

AT DACCA

The Janmatithi day, Jan. 11, was celebrated with especial Puja, Bhoga and Kirtana. Many people, young and old, were present on the occasion, and were entertained with Prasada.

During the public celebration day, Jan. 14, the poor were given alms in the morning, and in the afternoon the members and sympathisers of the local Ramakrishna Mission assembled in the residence of the late Babu Mohini Mohan Das, to do homage to the memory of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, whose portraits were placed on a dais beautifully decorated with flowers and garlands. After the singing of songs and chanting of Sri Ramakrishna Stotras, a short life-sketch of Swamiji was read, and then Kirtana was continued for a long time. The ceremony was concluded with the distribution of Prasada.

AT THE VIVEKANANDA SOCIETY, Calcutta.

The members celebrated the anniversary at the Belur Math. Hundreds were fed on a sumptuous scale before the meeting took place. A specially composed song was well rendered by Babu Pulin Behari Mitter. The meeting was presided over by Swami Turiyananda. A nice picture of Vivekananda with extracts from his sayings was distributed in the meeting. A life-size portrait of the Swami was nicely decorated with garlands and flowers etc.

Dr. J. N. Ghosal first read out a short report of the Vivekananda Samiti. Pandit Amulya Chandra Vidyabhusan read a paper in Bengalee. He said that Swami Vivekananda did as much good work in the present day as Sankaracharya did in the past. Another gentleman read an essay in English on "Swami Vivekananda and the youth of Bengal." Babu Sarat Chandra Chakravarti read a paper in Bengalee explaining the character and work of the Vivekananda Samiti. Mr. F. J. Alexander read a paper on his experiences in Hinduism, which is reproduced elsewhere. The speaker was heard with great attention. The singing of another song and a vote of thanks to the chair brought the proceedings to a close. After the meeting there was a Ramkirtan.

AT KANKHAL

The Anniversary passed off most satisfactorily at the Ramakrishna Sevashrama. The whole Ashrama was very tastefully decorated. Some of the Swamiji's disciples and admirers joined the ceremony from Dehra Dun. More than 700 poor people of all castes and creeds, among whom were many famine-stricken people from Bikaner State who had flocked to Hardwar, were excellently fed.

AT SEREMBAN

The members and sympathisers of the Vivekananda Students' Hall celebrated the birthday festival in a fitting way. On the evening of the 13th. Jan. the members performed the Puja ceremony in the Temple, and on the 14th. there were Bhajana

from 2 to 4 p. m., a social gathering from 4 to 6 p. m. and a meeting in the Hall at 7 p. m.

AT KUALA LUMPUR

The 50th. birthday anniversary of Swamiji was celebrated by the members, friends and admirers at the Vivekananda Reading Hall, Kuala Lumpur, Federated Malay States, on 14th. Jan., with great success. There were a garden party from 3-30 to 5 p. m., music 5-30 to 7 p. m., and subsequently, a lecture on Swamiji's Life and Teachings (in Tamil). A pamphlet containing the sayings of Swami Vivekananda and a letter on "Hinduism in America" by the President of the Scientific Section of the Parliament of Religions, Chicago, was freely distributed on the occasion.

AT OTHER CENTRES OF THE R. K. MISSION

The 50th. birthday anniversary was also observed with religious fervour and devotion at the Ramakrishna Orphanage, Murshidabad; at the Math, Allahabad; at the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati; at Habiganj; at the Vivekananda Society, Colombo; and at various other centres, associations, Vivekananda Societies and Vedanta Societies of the Ramakrishna Mission in India and abroad.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

What the people of Bangalore or for the matter of that the whole of India, so lustily celebrated last Sunday, was an inspiration, an inspiration that the great soul of Swami Vivekananda instils in the hearts of one and all of his countrymen. Though the period of his existence in this earthly tabernacle was very short, he is a mine of knowledge for the exploitations of generations to come. Man is born to progress and also to achieve something. The best service one could do for himself is by serving others. The imprint of God is as much in the meanest person in the street, as in the highest and the mightiest. All these humanitarian ideas were physically embodied in the Swami. Added to those was his unbounded faith in the destiny of India. India was the possessor of the greatest of religions,—the Hindu religion, and was the most cultured, and advanced. His heart bled at the degradation of his country and countrymen and how he put himself to physical

torture to show up his aliveness to the miseries of his countrymen is current history. Steeped in all the rationalistic ideas of the day, fully imbibing the selflessness preached in the Gita, and renouncing his whole life at the altar of service for the country, Swami Vivekananda stands out as a valiant patriot championing India and her religion, and proclaiming to the whole world the possibility of a universal brotherhood through the catholic and all-embracing Hindu religion. The bewitching personality, the commanding eloquence, and the sturdy optimism of the great Swamiji stand out in conspicuous relief. The charm of his name has focussed unto him not merely the whole of India, but the universe too. To what extent one great soul can be the saviour and exalter of one's country is more than illustrated in him. He was a reformer as much social as religious and economical; social tyranny or the tyranny of the rich over the poor, came equally under his lash. The constant bringing into memory of such a great man, is indeed very healthy, and the unification of all in so doing augurs a bright future. But in honouring such a great man there is one great danger to which the less endowed are subjected. In the attraction by the powerful magnet, the lesser beings might completely lose their individualities. Mere slavish approbation, producing nothing but frothy eloquence, and evanescent enthusiasm after all prove to be the residuum. In order rightly to commemorate the life of such a great man we must enter into his spirit fully, and elevate ourselves from our own poor standard. Into our lives we must try and breathe his sentiments of love and patriotism. When the great Swamiji said, 'Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached,' he inspires his brother Indians to the great task before them and the greater future to be realised. A Chinese savant says, 'A sage is the instructor of a hundred ages. When the manners of Loo (to our purposes Swami Vivekananda) were heard of, the stupid became intelligent, and the wavering determined.' The exemplification of our being imbued with such an inspiration in our practical everyday life is the best method of consecrating and glorifying the great Swami, and the annual function is only an external visible manifestation of that undying fire that is burning within.

—The Mysore Times, Jan. 20, 1912.

SRIMAD-VIVEKANANDA-PANCHAKAM

अनित्यदृश्येषु विविच्य नित्यम्
तस्मिन् समाश्रित इह स्म लीलया ।
विवेकवैराग्यविशुद्धचित्तम्
योऽसौ विवेकी तमहं नमामि ॥१॥

1. To him who sifting out the Eternal from the transitory phenomena of this world, made it his sport to concentrate thereon his mind, purified by discrimination and renunciation,—to that discriminating soul I salute.

विवेकज्ञानन्दनिमग्नचित्तम्
विवेकदानैकविनोदशीलम् ।
विवेकभासा कमनीयकान्तिम्
विवेकिनं तं सततं नमामि ॥२॥

ऋतञ्च विज्ञानमधिभ्रयत् यत्
निरन्तरं च्छुदिमध्यान्तहीनम् ।
सुखं सुरूपं प्रकरोति यस्य
आनन्दमूर्त्तिं तमहं नमामि ॥३॥

सूर्यो यथान्धं हि तमो निहन्ति
विष्णुर्यथा दुष्टजनान् छिनत्ति ।
तथैव यस्याखिलनेत्रलोभम्
रूपं त्रितापं विमुखीकरोति ॥४॥

तं देशिकेन्द्रं परमं पवित्रम्
विश्वस्य पालं मधुरं यतीन्द्रम् ।
हिताय नृणां नरमूर्त्तिमन्तम्
“विवेक-आनन्द” महं नमामि ॥५॥

नमः श्रीयतिराजाय विवेकानन्दसूरये ।
सच्चित्सुखस्वरूपाय स्वामिने तापहारिणे ॥*

* This Stotram was composed by Swami Ramakrishna-
nanda on Jan. 28, 1911, to be chanted before Swami
Vivekananda during his birthday ceremony the next day.

2. To him whose mind was immersed in the bliss that comes of discrimination, whose nature delighted solely in kindling discrimination (in others), and whose grace was made winsome by the glow of discrimination,—to that discriminating soul my salutations ever go.

3. To him whose graceful form truth and knowledge made their abode, and which imparts a joy incessant, without beginning or end,—to that embodiment of bliss I salute.

4. Verily as the sun dispels the blinding darkness, as the Lord Vishnu destroys the wicked ones,—in exactly a like manner, whose handsome appearance, the cynosure of all eyes, drives away the threefold misery of life,—

5. To that teacher of teachers, supremely pure, the guardian of the world, the lovable, the prince of Yogins, who took up the human form for the good of mankind—to that Vivekananda I prostrate myself.

Salutation to that king of renouncers and controllers of passions, the sage, Vivekananda, who was of the essence of *Sachchidananda*, the spiritual preceptor, the remover of distress !

GIRISH CHANDRA GHOSE : IN MEMORIAM

THE Angel of Death has been with us again. This time it is Girish Chandra Ghose, the famous Bengali dramatist and the founder of the Bengali Stage and one of the foremost members of the Ramakrishna Mission who has been called away. The event took place, after a protracted illness of asthma, on Friday, February the ninth, in the early hours of the morning. No words can tell what loss this means both to the province and to the peoples of Bengal and, particularly, to the Brotherhood of monks and householders who, together with him, have sat at the Feet of Sri Ramakrishna.

The great consolation, however, is that the Lord has taken him after a life of greatest service to his fellow-men, and that he had already given to the world in one life-time more than can be expected of a genius of his high order. He is known best as the composer of some eighty or more dramas and as the unique member among the disciples of the Master. For Girish Babu was a man of fashion and a man of the world when he met Sri Ramakrishna. He was known and counted among

the “great men” of Calcutta and, withal, he was a man of a romantic and free temperament whose very life was characteristically a fine human drama. He came from a wealthy Kayastha family and spent his youth in that self-education which a joyous familiarity with life in all its phases inevitably brings. He was a man of infinitely varied experience and the character of his experience he has unconsciously immortalised in the personalities and meaning of his wide range of dramas that touch and describe life at all angles. They reveal him, what he was, a marvellous student of human nature and one whose insight into human life from its lowest to its most exalted phases was nothing short of “miraculous.” For this reason Bengal has called him, and most deservedly so, “The Shakespeare of Bengali literature.” He was also known, and rightly so, as “The Garrick of the Bengali stage.”

He could with a sameness of subtlety paint the realisation of Buddha and the wickedness of the abandoned profligate. By far the most wonder-

ful of all his works are those dramas that make human and vivid and real the sublime mythological characters of the epics and the Puranas. He made the various historic eras of Hinduism thrill with life and reality. In his "Sankaracharya" one saw the age of that man rise up and become peopled with all the interest and the meaning and the power and the events of the life of that celebrated revivalist of Hinduism and its most glorious philosopher. Or he would throw a great luminousness on the whole meaning of Hindu traditions and customs and ideals in a drama of the type of "The glory of the Pandavas." The whole organisations of his plots are those of a master-mind; they reveal the penetrating genius of which he was possessed. So powerful and realistic were some of the passages and parts of his drama, "The Career of Chaitanya," that Sri Ramakrishna himself was translated into ecstasy and wept for joy and pain alternately. And it was after he had visited the theatre of his great disciple, that the Master remarked that if others were possessed of wonderful intelligence, the intelligence of Girish was one hundred and fifty in the per cent., meaning thereby that he eclipsed all.

And yet Girish Babu whom the Bengali-speaking world knew as its most famous dramatist was also a man of silent spirituality and a friend of the poor. Numerous are the instances when he relieved, as it was in his power, the miseries of the afflicted and the poor. He was always ready with his generosity and he was looked upon as an adviser in difficulty. He was regarded as the head of the district community among whom he resided and his house was always open, day and night, to those who sought his company. In this he was a man of easiest approach. And the conversation was always of a thrilling character. Either it was his own experience which he would narrate or some episode in the life of the Master, to whom he was so dear. The Brothers of the Mission revered him as a man with something bordering on super-human faith. The story is told of him that when Sri Ramakrishna said to him, that all he needed to do was to repeat his (Sri Ramakrishna's) name but twice a day to be spiritually saved, he replied, "I am a man of the world, Sire. How can I assure myself that I will remember to take your name even twice a day." Then said Sri Ramakrishna, "Take it but once a day, and all shall be well with you." And then—the sincerity of the man—the disciple answered, "Sire, I do not know if I can even do that much. For this world makes one easily forget." "Well, then," said Sri Ramakrishna, "you need do nothing. I shall take care of you. Just give yourself over to me entirely." "That I most willingly do," answered Girish Babu.

His life has been the proof that Sri Ramakrishna

had taken over the soul of Girish Babu, for so did events build themselves about him that he was made one of the great spiritual men of this age. And in his old age Girish Babu had become transfigured into the sage and words of spiritual wisdom fell from his lips constantly. And, though, when Sri Ramakrishna requested him, he could not be sure that he could remember to take his name even as much as once a day, all along in his later years Girish Babu took day after day, and numerous times each day, the name of the Lord Sri Ramakrishna. And a wonderful resignation and sweetness hovered about him and one would hear him say such beautiful things, as "There is mercy in what He gives and there is mercy in what He denies." The very room in which he sat, day after day, was charged with a spiritual atmosphere.

Many and eloquent have been the tributes which Girish Babu has received both from the public, at large, and from the representative men of his time, but probably no other tribute was as worthy or as true of him as that he received from the Swami Vivekananda who said, "I consider Girish Babu the greatest dramatist in the world and his drama 'Bilvamangal' is the finest I have ever read."

Touching and eloquent in its reverent silence was the tribute the city of Calcutta and the people of Bengal paid to the deceased playwright when his remains were carried to the burning-ghat. Some of the most noted leaders in the political, literary and social world came to pay their final respects to the man whom they had learned to love personally and to respect as a great public man.

Now he is with the Lord and—he rests in peace!

GIRISH CHANDRA GHOSE.

(In Loving Memory)

Peace! Peace! Holy Peace!
 The Holy Peace of the Lord hath come!
 For one of His Greater Devotees,
 Lo! It hath silenced all the noise of life.
 Love! Love! Infinite Love!
 The Infinite Love of the Lord hath come!
 It hath taken one of His Devotees
 From out the strife of life within its folds.
 From mortality to immortality he hath gone;
 Through death to Utter Deathlessness:
 Casting off the garments of the flesh
 He hath entered the Presence of the Lord.
 And all the Strength of Him that was his Prayer
 Hath soared into Realisation's Flight:
 And Bliss and Blessedness are his,
 And Perfect Calm, and Perfect, Perfect Peace!

F. J. A.

NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

(CULLED AND CONDENSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

THE members of the Sri Sadhu Ratna Vedanta Sabha of Madras presented a welcome address to Swami Sarvananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Madras, at the premises of the Sarasvat Balika Pathshala on Jan. 28, and thanked him for his having become the patron of the Sabha.

MADAME Alexandra David Neel, a learned French lady, who comes with a letter of introduction from Lord Crewe, Secretary of State for India, is in Calcutta, and recently paid a visit to the Sanskrit College, Calcutta, and held discussions on Vedanta Philosophy with the Pandits there. She has been sent by the French Minister of Public Instruction to study Vedanta Philosophy in India. Madame Neel is a Professor of the University of Brussels.

THE following was one of the resolutions passed by the Hindu Students residing at Seattle at a meeting held by them on the 9th. Dec. last at the United India House, 45 14. 8th Ave. N.E. U.S.A. :—
“Be it resolved that in the untimely departure of Sister Nivedita, Miss Margaret Noble, India has lost a great worker in the cause of her progress. We the Indian students mourn deeply this great loss and pray for her noble soul.”

A correspondent writes :—The Ramakrishna Mission sent a band of young men to look after the comforts and conveniences of the innumerable pilgrims to Gangasagore, mainly consisting of old helpless widows and illiterate people. A gentleman had paid Rs. 300 and medicines worth Rs. 70 for the purpose. The party consisted of an M. B. and a number of workers. The manager of Messrs. Macneil and Co., allowed free passage to twenty-two persons. From beginning to end they proved a great source of comfort and convenience to the pilgrims. They saved two old ladies from being drowned, saved several lives from attacks of cholera, cremated several dead bodies, sought out some three hundred bewildered pilgrims and restored them to their respective parties. Babu Kumudbandhu Gupta, Subdivisional Officer of Diamond Harbour and his police staff co-operated heartily with the volunteers.

THE study of Sanskrit has been prescribed by the late Swami Vivekananda as the only means of uplifting the lower classes. He was never tired of saying that the Caste problem and the problem of the regeneration of India could be solved only by making all classes, participators in the inher-

ance of Sanskrit learning and by a process of levelling up rather than of levelling down.

Some such spirit would seem to animate His Holiness the Jagad-Guru Sri Sankaracharya of Sringeri Mutt in opening the Indian Sanskrit Institute in Bangalore City. To those who watch the trend of events, the fact that, side by side with the opening of the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, an Institute for advanced Sanskrit learning should be started and that too by the Head of the Great Monastery founded by Sri Sankara, is full of happy augury for the future of Hinduism, and a guarantee that the working of the forces from the West will not result in our breaking away from the past and that while re-adjustments of our social arrangements may be necessary to suit modern requirements, the essential spirit of Hindu civilisation and ideals will not be lost.—*The Indian Social Reformer.*

The Indian Nation writes: “The birthday anniversary of the Swami Vivekananda came off on Sunday, the 14th. January. This was the 50th. anniversary of the great religious preacher of the 19th. century. At Belur thousands of the disciples and admirers of the late Swamiji thronged with hearts full of devotion and ardour. A large crowd of poor men collected there and were fed to their heart’s content. It was certainly a very interesting and impressive function. A visible expression of joy, mingled with a deep feeling of devotion, gleamed on every face. The memory of the great Sannyasi, who consecrated his life to humanity, is still cherished by his grateful countrymen. Similar celebrations are held in other provinces where the message of Vedanta, preached by him, has brought life to hundreds of dead souls. At Mylapore the Hon’ble Justice Sundara Iyer presided over a meeting; Benares too had a very enthusiastic meeting of her own. It is a very cheerful sign that the great Swamiji’s life is inspiring thousands of Hindus to devote their lives to acts of service and sacrifice. The Ramakrishna Sevashramas are very useful institutions, where the helpless and the sick find a peaceful shelter. A nation, which can produce men like Vivekananda, can still look forward to a future as glorious as its past. Who is so callous as not to feel a thrill of life when he finds men of character and education who have cheerfully foregone the sweets of family life and taken upon themselves the solemn duty of serving humanity? It vitalises one’s soul to visit the various Sevashramas where a band of hopeful and loving men are going on, every day and night, the round of duties uninviting and painful to most of us, with a smile on their face and the name of God and their great Guru on their lips.”

The Mahratta, in noticing the Semi-centennial Appeal for Swamiji's Memorial Temple, in its illustrated supplement of Jan 14, observes as follows:—

“Full fifty years will have to-day rolled by since the birth of Swami Vivekananda on 12th. January 1863, yet his memory is as fresh and green among the people as ever. Swami Vivekananda's achievements were in a sense meteoric, so suddenly and brilliantly did they shine. Within a life of 39 years the Swami did the grand work of re-establishing Hinduism on its pedestal of supremacy against the onsets of scientific materialism. The freedom of spirit and thought which he imbibed from his mother Shreemati Bhuvaneshwari Dutta, who passed away in last July in spiritual meditation, was set a-glow by the magic touch of his Master, Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Ramakrishna found in Narendra—that was Vivekananda's home name—the best material for spiritualisation, and converted the scepticism, bigotry and the atheism of Narendra into the intrepid freedom of thought and the sublimity of conception of the future Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda is the real father of Indian Nationalism. He wanted to develop a modern India—not the India “strutting about in the finery of the alien, ephemeral, materialistic ideals and civilisation, but she who stands in glory as Mother, the Mother of Religion.” He breathed about himself an atmosphere of the old Vedic days and upheld the national ideals of *renunciation* and *service*. He wanted the Indian to become “an occidental of occidentals in his spirit of equality, freedom, work, and energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts.” Every Indian is proud of this father of Modern India, yet how is his memory perpetuated? The following appeal will, therefore, speak for itself, and, we trust, will meet with cordial response from the people.”.....

THE undersigned, being desirous of helping deserving Indian students of both sexes to receive liberal and professional education in foreign countries, begs to offer six scholarships, tenable for 3 years, and invites applications for the same. The conditions for the award are as follows:—

I. The scholarships will be known as the “**Guru Govind Singh Sahib Educational Scholarships.**”

II. All properly qualified Indian ladies and gentlemen, without distinction of race, caste or creed, will be eligible for election to the scholarships.

III. Each scholarship will be tenable for 3 years, commencing August, 1912. *Note.* The period may be extended in the case of able and industrious scholars, who finish the three years' course

of study with marked success and credit:

IV. The scholarships will not be given in money. Each scholarship will include free board and lodging, all expenses for clothes, books, stationery, medicine, postage and other requisites of student life, all college fees, and a small amount of pocket money during a period of three years. *Note.* Medical students will pay their own college and laboratory fees, which amounts to about \$175 (Rs. 525) per annum.

V. All scholars will come from India to Berkeley (Cal.), U. S. A., at their own expense. Each scholar will receive third-class fare (second class in the case of ladies) for the return voyage to India on the successful completion of the three years' course of study.

VI. All scholars will reside at a hostel to be called the “Guru Nanak Deva Vidyarthi Ashram,” Berkeley (Cal.), and lead a simple and abstemious life. Scholars will not smoke or use alcoholic beverages.

VII. (a) Each scholar will study, at his or her choice, at least one of the following subjects at the University of California, Berkeley (Cal.)—History. Economics. English Literature. French Literature. German Literature. Spanish Literature. Japanese Literature. Civil, Mechanical or Mining Engineering. Commerce. Music. Medicine. (b) Each scholar will qualify himself or herself for one of the following degrees at the University:—

M. A., M. L., M. Sc., Ph. D., M. D.

VIII. A scholar, who is not diligent in study or who fails to maintain a good moral character, shall forfeit the scholarship and the return passage money.

IX. Candidates should supply information with regard to the following points in their applications:—Sex. Age. Religion. Caste. Married or Unmarried? Present Occupation. Qualifications. References. Subject or Subjects of Study (selected from the list given above).

X. All applications, with full testimonials and references, must reach Mrs. Bertha L. C. Pope, 2708 Virginia St., Berkeley, (Cal.), U. S. A., before May 15, 1912.

Sirdar Jawala Singh, Moorland, Cal., U. S. A.

Items of Information. Able graduates of Indian Universities can obtain the degree of Ph. D. after two years' study. Medical students, who have studied for 3 years at a medical college in India, can obtain the degree of M. D. after two or three years' study. Students, who have studied at a college of Engineering or Commerce in India for some time, also get credit for their previous work. Third-class fare from India to San Francisco via Hong-Kong or Yokohama is about Rs. 300. Second-class, Rs. 500. Copies of this prospectus can be obtained from the offices of the chief newspapers in India.