

Prabuddha Bharata

OR

Awakened India



उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.

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इच्छित जाग्रत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

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

—Swami Vivekananda.

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SRI RAMAKRISHNA'S TEACHINGS

ATMA-JNANA—XXV

THE Master (to Pratap Ch. Mazoomdar) : You are an educated and intelligent man, you are a deep thinker. Keshab and yourself were like the brothers Gour and Nitai. You have had enough of this world—enough of lectures, controversies, schisms and the rest. Do you still care for them? Now, it is high time for you to collect your scattered mind and turn towards God. Plunge into the Ocean of Divinity.

Mazoomdar : Yes, Revered Sir, that I ought to do; there is no doubt about it. But all this I do simply to preserve Keshab's name and reputation.

Sri Ramakrishna (smiling) : Let me tell you a story. A man built a cottage on a mountain-top. It cost him hard labour and much money. After a few days there arose a cyclone and the cottage began to rock to and fro. He was very anxious to save it, so he prayed to the Wind-god, saying : "Lord,

I beseech Thee, do not destroy this cottage"; but the Wind-god did not listen. He prayed again, but the cottage kept on rocking. Then he thought out a plan to save it. He remembered that according to the mythology, Hanuman was the son of the Wind-god. Instantly he cried out : "Lord, I beg of Thee, spare this cottage, for it belongs to Hanuman, Thy son." But the Wind-god did not listen. Then he said, "Lord, I pray Thee, spare this cottage, for it belongs to Hanuman's Lord, Rama." Still the Wind-god did not listen. Then, as the cottage began to topple over, the man, to save his life, ran out of it and began to swear, saying, "Let this miserable cottage go to destruction! What is that to me?"

You may now be anxious to preserve Keshab's name; but console yourself with the thought that it was after all owing to God's will that the religious movement connected with his name was set on foot, and that if the movement has had its day, it is also owing to that same Divine Will. Therefore dive deep into the Sea of Immortality.

OCCASIONAL NOTES

OUR thoughts reach out to those who have suffered by reason of the sinking of the "Titanic." Our prayers, likewise, are offered up, and those of our readers as well, and our sympathies are with all those in grief.

In some respects no catastrophe in modern times has ever been so terrible as was the recent wreck of the great steamship "Titanic." The number of human lives lost is appalling. The whole world has been touched. The conditions under which the accident occurred left no hope of escape to the thousand and several hundred persons who went down with the ship. They were caught like rats in a trap. An iceberg is the last danger of which one would have thought; and in this light it seems almost that it was fore-ordained. There was an ill omen even from the beginning, for as the steamer was leaving Southampton, the suction of the propeller was so strong that a collision with a near-by steamer seemed inevitable.

One turns from the more sombre aspects of the sinking of this largest of ocean liners and all the agony and anguish it entailed, to those deeds of heroism and silent self-sacrifice which were manifested and which revealed so much of the greatness and beauty and, verily, even the divinity of the human soul. They stand out as a Great Light in the darkness of it all. Across the moments of physical dread and terror one hears the notes and the song of "Nearer my God to Thee" played by the string-band and sung by those about to die just before the ship took the plunge beneath the surface of the sea. In these same moments one finds a great spirit of human love and fellowship and resignation and divine courage which makes the reader stand in reverent awe. Indeed, one would

almost be willing to join in such an atmosphere, for death is holy coming under the radiance of such a spirit as *śhis*. For those who have perished on the "Titanic" with their last thoughts fixed on God, death became liberation; it was the gateway of immortality. Over all the frightful crying-out of dying human life, over all the frightful noise which the ship must have made as it went below the waters and as the waters themselves hurried in with the furious noise of hurricane winds, over all this one hears those last notes, verily undying notes, the notes of "Nearer my God to Thee!"

It is with those last notes and with the Great Spirit upon Whom they called that we leave the large number of human souls which perished; and we know full well that they are with God! The scenes which took place as the lifeboats were lowered, were beyond all praise. There was no mad rush for life. A deep resignation came over all. Indeed upon some came an actual willingness to drown. This was particularly true of a large number of the women who refused to be separated from their husbands, preferring certain death in the dark, icy waters and to stand by their marriage vow, "until death us do part," to being saved and spending the remainder of their days as widows. This was a divine heroism showing the divinity and depth of human love. Such heroism is *Mukti*; such love, in itself, is salvation.

Millionaires are generally thought to be idle fellows, living lives of luxury, and most persons would never imagine that they could have the courage to stand aside in such an hour and help others to safety while they themselves faced certain death. The sinking of the "Titanic" happily proves otherwise.

It shows that beneath the breast of the wealthiest and beneath the breast of the poorest beats alike the same human heart, throbbing to greatness and sacrifice, whenever the occasion arises. And what was true of the passengers and crew of the "Titanic" would be equally true in the case of any other great emergency in which numerous lives are endangered. The sinking of the "Titanic" brings us face to face with the human heart, of the inner workings and greatness of which the highest philosophy is only a faint echo.

All honour to that gallant crew with its splendid Captain. They worked to the end and they worked through all the terrors of death and in glorious self-sacrifice into the very Presence of God. Bravely did Captain Smith meet his death, for even while in the icy waters he struggled in order that others might be saved. Indeed, just before he was washed off into the sea he megaphoned to the crowd to be *British*. That showed the Man in him. And such manliness points the way to divinity through the vision of the grandeur of human character. Many of those who could not be saved cried out to the women and children and the few men who were saved "Good luck and God bless you!" And then they sank beneath the waves. The wireless telegraph operators, most of them under thirty, and the mail crew of the vessel stood to their posts until the last. It was all wonderful; it was divinely wonderful. And from this point of view, this spiritual outlook, we say, "Blessed are those who have met the Immortality of death through the sinking of the "Titanic." They are free, Free, FREE, and they are with God, for as they were going into the Light of Immortality they indeed felt those last inspiring notes in their hearing and those last words upon their lips and those last soul-stirring thoughts within their minds,—

"Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!
E'en though it be a cross
That raiseth me:
Still all my song shall be
Nearer, my God, to Thee—
Nearer to Thee!

Though like the wanderer,
The sun goes down,
Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone;
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, &c.

There let the way appear
Steps unto heaven;
All that Thou send'st to me
In mercy given:
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, &c.

Then, with my waking thoughts,
Bright with Thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs,
Bethel I'll raise:
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, &c.

Or if on joyful wing
Cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot,
Upwards I fly:
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, &c.

In the sinking of the "Titanic" Mr. William T. Stead has perished. No Western name is more well-known in India than that of this distinguished journalist and publicist who was always the Friend of India and the champion of the cause of the Indian people. He was a true Karma Yogin, working for work's own sake, having ever in mind the Vision of the Ideal. He was a man of deep spiritual and public convictions, a man interested in the solution of each and every problem, the solving of which means the betterment of society as a whole. He was also one of the foremost advocates of Peace. His life was a light unto men and his reward is

Freedom, of the earthly and social aspects of which he was such an earnest and indefatigable champion. His character shines throughout his whole life and work. He helped to inject a sense of moral honesty and righteousness into English politics and journalism, and by his writings influenced the decision of statesmen, thereby becoming one of the makers of the history of the present time. He is also said to have influenced the will of the late Cecil Rhodes in the provision of the

“Cecil Rhodes Scholarships.”

Survivors say of him that, when they last saw Mr. Stead, he was awaiting death with a great philosophical resignation. He knew that all would be well with him. And for him, resignation has a foretaste of that Realisation into which he has entered. India is grateful to him. Humanity is better because of his having lived. He lived to a ripe age and his was a most useful life. We know that he is in the Blessedness of Peace.

IDEALS IN EDUCATION

WHAT is education in the light of the Vedanta philosophy? “Educare” the Latin verb from which the word, education, is derived, signifies “to draw out,” or “to draw forth.” This definition of the word is full of meaning. It immediately involves the idea that education is a process, not an end in itself. It is a *process* by which *something* is drawn out and made to shine forth. That *something* is the real individuality of man. To the Vedantist the real individuality of man is spiritual. This is the first ideal in education—a conception of the true individuality of man.

The second is—a nobler conception of education itself, resulting, necessarily, because of the first ideal. This consists in regarding education not as scholastic training, but as a *life-process* in which spiritual and true individuality is revealed. Education, in this sense, is a Process of Constant Becoming; in this sense it is utterly beyond the material standard of diplomas and degrees. It includes all knowledge, but its vision rises beyond the material and physical definitions of knowledge into the region of a true knowledge concerning one’s Self, concerning one’s own nature. In this light, education has no boundaries and is not bound by set rules and formulas. It is not a process of

mind, alone; it is the development of the *whole* individuality. And there are many, many, if not most, educational factors, outside and beyond the university curriculum, in this sense.

The third ideal is—a clear conception of what constitutes the main subjects of education. From the standpoint of the Vedanta, there are, there can be but two—Truth and Reality. These, likewise, are the subjects of material knowledge, but in a relation to external, physical phenomena only. Whereas, the relation these subjects of knowledge and education bear, in a Vedanta definition, might be formulated in a question of the following character, “What is Truth, what is Reality with regard to one’s Self? What is the Self of man?” This relation goes even beyond knowledge, asking, “What is That, knowing which all other things shall be known?” A monumental theme for knowledge and education! It is beyond university degrees and the ordinary understanding of education. It is beyond the pale of many lives. Yet, withal, it can be realised at any moment, when the subject of knowledge, the true and real Self of man, has arrived at that climax of spiritual insight when it *knows*, “The Subject and the Object of all knowledge are One and the Same—a Spiritual and Unit Reality!”

The fourth ideal is—a clear conception of the distinction that exists between mind-knowledge and the knowledge of consciousness. The one is open to doubt and readjustment; the other is a state of awareness, a state of conviction in *feeling*. The one is fixed in the realm of probability—for theories and even established laws are subject to the changes that occur in the wake of increasing discovery;—the other is fixed in the realm of changeless spiritual actuality. The one is busied with the definition of *matter*; the other is busied with the realisation of the spiritual foundation of consciousness. The one is physical, the other, spiritual. The one deals with the *discovery* of physical facts; the other deals with the *realisation* of spiritual realities. The one is subject to change; the other is established in the domain of infallible reality. The one deals with the revelation of parts, the other with the revelation of the Unit Whole.

The fifth ideal is—a clear conception of the uses of education. The ordinary education fits man for the world. It seeks a physical expression and centres about so-called practical affairs. The education which is a Process of Constant Becoming seeks an ideal expression, be it in art or in music, in poetry or in the religious life. It is impractical from the point of view of the practical world. It is possessed of visions and dreams. It has little concern with external phenomena, save as it can read into them symbolic meanings and symbolic representations for spiritual realities.

The sixth ideal is—a constant holding in mind of the vision of the revelation to which the spiritually-understood education leads, the expression of true spiritual individuality, when all limitations that constitute ignorance have been broken or transcended. Then the individual *knows* himself to be the very Subject, the very Self, of all those manifold objects of knowledge, whose relative beauty, goodness or truth he struggled to know and possess

through so many forms of relative education. He knows, also, that all these are, in the All-embracing Reality of the Self, summed up into One Vast Spiritual Whole. This is the Vision of God, the Revelation of True Individuality, the Revelation of the Soul—and in this transcendent knowledge and consciousness God and the Soul are One.

Such is the process and the end of true education. And all education is ultimately *spiritual*. So does the Vedanta teach.

AHAM BRAHMASMI

Who am I that should concern My Self
With the Shadow of the World or with its change!
Brahmâsmi! I am Brahman! I am Brahman!
There is no stain in me. Stainless am I.
Let the dreamer caught in Maya's trap
Dream of littleness and sin. I am Beyond,—
Brahmâsmi! I am Brahman! I am Brahman!
Without a form yet everywhere embodied
I am the Same Great Formless Self in all,—
Brahmâsmi! I am Brahman! I am Brahman!
Thought is not Mine and yet am I Omniscient.
All forms and thoughts I bend unto My Will;
In knowing Self all forms and thoughts are Mine,—
Brahmâsmi! I am Brahman! I am Brahman!
I blast the Darkness of the world
With strongest Shafts of Everlasting Light—
Brahmâsmi! I am Brahman! I am Brahman!
O'ertoppling life, o'ertoppling birth and death,
Deathless, birthless, without a name or form—
Brahmâsmi! I am Brahman! I am Brahman!
In vain may all the world hurl its mass at
My Being's timeless, thoughtless Self-sufficient Self.
Lifeless am I, yet swallowing all life,—
Brahmâsmi! I am Brahman! I am Brahman!
Who knows My Greatness! Who senses My Renown!
None knows, nor senses, for it is Beyond,—
Brahmâsmi! I am Brahman! I am Brahman!
Thought cannot touch that Everlasting Height
In which I dwell in and above the world,
For thought then Thoughtlessness should be,—
Brahmâsmi! I am Brahman! I am Brahman!

—The Monk Satyanarayan.

IN THE HOURS OF MEDITATION

III

A GAIN the hour is at hand. Day merges into the evening time. Everywhere without is quiet. Nature herself is at peace. And when nature is at peace, more peacefully does the soul retire into the inner chamber of the heart. More readily also. Let the senses and their activity subside. Life, as it is, is short; desire is rampant. Give at least some short time unto the Lord. He asketh little, only this, that thou shalt know thy Self; for, verily, knowing thy Self, thou comest to know Him. For God and the Soul are One. Some say, "Remember, O Man, that thou art dust!" True, of the body! Even of the mind is it true! But the higher, the mightier, the truer, the holier revelation reads, "Remember, O Man, that thou art the Soul!"

"Indestructible and imperishable art thou alone, O Soul!" So speaketh the Lord. All else wanes. However mighty the form, it perishes. Death and destruction are the lot of all form. Thought is subordinate to change. Personality is of the weaving of these—thought and form. Therefore, stand aside, O Soul. Remember thou art the Self beyond both thought and form. All virtue resides in this consciousness, "Thou art One with God." In this alone art thou immortal; in this alone art thou pure and holy.

Try not to *become* the master. Thou *art* the master! There is no becoming for thee. Thou *art*, O soul! However sublime may seem "the process of becoming," the hour shall come when thou shalt know, "Progress is in time" but "Perfection is within eternity." And thou art not of time. Thou art of eternity.

Is there divinity! Then, "Tat Tvam Asi!" meaning "Thou art That! Thou art That!" Understand that which is the Highest within thee. Worship the Highest! And the most

perfect form of worship is the knowledge that thou and the Highest are One. And what is the Highest? That, O Soul, thou callest God.

Throw all dreams into oblivion! Having heard of the Self within thee, the Self thou art, understand! Having understood, perceive! Having perceived, know! Having known, realise! Having realised, then—"Tat Tvam Asi!" which is "Thou art That!"

Retreat from the world! It is the embodiment of dreams. It, together with the body,—verily, these are the nests of dreams. Shalt thou be a dreamer! Shalt thou be bound forever in the bondage of dreams! "Arise! Awake, and stop not till the goal is reached!"

So speaketh the Lord in the silence—in the deep, deep Silence when only His Voice is Audible. Hari! Om Tat Sat! "Go thou in Peace!" Beyond all, aye, even within all appearance of form reigns the Spirit. Its nature is Peace, Peace, Unutterable Peace!

IV

The Voice of God, speaking, saith in the Quiet Hour, "Remember, ever remember, 'Only the pure in heart see God!' Purity is the first requisite. Even as they who are governed by desire are intense therein in their passions, even so be thou pure; even so, do thou have a passionate longing for purity! Search deeply and steadfastly for purity. It alone availeth. Call to thy mind that great prayer of My servant, Prahlada, unto Me, 'O Lord that same intensity of love that worldly people have for the fleeting objects of the senses, give to me that same intensity of love for Thee!' Purity is the antechamber to the Lord's Presence. Before thou thinkest of the Lord, think of purity. Purity is the key by which the doors of meditation that lead into the Abiding-Place of the Most High, are opened.

"Throw thyself upon the Ocean of My Strength. Strive not! Seek not! *Know* that I AM. This knowledge, added with complete

resignation unto My Will, shall save thee. Have thou no fears! Art thou not in Me! Am I not in thee! Know thou that all this passes, which men deem so great. Death is everywhere, swallowing up the forms of life. Death and change ensnare and bind all things—save the Spirit. Know this! Purity is the method of this knowledge. It is the foundation-ground. With purity come fearlessness, freedom and the realisation on thy part of thine own nature, the reality of which I AM.

“Let the tempest blow, but when desire burns and the mind vacillates—then, THEN call upon ME! I shall hear. For, as My servant hath said, I hear even the footfall of an ant. And I shall speed unto thee. I do not desert them who call upon Me sincerely. Call upon Me, not only sincerely, but steadfastly, as well.

“I am not the universe; I am the *Spirit* beyond it! The universe is as a carcase unto Me. I am concerned with the SOUL alone. Be not deceived by the external magnitude of things. Divinity is not in form, nor yet in thought. It is the purified, free, spiritual, blissful, form-emancipated, thought-emancipated consciousness which knows not, nor can know any stain or sin or bondage or limitation. Within the innermost that art thou, O Soul. Realisation shall come to thee with regard to this. It must. For such is the Sure Goal of the Soul's life. Remember, remember I am with thee! I am with thee! I, the Lord, am with thee! I am as Strength to all thy weakness; I am as Forgiveness to all thy sins; I am as Love to all thy search for thee! I am thy Self! I am thy Self! Put off all other thoughts of Self! For in the thought that thy Self is in any wise different from the Self of Me lies all ignorance and all weakness. Arise, thou Shining One, know that I am thy Self! I am thy Self!

“And purity is the pathway to My Presence! Herein is thy Salvation! Hari! Om Tat Sat!

“Peace! Peace! Peace!”

GLEANINGS

(Collected by Mr. Nandlal Ghosal)

Unanswered yet? Nay do not say ungranted;
Perhaps your work has not yet all been done;
That work began when your first prayer was uttered
And God will finish what He has begun!
If you will keep the incense burning there
His glory you shall see someday, somewhere.

—Nixon Waterman.

* * *
The only question God ever asks a man is
“Have you lived up to your Light?” And the
man's only answer is a smile or a sob.

—Suggestive Thoughts.

* * *
Believing the soul to be immortal and to possess
the power of entertaining all evil as well as all good
we should ever hold fast the upward road—and
devotedly cultivate justice combined with wisdom.

—Plato.

* * *
The world's a body and the Truth its soul,
The angels are its senses, they control
Its *limbs*—the creatures, elements and spheres—
All seem to be, One is the whole.

—Omar Khayyam.

* * *
The mystery of growth is one of the greatest in
the universe. We feed the plant, it grows. Give
the animal what it needs to eat and drink and it
thrives. Poison either of them through food or
drink and you dwarf it for ever. Give the soul
good, high and inspiring thoughts to feed upon and
it springs heavenward with mighty bounds. Put
before it day after day base and depressing thoughts
and it languishes and dies.—E. L. Vincent.

* * *
Life may be hedged in by circumstances so as to
be narrow, but may always be deep and high.
And it is depth that gives enduring power, and it is
height that affords an outlook.—Lilian Whiting.

* * *
That which you would be and hope to be, you
may be now. Non-accomplishment resides in your
perpetual postponement, and, having the power to
postpone you also have the power to accomplish—

to perpetually accomplish; realise this truth, and you will be to-day and everyday, the ideal being of whom you dreamed.—James Allen.

* * *

The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they while their companions slept
Were toiling upward in the night.

—A. H. Hassell.

* * *

There is a nobler glory which survives
Until our being fades, and, solacing
All human care, accompanies its change:
The consciousness of good, which neither gold,
Nor sordid fame, nor hope of heavenly bliss,
Can purchase.

—Shelley.

* * *

Half our ills are due to impatience. There is an infinite source of help in simple repose.

—H. W. Dresser.

* * *

The pathway of peace in every human life leads through the Valley of Heart's Desire to the Mount of Soul's Repose. Some pilgrims there be who were born on the Mount and they must needs descend to the Valley. Others there be, more—far more—who were born in the Valley and these must need ascend to the Mount. Perhaps once in the course of an eon, some solitary soul that has loved enough to be all human yet longed enough to be all God, treads this difficult path of peace back and forth—back and forth through the span of an earthly life. Then how they misunderstand him!—Progressive Thoughts.

SHIVA SHMASHANESHWAR*

(The Lord of Burning-Ghats)

Coming along the Ganges side under the covering of night,
Our pleasant reverie was broken by the clanging of great gongs;
And upon our ears resounded the ringing of the temple-bells:
It was the hour of sacred thought and prayer that rises unto God.

We found ourselves approaching fast the Shrine of the Lord of Burning-Ghats,
On one side were the funeral grounds, lit up by the glaring Flames of Death,
On the other side rose the shrine of Shiva, shrouded in the evening quiet;
And our thoughts began to ponder on the Grandeur of the Lord.

Before the shrine stood reverently some score or more of worshippers;
Within the Shrine a temple-priest stood, waving lights before the Lord,
The Lord, above all thought and form, Who dwells within Eternity,
His Peace, like the Peace of a shoreless sea—Itself Infinity.

And all the littleness that goes to make up life dawned on us there,
To be as dust before the Lord, whom neither death nor change can touch;
And all the magnitude of Him, the Utter Vastness that He is:
Aye He is the One, among the Myriad-fold the One.

He is the Stambha of the world, the Grand Standing-Place Divine;
About Him whirl in endless change the warps and woofs of sense and thought;
But He, the Lord, is shrouded in the Glorious Height Beyond,
And yet—unto His devotee speaks the Words of Human Love.

—A Shiva Bhakta.

* An emblem of Shiva whose shrine faces one of the burning-grounds on the banks of the Ganges in Calcutta.

SARNATH

HERE it stands at Sarnath—the great, great Topa, around which innumerable holy memories cling of the days of Buddhism, and verily of Lord Buddha Himself. There it stands, a great dome-like structure, once radiant in its sculptured beauty and architectural grandeur—and now, utterly dismantled. All about are the ruins of what was once the Sangharama-Vihara, the assembly-halls and monastery of the Buddhist monks. Formerly these were high-storied and studded with towers and surrounded by groves—for the site of Sarnath twenty-five centuries ago was the Deer Park in which Lord Buddha had set rolling—“The Wheel of the most Holy Law.” In the days of the Vihara a life-size statue of the Teacher stood, carved as in the act of turning “The Wheel.” Now all is gone; there is a great hollow where once lay the foundation of the monastery. Now only a few stones are left.

But how sacred are those stones! Could they *speak* what glories they would reveal and what a wonderful life, what a wonderful epoch. The great statue of the Lord is still as of old. It has been transferred to a near-by museum, but to the love of the devotee of the Tathagata it is still as majestic, still as filled with the Grand Presence as when the Buddhist monks and pilgrims gathered about it centuries ago in admiration and in trembling ecstasy.

It is but half-an-hour's journey by carriage from the heart of Benares to the wonderful and eloquent desolation at Sarnath. Half the journey completed, the open country comes to view. One gathers in the fragrance of the morning air. Suddenly it looms, the great Stupa of Sarnath, built epochs ago out of the love and worship of personalities and generations who are forgotten in the historic memory.

And one is taken back, then and there, into that old, sacred time. The whole scene changes. The roads are filled with the monks in their yellow robes. The name of Buddha is heard on the air. The bullock-carts travel wearily along carrying visitors or devotees to the monastery in the distance. It is a Buddhist world. A gentleness is every-

where; a divine gentleness. The Great Spirit of the Master hovers over all. And then, perhaps, one hears the chanting of some soul-stirring episode from the Tri-Pitakas. In fact, it may be the story of the Deer Park itself; how the Lord preached in this retreat—now Sarnath—to those five disciples of old, who had deserted Him, in other days, because He had found that harsh asceticism was not the goal. He had fallen before them in the jungle, exhausted and emaciated from much ascetic practice. They thought Him dead. But He arose; and despairing of Penance as the means to salvation, He abandoned it. It was then that His disciples had deserted Him.

It may be that at this moment some wandering monk passes by our carriage murmuring the name of the Lord Buddha. The reverie ceases. One looks at the Stupa. It is close at hand now; and in the secret of thought one likewise murmurs, “Om Namō Bhagavate Buddhaya!”

And then the story of olden time is heard again. The sense of hearing is dead to the present. The Buddhist monks pass. The spirit of the time is that of Buddha.

And then one follows the Blessed One clad in ashes and with a begging bowl journeying along the dusty roads and through great jungles of forest, along and along, until He reaches the Holy City of Kasi “to beat the drum of immortality in the darkness of the world.” He goes beyond the city proper to the Migadaya, the Deer-Park, the Sarnath of to-day.

With the words of the Lord upon our ears we arrive at Sarnath. A hundred memories crowd in upon us. It is all Buddha! Buddha! the Compassionate One, the Enlightened One, Buddha Bodhisattva. The mind reverts to the palace of young Gautama with his beautiful wife, Yasodhara. The early morning is upon us and also the early morning of that life of renunciation, set at first in the most wonderful of dreams,—marble palaces, playing fountains, beautiful dancing maidens, great green parks, the vision of the near-by snows,—and then the meeting of young Gautama, for the first time, with sickness, old age and misery and death.

And then we see the young prince setting out upon the highway as one who renounces, as a monk, even as a wandering lion in soul in a tremendous search for truth.

No wonder that the great Stupa of Sarnath was built to commemorate His blessed memory. O for the great Compassion of the Lord! O for the wonderful Heart of the Lord, seeking for Truth that others may be saved!

What is that! We are now walking over the ruins of the old Vihara, the ruins of a monastery built centuries upon centuries ago—and every stone speaks of Buddha. But what is that in the distance? Closer and closer we approach. Ah, the sweet wonder of it—under the neighbouring trees a party of Thibetan monks in their red robes and serious pilgrim countenances. All the way they have come—all the way from far-away Thibet, afoot, across the long, long distance. And they speak in hushed tones,—and they speak of the Lord, or tell their beads in pious meditation. They seem superhumanly happy. And indeed they *are* blessed, blessed by the Presence of the Lord Himself, for the Lord *is* present there, where His devotees call upon Him.

We walk across the distance. Now we stand before the Stupa itself. O how high it rises, telling of the greatness of the Lord. What! Lo and be-

hold, here lie prostrate upon the ground a group of holy women from far, far Ceylon and there, just beyond the circling corner of the massive Stupa flutters a yellow robe upon the breeze, the robe of a Buddhist monk. Aye, Thibet and Ceylon. What more eloquent tribute to the far-reaching influence of Lord Buddha's thought! And other women and other monks touch the great Stupa with sandal paste; or they burn lights and incense in the crevices; or they inscribe sacred words, words from the text of Lord Buddha's Gospel, upon the walls in letters of gilt. And the morning sun looks lovingly upon the scene. Tenderly it looks down upon the ancient ruins and upon the group of loving devotees, aye, and upon the Presence of the Lord Himself, for He is *there*. Throughout the Ages He is *there*.

O the sweet, sweet memory of it! O the joyous countenances of the worshippers of Lord Buddha! O the splendours of the morning sun upon it all! O the eloquent silence of the stones that lie about! O the Grandeur, O the Ineffable Sweetness of Lord Buddha! O for the Great Peace imprinted in the carved stone and upon the Shining Face of the Lord. O the Great Order of the Monks! O the Silence of Nirvana! O the Tenderness of it all!

Om Namo Bhagavate Buddhaya!

—A Pilgrim to India.



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LIVES OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND VIVEKANANDA FOR MODERN INDIA

[Extract of a lecture delivered by Prof. K. Sundarama Aiyer, M. A. at the 79th. birthday anniversary meeting of Sri Ramakrishna at Madras.]

I had long felt an attraction for the late Swami Ramakrishnananda. Though we had only met occasionally, I could not help being struck and subdued by the combination of high qualities which were conspicuous in him. I have not now in view his intellectual gifts—those solid gifts and attainments which he ungrudgingly spent in the service of his countrymen and co-religionists,—but his meekness, his simplicity, his purity of life, his forgetfulness of self, his regard for human feeling, and his tolerance of human foible. He was an ideal Sannyasin. Every moment of his life, every thought of his mind, every word he uttered went

to show how truly he had realised, and how passionately he loved, the divine nature in man. Long it will be before the impression can be effaced which he created in us by his high qualities and by his devotion to his labour of love in our midst. It rends one's heart to know that one shall never again behold that benignant glance of his eye and that winning manner which stole the heart away even at one's first meeting with him.

I had not the fortune of knowing the sage Sri Ramakrishna in person and had never even heard of him till I met Swami Vivekananda at Trivandrum in December, 1892. But to have known the Son is to have known the Father. "I and my Father are one." Swami Vivekananda—whom Sri Ramakrishna called a *nitya-siddha*—is the perfect

reproduction of his perfect Guru. Only the other day we read in the page of Occasional Notes in the 'Prabuddha Bharata' for January, 1912, "Ramakrishna and Vivekananda are one as Guru and disciple, as teacher and messenger of the New Faith, the revived Hinduism, the synthetic religion in which sectarianism is unknown." I know Vivekananda, so I know Sri Ramakrishna. I know Vivekananda not only from his published speeches and writings, but by intimate personal intercourse. For 9 days in 'Privandrum in December 1892, and again for another nine days in Madras during his memorable stay at Kernan Castle after his first return from the West, I was almost constantly in his company and learned a good deal of his aims in life and his message to the world. More can be learned of men like him from such intimate intercommunion and the vivid impression of personality therefrom than by the study of any number of writings, however valuable in themselves. Especially, we must guard carefully against drawing conclusions from some aspects only of a personality like the Swami's—for we shall thus only present a distorted and one-sided picture of him and surely that is to do a sheer injustice to the sage who has shed a lustre on the holy land by his marvellous, though short, public career as one of the great lights of the modern world.

Modern India presents two aspects,—one as she is influenced by Western civilisation, the other as she is the product of her own past with a culture of her own and a mission to the world at large. Ramakrishna and Vivekananda have sought to influence and guide us as regards our relations to the West and our duties as inheritors of an ancient and unique spiritual culture.

Let us first consider our position and duties as the heirs and guardians of the spirit. Here we have, first, to preserve our acquisitions from the Rishis, and, secondly, to give the rest of the world their due share of them. As regards the first of these points, some think, that our conception of the Atman is only valuable, and that our entire Dharma may be shelved. Now, a portion of Dharma consists of the means by which the realisation of the Atman is effected. These are *Karma, Bhakti, Yoga, Jnana, and Tyaga*. If these are to be abandoned, then the entire spirit of that life and culture which is peculiar to India and the Aryan people will pass, and the conception of the Atman will become purely metaphysical and thus emptied of all its practical spiritual content. The Rishi, Yajnavalkya, who was a "Yogisvara" as well as a teacher of Dharma, has declared in his Smriti:—"That is the highest Dharma which constitutes the realisation of the Self by means of Yoga." So Dharma includes the entire range of conceptions, ideals, processes and institutions—social, econom-

ical, political, ceremonial, spiritual and practical—forming what is known as the religion of the Aryas and cohering together into a system of knowledge, culture and civilisation. What was Vivekananda's attitude towards it? That he was a firm believer in the spiritual processes of Karma, Bhakti, Yoga, and Jnana is well known. The Swami himself points out:—"It is the Sruti that is still the backbone of all the different divisions of the Hindu religion." And again:—"All the other religions of the world are included in the nameless, limitless, Eternal Vedic Religion. Work hundreds of lives out, search every corner of your mind for ages, and still you will not find one noble religious idea that is not already imbedded in that infinite mine of spirituality." He also speaks of the Gita as the "divine commentary" on the Vedas, and of the Sutras of Vyasa as their "organised system." Then we have the great Acharyas who have handed down to us the traditional interpretation of these sources of our religion, and the great Pandits of the land who have guarded the tradition from generation to generation. Lord Macdonnell, when he was Lieutenant Governor of the North Western Provinces, addressing a meeting of Pandits, said:—"Living in retirement and studious abstraction, you maintain the practice and traditions of learning and reflection which have so enriched the literature of your country and preserved its religious ideals." True Indian spirituality, however, cannot be made to depend upon the mere intellectual comprehension of the "source books" of Hinduism and the mastery of arguments and analysis, but upon the life-giving touch of the Sad-Guru. Sri Ramakrishna is the modern example or type of the Perfect Man,—the True Mahatman, as Professor Max Muller called him, the man who has attained to realisation of the Atman. Over and over again, the Swami insists and reiterates that "realisation is the only religion."

It is sometimes said by those who look only at "some aspects" of the Swami's work and teaching that he was an iconoclast greater than the most radical social reformer. This is a great mistake, and due to the premature publication of his private letters, in which he often took up the role of a severe castigator of *Ahamkara* (egotism) of all kinds, so that he might reform the individuals he addressed and turn them to some extent into the paths of humility and rectitude. The idea of writing letters, with a view to publication is purely Western. His public utterances go to prove that he was far from being an iconoclast.

[Here the learned lecturer quoted *in extenso* from the speeches and conversations of Swamiji,—his ideas concerning Hindu institutions, his warning against the folly of blindly imitating alien societies and their methods, his interpretation of

the glorious purpose of our caste system, his suggestions about remodelling it by reviving the old laws of the Venerable Rishis for which Hindus should have the highest admiration and no word of condemnation, his exhortations to the Bráhmaṇas on their duties of uplifting the Indian masses, his bold defence of the much misunderstood idolatry from the attacks and ridicule of the so-called Protestant Hindus, and, last of all, his ideas about the much-talked-of question of taking food—in order to vindicate Swamiji's great love and admiration of those ancient national customs and institutions of the Hindus, as well as to show that his policy was not for their destruction but construction on the old lines with necessary modifications to suit the modern times.]

Continuing, the speaker said: Similarly, we can get the Swami to deliver his views on so many other points. The substance of his teaching is summed up in what he said on one occasion:—“We must revive the old laws of the Rishis.” That is his solution for all our problems.

The truth is that there are gross misconceptions abroad regarding our Dharma, and then you will see why the Swami insisted on reviving the old laws of the Rishis. First, Dharma is not imposed on us by a ruler. For the ruler himself is subject to Dharma. Dharma does not change like laws with a change in the views of the ruler, or pass away altogether with the passing away of the ruler imposing them. A learned living German writer says:—“With dogged intolerance the foolish majority raises its will to the dignity of law.” Dharma is not law, but a thing far higher. The Rishis discovered Dharma in their *Samprajñāta Samādhi*. It is said of Manu and Yajñavalkya that they were for a time in this Samādhi before proceeding to declare the Dharma. The same was true of other Rishis. Secondly, there are times when Dharma declines and there are other times when Dharma advances, in the estimation and observance of men. It is thus in a state of greater or less manifestation in the world. But it cannot undergo essential change, nor can it be destroyed. Matter and force may get changed in their forms, they may pass from manifestation into non-manifestation and *vice versa*, but they never cease to exist. This is the law of the conservation of matter and force. The same is the case with Dharma. Dharma is itself independent of time, place and human feelings. It is eternal. It remains, even though periods of creation and destruction (*srishti* and *pralaya*) may intervene for the world. It is also universal,—intended for all human, and even for all living beings, for all Jivas. We hold that all Jivas are eternal. Our bodies are transient and perish, but we remain for ever. Dharma is the real universal religion of humanity. In no other

sense can religion be universal. In any other sense, a universal religion is a dream, a delusion and a snare. As is said by a great living writer:—“The delusion of a great world-religion is rank, chronistic and sacramental materialism; like a malady it clings to the Protestant Church out of its Roman past; only in limitation can we grow to the full possession of our idealising power.” Has it not been said of Jesus, “Heaven and earth may pass away, but his words shall not pass away until all are fulfilled”? Similar, but much more logical and thorough-going, is our idea of Dharma. No wonder Swami Vivekananda has taught us, “We must revive the old laws of the Rishis.”

In connection with this first part of our subject, we have yet to consider how we should help the rest of the world by carrying to them the message and the blessing of our ancient spiritual inheritance. Here Sri Ramakrishna, as we shall presently see, unmistakably communicated to the Swami the inspiration he needed. But the Swami knew full well that he was not the first Indian Messenger to the West.

[Dilating on the subject the eloquent speaker quoted from Swamiji's lecture at Colombo in which he had pointed out that the unique Mission of India was “to conserve, to preserve, to accumulate as it were into a dynamo, all the spiritual energy of the race, and pour it forth in a deluge on the world whenever circumstances are propitious,” and that as it was pre-eminently now the case, hundreds like him should go out to preach its religion to every nation under the sun.]

But there is the impression that the Western world is superior to us in civilisation, in all that constitutes civilisation. We see their missionaries and philanthropists by the thousand, and all of them are engaged in the so-called work of raising us from the childhood of semi-barbarism. There are many here who, in season and out of season, preach to us that “we are children” and have all the weaknesses, the puerilities, and the imbecile propensities of children.

[Here follows the Swamiji's convincing reply to this ridiculous assertion, in which he vindicates the superiority of Indian civilisation over all others and shows that the world has yet to learn from India the idea not only of toleration but of sympathy, which runs through every phase of our national literature and national life. Swamiji is also quoted to show that another great idea which we have to give to the world, and which the world wants from us to-day, is the real and basic solidarity of the whole universe, the infinite oneness of the soul, which is the eternal sanction of all morality, the rationale of all ethics and all spirituality.]

In private conversation with me, he often said that Western people were remarkable for their

consumingly aggressive activity and that this Rajasic nature of theirs was productive of evil both to others and to themselves. It prevented other nations from enjoying the freedom to develop on their own lines of advance and it made them forget Him who could make and unmake universes, and so lose their souls while achieving material triumphs of all kinds. The same idea is brought out in the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna just published. The late Brahma Samaj Missionary, P. C. Mazoomdar, once sought an interview with Sri Ramakrishna and said to him:—"Sir, the national characteristics of the English people may be summed up by one word, viz., the worship of what you call *kanchana* (gold). I must say however, there are a few honourable exceptions. As a general rule, *Rajas* or worldly activity is the one thing everywhere. Much the same thing is observable in America." To this Sri Ramakrishna replied:—"The attachment to work which you say is the chief characteristic of the English and American people marks all human communities. But remember, it is a mark of the earliest stage of life. Work for the sake of one's own worldly good,—riches, honour, fame—is degrading. Worldly activity (*Rajas*) will only bring increasing ignorance (*Tamas*). It will make you forgetful of God and attached to woman and gold (*Kamini* and *Kanchana*). Therefore the attachment to work that is observable in England and America—an attachment leading to spiritual degradation—is to be condemned." Then Sri Ramakrishna proceeded to give his own teaching regarding work, and the entire passage is one of the sublimest ever conceived by a human mind, and so I shall quote a few passages from it:—"You cannot get rid of work, because nature will lead you on to work. That being so, let all work be done as it ought to be. If work be done unattached, it will lead to God. Work so done is a means to the end, and God is the end. To work without any attachment is to work without the expectation of any reward or any fear of punishment in this world or the next. Work without attachment, however, is exceedingly difficult, especially in this age. The fact is, one must have true Knowledge (*Jnana*) or Love of God (*Bhakti*)." "In the first place, this love of God reduces the quantity of one's work by fixing one's mind on one's own ideal, i. e., God. Secondly, it helps one to work unattached. One cannot love the Lord and at the same time love riches or pleasure or fame or power." "Do not regard work as the be-all, and end-all,—the ideal of human existence. Pray for *Bhakti* (devotion to God). Suppose you are fortunate enough to see God. Then what would you pray for? Would you pray for dispensaries and hospitals, tanks and wells, roads and Serais? No, no, these are realities to us so long as we do not see God. But once placed face to face with the Vision Divine, we see them as

they are—transitory things no better than dreams." It is this message, the message of the Veda, the ancient message of the Rishis that Sri Ramakrishna redelivered to us in the modern age. Swami Vivekananda carried it everywhere as the messenger of Sri Ramakrishna, and he again and again impressed on us the duty we owe to our motherland, to the *Punya-Bhumi*—the duty of helping Western nations out of their absorption in the worship of *Kamini* and *Kanchana* (Woman and Gold) and to realise something of which they at present know nothing, viz., the divinity that is ever present in all of us and everywhere in the world and which is the true self of man and the goal of all human endeavour.

Some of us may entertain a doubt whether a people like us who have so long—for a thousand years or more—been a subject race and have contracted some of the vices which political subjection brings in its train, can undertake so great and so stupendous a task with any prospect of success. The reply is—if reply were needed after what I have said already—Look at Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Sri Swami Vivekananda, look at the work of the Sri Ramakrishna—Vivekananda Mission both here and in the West. But we have the inspiring explanation of the Swami himself.

[Here copious extracts from Swamiji's lectures follow, which are full of inspiration to rouse the drooping souls of Indians to their unique mission of deluging the whole world with the ennobling ideas of the Upanishads and Vedanta, for which it is only ready now.]

And who are to be the men to take up the work of conquering the whole Western world and India herself for the glory and the immortality of the spirit? The Swami's ideas on the subject are clear and convincing: "That I went to America was not my doing or your doing, but the God of India who is guiding its destiny will send me and hundreds such to all the nations of the world." The Swami wants "hundreds such,"—hundreds like himself. It is those who have conquered "*Kamini* and *Kanchana*,"—the two great deities of the Western world—that must go out as preachers to the West. There is hardly any use mentioning in this connection the great Grihasthas of India's Heroic Age,—Vasishtha, Atri, Agastya and others who, even in that age, must have been rare. The ordinary Grihasthas, however enlightened and pure, cannot be altogether free from worldly ties and temptations,—from the *eshanatraya*, the desire for gold and children and enjoyment hereafter. So the Swami wanted young men of enthusiasm and imagination carefully trained and disciplined for this work in an institution especially organised according to his ideas. "Not by work, not by progeny, not by wealth, but only by renunciation did they

gain immortality"; only such men must go to the West. "Having themselves crossed this terrific ocean of Samsara, they help others to cross also who have no other help." In the Swami's noble and inspiring language:—"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 wickedness in the world. Hindus, let not your hold of that banner go."

(To be continued).

Correspondence: A Strange Occurrence.

Dear Swamin,

We the Members of the Ramakrishna Mission, Dacca, send you for publication the following quotation from a private letter written from Shillong, dated 19th April, by Srijukta Charu Chandra Goswami, a registrar under the Assam Government, to Srijukta Nitya Gopal Goswami of Dacca:—

"I cannot but let you know of a very wonderful thing that happened here. When I was recently in Dacca I spoke to you about my friend, Panchanan Brahmachari.* During my absence the house of a gentleman here caught fire. There was no one at home at the time, and water was scarce. Grasping the situation Panchanan Brahmachari at once ran up the thatched roof of the cottage with two cans of water in his hands. One can of water fell upon his body, and the other he poured on the roof. The fire blazed up furiously, when two Gurkha soldiers coming to the spot found that the man was in the imminent danger of being burnt. They began to drag him down, but the gentleman was wildly shouting "Jaya Ramakrishna!" He was then in a semi-conscious state, but saw vividly the form of Sri Ramakrishna with outstretched arms, saying "There is no fear!" It gives one a thrill to write that though the trees and plants in the vicinity of the cottage were all burnt, the cottage itself remained intact! Panchanan's face was scorched and disfigured, so much so that coming back here I found it difficult to recognise

* He is an inhabitant of Kotalipara in Faridpur Dt. and a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna. From several years he has been a teacher in the Girls' School, Shillong. Such a man of fiery, courageous and philanthropic nature is rare in these days. To help the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama he goes out with his begging bowl for alms every Sunday. With strenuous personal labour and with the aid of his countrymen he has established a Sevashrama in his native village.

him. Though he was under medical treatment he was always telling, "I shall jump into the fire again to be cool that I may behold once more that benign, lustrous face." Two days before the end of the Bengali year (12th April) he came and said, "My face will be all right soon. The Doctors say that the marks on it will be permanent like those of white leprosy, but Sri Ramakrishna has told me that they will all disappear after the bath on the sacred Chaitra Sankranti day (the last day of the Bengali year). We thought it would have been wise for him not to have told this, lest it did not come true. On the morning of the aforesaid day a pious Brahmo gentleman asked him, "Why, there is no change in your face yet?" But after his bath it was seen that there was no trace of any mark there, and no one would think that it was ever burnt! The man is beside himself with ecstasy. Who knows the glory of the Lord and His ways! We are only His servants."

LIFE IN DENIAL.

From the German of Paul Gerok.

Translated by A. C. W.

Deny thyself! The Master teaches this
And all His words are gold. He knows the heart.
I willingly would follow Him in all.
And yet I cannot grasp so stern a law.
Who am I, if I must forsake myself?
It falls like blow on face, like pain on heart,
That penetrating word, "Deny thyself!"

Uphold thyself. Thou canst not better be
Than that which God intends thee to become.
Be just thyself; for that is thy true work.
A blade of grass ne'er strives to be a palm,
A tree remains a tree, a flower a flower.
Then bear this proverb deep enshrined—
Maintain thine individuality.
Whatever men may say—uphold thyself.

Ennoble self! Be diligent to tend
Each heaven-implanted germ of life,
Yet fear not wild offshoots to prune away,
That sweetest fruit may follow every bud.
So thus these seeming contradictions meet—
By cultivating good and checking ill,
Thou shalt uphold and yet deny thyself.

SAINT APPAYA OF BHATKAL

(Continued from page 95)

WHE left Appaya in the company of the Sadhu for whose search he was about to lose his life. Taking Appaya on his lap and fondly embracing him, he breathed into his ear the Shiva-Panchakshara-Mantram. After thus initiating him, He said "My son, not far from here, in the town of Bailur you will find the Jivanmukta saint Sri Vimalananda Swami. He is Myself, the Lord, and he will be your Guru. Be devoted to him heart and soul. Have unbounded faith in him. He will enlighten you and will make you blessed." So saying, He vanished. For a few moments Appaya was not sure that he was not dreaming. Intense darkness all around, the sea roaring at his feet and he on the shore all alone! Could he affirm it was not in a dream that he had seen and been spoken to by someone! He shivered with cold and passed his hands over his body. "To be sure I am wet all over!" he cried, and began to recollect himself. He remembered every incident till his arrival at Murdeshwar at night. He had not found his Sadhu there. Ah! In his anxiety to find him he must have missed his way and gone into the sea. Everything else seemed probable now. "I can however verify in the morning the directions I have received," thought he. He spent the night as comfortably as he could on the sea-shore, and when the eastern horizon heralded the advent of a new day he enquired of a fisherman the road leading to Bailur, and was on his way thither.

There are many conjectures as to who it was that had rescued Appaya from drowning. Some say it was the Kula Devatâ (Family Deity) of Appaya come in the form of the Sadhu, while others affirm that it must have been Sri Dattatreya Yogi who had assumed that form to succour the helpless Appaya. Sri Dattatreya is regarded as an Avatara, and is said to have been born into this world sometime before Appaya. There are also some who point out that it might possibly have been Vimalananda Swami himself that had thus opportunely come to his aid. To Appaya however

it mattered little who that Person was. It was one more proof to him that there is a Helping-Hand ever ready to succour the helpless.

Now a word concerning Vimalananda Swami. About four leagues from Bhatkal there is what is now a mere village but was then a flourishing town called Bailur. It is noted for the Temple of Markandeya Rishi who, as the Pauranic story goes, was made immortal by Shiva when at the sight of Yama, the God of death, coming to snatch him, he went and entwined himself out of fear round the big Shiva Lingam in the Temple, as his refuge and protection. Like Bhatkal, Bailur formed part of the Kingdom of Nagar. The Revenue-Officership was vested in one Koppi Narnappaya. In status this post was a little higher than that of the present-day Mamlatdar or Tahsildar, and it is difficult to say whether there was anybody but the King above the Revenue-Officer, or Nadiga, as he was then called. At the close of every year the Nadiga had to pay into the King's Treasury the appointed dues of his jurisdiction. If the King was satisfied with his administration he was allowed extension of his office for another year. Narnappaya was very rich and felt exceedingly happy. He had one son whom he loved more than his life. One day the boy while playing in the garden saw a cobra approaching and shrieked out. Narnappaya who was attending to some visitors in his parlour, heard the cry and ran to the spot. But the serpent had done its work. It had bitten the boy and disappeared. Imagine the grief of the father. Immediately all the physicians in the vicinity were sent for; but nobody could do anything. The poison having by that time found its way into the system, the boy became unconscious; he was hovering on the brink of eternity and the helpless father was standing near, bathing him in tears. In utter despair he took the boy in his arms and ran into the Sri Lakshminarayana temple near by that had been built by his ancestors. Laying the lifeless form of his son at the feet of the Image he wept, "Ah Lord, give me back my child and take me instead. Why didst Thou bless me with a son if Thou didst want him back so soon? Merciful Father! Have mercy on the feelings of an aged man. Let me not go hence with my faith in Thee shaken." He heard a voice say—"The Yogi in the Markandeya Temple will resuscitate thy son. He

thee to him." He flew to the temple and catching hold of the Yogi's feet prayed for the life of his son. The Yogi was moved to tears. He bade the father cease his grief and went out. Soon he returned with a blood-sucker or chameleon and putting a piece of darbha (grass) into its mouth, commanded it to bring the serpent that had bit the boy. In five minutes it returned to the place leading a cobra. The Yogi caught hold of the serpent and applied its mouth to the wound in the boy's leg to suck its poison out. Slowly the boy showed signs of life and as he regained consciousness completely, the serpent rolled on the floor dead. Narnappaya's joy knew no bounds. Out of gratefulness for the recovery of his son, he built a new Math close to the Markandeya temple and made it over to the Yogi inducing him to stay there. This Sannyasi went by the name of Srimat Chidananda. He had two disciples, Brahmananda and Shivananda. Of these, Shivananda settled in the village of Kaikini, midway between Bhatkal and Bailur. The Kaikini Math of the present day contains the Samadhi (Tomb) of Srimat Shivananda, and the Kaikini-kars one meets with in Bhatkal and thereabouts nowadays, come of the family which gave birth to Shivananda. His brother-disciple Brahmananda lived in the Bailur Math with his Guru and after him came into possession of the Math. Brahmananda had a disciple who went by the name of Srimat Vimalananda—the same to whom Appaya was directed to go. After Vimalananda comes Sachchidananda and this order of monks seems to have come to an end with him. Appaya cannot be identified with Sachchidananda, as it is not known whether he had adopted the Sannyasa Ashrama. The Samadhis of these four Sannyasis from Chidananda down to Sachchidananda still repose in the Bailur Math and are worshipped with great pomp and ceremony to this day. The Shivaganga Tirtha or the sacred Tank constructed by Srimat Chidananda near the Math is still very famous. Appaya's Samadhi lies at Bhatkal and a temple (called Nadigara Devasthanam or Samadhi Math) has been built round it.

To return to our subject. With little difficulty Appaya reached the Bailur Math and prostrated himself before Vimalananda Swami, who like one of long acquaintance said " Are you come, my boy? God

bless you." What was Appaya's wonder to see that it was the very Sadhu who had begged food of him! Now all his doubts were cleared, and he stayed in the Math. He felt very happy in serving his Guru who, seeing that his disciple was ripe for spiritual knowledge, imparted it to him step by step. Slowly the veil of ignorance was lifted from his eyes. Slowly the clouds of Maya were dispersed and slowly the Sun of Knowledge appeared before him in all His Glory. To him there was no more hallucination of the " I " and " Mine "; no more delusion of " Father " and " Mother "; no more glamour about " the rich and poor " and " high and low. " He saw the Unity underlying this apparent diversity of the phenomenal world—the One Being manifesting His qualities in different forms. He had crossed the ocean of life and while yet in the mortal coil had tasted the Bliss of heaven! He has left many songs descriptive of the ecstasy he experienced at the time.

Let us now turn for a moment to see how Appaya's disappearance was felt by his people. His wife was the one person to suffer most from the separation. She was prostrated with fever the day Appaya ran away from the parental home. Seeing that his son did not return home in the evening, Appaya's father sent his servants to ascertain where he was. No clue as to his whereabouts was to be found in Bhatkal. Two days later one of his men brought the information that he was staying with Vimalananda Swami in Bailur Math. " From his childhood this world had no attraction for him and now when he has found such a Guru as the renowned Vimalananda Swami, would my entreaties be of any avail? Let him live where his heart desires. God grant him a long life. " So reasoned his father and kept quiet. But the maternal love was stronger. She could not bear not to see her son when he was so near. She personally went to Bailur and entreated him to return home, if only for her sake. She begged of Vimalananda to use his influence, though there was no need for this. To Appaya, father, mother and wife were all one now. He spent a couple of days with his parents. His wife's illness did not disturb his tranquillity of mind in the least. He said to her " My dear, when we know we are all watched by a kind Father who permits only what is

best for us, why be disheartened? Let us have infinite faith in Him and we shall not come to grief. Consoling his parents and wife and promising to return shortly, he took leave of them and went back to his Guru. But he had to go back home sooner than he had thought; for his wife who had caught fever the day she felt the shock of lifelong bereavement from her husband, never showed signs of recovery and at last paid the debt of nature. When the news reached Appaya, he smiled and said that the Bhagirathi (the Mother Ganges and also the name of his wife) that had come down from Kashi (Benares or it may here mean God—the Source of everything) went back to Kashi, her work here finished. A few months later Appaya's father also left this world handing over his office to his brother Mangeshaya, though it was to come to Appaya by hereditary right. Appaya's mother soon joined her husband. And in course of time Swami Vimalananda also left the physical tabernacle and attained Freedom. Appaya was now alone in the world—alone, to our way of thinking; but to him there was no loneliness; no birth or death; no coming from or going anywhere. To him his dear and adored ones who had departed were the same as in life. "Who talks of death?" he would say, "The whole Universe is quivering with Ishwara's life; every atom lives on for ever. There can be no death. If some blind persons cannot see light, does it show that there is really darkness around? If you cannot see a thing do you call it dead?"

Everyone of the Sannyasis of Bailur Math had written on Vedanta Philosophy and their works were all in the custody of the Archaka or temple-priest of the Math. He did not allow anybody to have even a look at them. They were for the most part written on dried palm-leaves. It is said that about ten years ago, the Archaka's house caught fire which spreading to the Math destroyed these manuscripts. Appaya like these Sannyasis could sing extemporaneously new songs perfect in metre and rhyme. Unfortunately nobody took pains to collect them. Recently Mr. Ananth Shivram of Bhatkal collected with great labour what information he could regarding Appaya and published in book form his life and some songs written by him in the Kanarese language. I should

acknowledge my indebtedness to this book, as the incidents herein related are borrowed from it in their entirety. The songs contained in the book are very instructive.

(To be continued).

A Seeker.

A WORK OF MERCY BY THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION AT BANGALORE

OUR heartiest congratulations to the Ramakrishna Mission's Centre in Bangalore. Silently this centre has been carrying on a work of service which is unique in its character and mission in India—that of giving religious instruction to the Hindu convicts, resident in the Bangalore jail. For nearly two years this has been going on without any ostentation on the part of the workers. But we feel that this work of the Bangalore centre should be made known to the public in order that a spirit of emulation shall arise and that the spirit of this special work shall *spread* throughout the land.

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna came into this world for just such people as the convicts and outcasts, the miserable and the afflicted and the sinners who are in need of sweet, loving sympathy and spiritual support. And it fills us with joy to find that the Bangalore centre has taken upon itself the task of loving service to those most in need of solace and spiritual blessings.

The Ramakrishna Mission has many centres for assisting those who suffer from physical ailment. Of its kind, the Ramakrishna Home of Service in Benares is one of the most unique institutions in India. But this new phase of service in Bangalore is just as unique. In these days when every person is eager for personal salvation it is good to find a Sadhu, such as our Swami Somananda in Bangalore, helping others to save themselves. The leader of this particular service is our Swami Nirmalananda, the president of the Bangalore Math, who is to be congratulated and thanked.

As preached by the Swami Vivekananda, the message of Sri Ramakrishna embodies itself in two ideals, that of "Shiva" or meditation, and that of "Sheva" or service. And of these two, service is by no means the lesser one. And in the

writing there come the words of the Lord Himself, "O Divine Mother! Let me be born again and again, even as a dog, so long as I may be of service even to one single soul."

The practical form which Swami Somananda's service takes, is in a visit to the jail each Sunday morning between the hours of 7-30 and 9. Through Swami Nirmalananda's arrangement the state carriage of the Government of Mysore conveys Swami Somananda to and fro. During the time mentioned the Swami reads portions from the Bhagavata, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and other Hindu scriptures to the assembled convicts, about five hundred in number. It is touching to witness the attention with which they listen to the text of the scriptures, so one correspondent tells us. And it brings tears to the eyes to see these men whom society reckons as its outcasts decorating, each Sunday morning, the pictures of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Many are the Bhaktas, the devotees of the Lord; many times is He worshipped, but if we could see into the Heart of the Lord we would find It filled with deep joy and most loving compassion and saving blessings and overwhelming love for these children of His who worship Him in the temple of a jail each Sunday morning—for they *are* His children, His very own. May the Lord give them added strength and joy.

The Opening of the Phthisis Ward of The Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal.

THE opening ceremony of the Phthisis ward of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal, was performed with great *eclat* on the 1st of May in the Ashrama premises by Swami Brahmananda, the President of the Mission. In the Reports of the Ashrama appeals were made for a Phthisis Ward, which seemed a long felt want by the authorities there. Through the kind generosity of a gentleman who gave Rs. 1,000 in the name of Rami Bai for the purpose, the plinth of the building was constructed long ago; but it was principally through the munificent liberality of another friend who made a donation of Rs. 4,000 and who is unwilling to publish his name, that the

building could be finished. It is a large and airy one-storeyed house capable of accommodating about twelve patients, and consists of one big hall-room in the middle with four smaller side-rooms, and a verandah on one side.

The ceremony began with the worship of the *Salagram* Narayana in one of the side-rooms. The recitations of *Chandi*, i. e., "the Glory of the Almighty Divine Mother," were performed by two senior Sannyasins of the Mission in the hall-room and another of the side-rooms. In the meanwhile the worship of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was being conducted in the chapel of the Ashrama by one of the Brahmacharins, ending with the *Homa* ceremony in the hall of the Phthisis Ward. The President then opened the silver lock and formally declared the Ward open. Then a regular procession was formed with the President at the head and the other Swamis and Brahmacharins and visitors following. The photo of Sri Ramakrishna was carried in front, accompanied by the melodious sounds of bells and conches and gongs, and was taken into all the rooms one by one and His blessings invoked on the unselfish service carried on by the workers. After the *Bhoga*, *Aratrika*, and hymns to Sri Ramakrishna were over, the *Mahatmas* of Kankhal, about two hundred in number, were sumptuously fed in the rooms of the new Ward, with *Prasada*. The feast itself was a sight to be seen; for, the chanting, by the *Mahatmas*, in melodious tones, during the feast, of the various beautiful and soul-striking Slokas from the sacred scriptures, broken only by an occasional outburst in chorus of "Namah Parvatipataye Hara!" (Salutation to the Lord of the daughter of the Himalayas), lent a great solemnity to the joyous occasion. With the feeding of the poor to their hearts' content the ceremony came to a close.

It reflects great credit on the workers of the Ashrama for the success of the ceremony from beginning to end. May the blessed Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna shower his choicest blessings on them and their purely disinterested labour of love, nay, worship of the "Poor Narayanas," as the Swami Vivekananda so appropriately termed such service.

In this connection, it will not be out of place to record the profound gratitude and thanks of the authorities of the Mission and the workers of the Ashrama, to the Government, for awarding a silver medal to the Ashrama in recognition of its philanthropic work, at a *darbar* held at Meerut on the 19th of April last, over which the Commissioner presided.



NEWS AND MISCELLANIES

(CULLED AND CONDENSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES)

ENGLAND has the greatest number of lighthouses and lightships in the world—one for every 14 miles of its coast line.

A MAN standing on the shore is able to see three and a half miles out to sea, while from a cliff 100 ft. high he can see 13 miles.

THE letter "I" in the Chinese language has 145 ways of being pronounced, and each pronunciation has a different meaning.

THE highest meteorological station in the world is that on Pike's Peak, Colorado, United States, which is situated at an altitude of 14,134 ft.

THE tallest cabbages in the world are to be seen in Jersey. Some specimens attain the enormous height of 10 ft. Nearly every one who visits Jersey brings home a walking-stick made from the dried stalk of a Jersey cabbage.

J. CLASSEY, eighty-three and J. Barker, eighty—competed in a 50 yds. swimming handicap for veterans in the Serpentine, Hyde Park, recently, where there were nine competitors, whose combined ages amounted to 545 years.

ALREADY the Singer Tower 618 ft., has been surpassed by the high Metropolitan Building, 700 ft., which in its turn is to be surpassed by the Woolworth Building, 750 ft., which will claim to be the highest building in the world.

SOMETIMES oil-lamps give a very poor light. When this is the case, try placing a small piece of camphor in the oil vessel and you will find in a very short time the light will become quite bright. If no camphor is at hand, use a few drops of vinegar instead; it is most effective.—"The Wealth of India."

THE African lung or mud fish sometimes attains a length of 6ft. It is very abundant on the Gambia River, and there, during the dry season, lasting through August and September, the fish buries itself in a burrow in the mud, remaining for quite a long period in a dormant condition, being nourished by a large store of fat that has been collected in the body. When the dry season has

passed the fish again takes to the water, in which it can swim with exceeding rapidity.

THE strength of the Indian Army consists, in round numbers, of 75,000 British soldiers and 35,000 volunteers together with 126,000 Indian troops and 46,000 reserves and Imperial service troops—in all 318,000 men. The country that is protected by this Army covers 1,773,000 square miles, a continent as big as Europe without Russia—with a land frontier of 6,000 miles!

THE diameter of the solar globe is 866,000 miles. No fewer than 109 globes of the size of the Earth would be necessary to stretch from the one side of the Sun to the other. The volume of the Sun is one and a quarter millions of times greater than the volume of the Earth. If all the planets, satellites, and cometary and meteoric bodies in the solar system were rolled into one globe, it would take no fewer than 750 of such globes to equal the volume of the Sun. If we had a contract to build up this stupendous bulk, and were to deliver a load of the same size as the Earth every hour, the order could be completed working night and day for 150 years.—From "The Romance of Modern Astronomy" by Hector Macpherson, Jun.

It was Swami Vivekananda who really brought India in close contact with America. Since he stood on the platform of the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893 and addressed his audience as 'Sisters and Brothers of America,' a relationship was established between India and America which has been growing steadily ever since. Of all Western countries America is the country which takes the greatest interest in the cause of India and this is the reason why India feels so much drawn towards America.—*The Tribune, Lahore.*

THE Plague Relief work of the Ramakrishna Mission at Bhagalpur was started on the 7th of March last by five workers sent from the Belur Math and was stopped on the 16th April when the plague gradually subsided. The workers superintended the cleansing of roads and houses in the different wards of the city, and treated and nursed many patients. When it was seen that the Plague Hospital newly established by the Rev. Mr. Perfect was suffering for want of volunteer nurses, Brahmachari Sushen Kumar was sent to help the hospital work. With his assistance, the Rev. gentleman attained much success in his work of nursing the patients.

WE regret to announce the death of the Dewan Bahadur R. Raghunath Row, which took place on May 3, at the age of eighty-five. He was an indefatigable champion of Hindu Social Reform on Shastric grounds. He refused to the end to recognise that social reform was anything more than a matter of the right interpretation of the ancient Aryan Scriptures. He frequently contributed to the Madras newspapers and wielded a vigorous pen in upholding the cause of right and denouncing the evils of society throughout his long and strenuous life.

UNDER the auspices of the Mahatma Vivekananda Association, Kaity, which celebrated its third anniversary this year at Ootacamund, Swami Nirmalananda delivered a series of lectures and discourses between the 28th April and 1st May.

The first lecture was on the "Life of Swami Vivekananda as an Ideal for Young India." In these days when patriotic workers for the welfare of India are required in enormous numbers, there is no greater soul than the late Swami Vivekananda whose life can be set up as an ideal for honest workers. He was the first Sannyasi to break the barriers of the inveterate exclusiveness of the Hindus, to cross the seas and to hold aloft to the outside world the torchlight of the teachings of the Vedanta Philosophy, and it was he who raised in a great measure the status of India and its civilisation in the eyes of the Westerners. Anyone who has even a superficial idea of his life and work can realise how ardent a patriot the Swami was and how every throb of his heart was for the uplifting of the masses.

The second lecture was on "Reasons for the Study of Vedanta." It was a candid exposition of the attitude of the Ramakrishna Mission towards other religions.

The third and the fourth days were spent in answering questions put to the Swami by the audience. The Swamiji's answers to all of them were clear, definite and immensely instructive. In the end, he explained the position of the Ramakrishna Mission in the field of philosophical work.

The Swami had an interview one day with His Highness the Gaekwar of Baroda who received him kindly. His Highness learnt from the Swamiji direct the aims and objects of the Ramakrishna Mission.—*The Daily Post*, Mysore.

"THE Indian craftsmen at work in the White City are fascinating creatures.....Their environment is fantastically Oriental.....They are as they were a few weeks ago in their native city or village. It is we who are out of place and incongruous, for

they have brought the spirit of India with them, and for the moment it resists the pressure of the new raw environment. Their garments make us furtively ashamed of our ugly and tight clothes. Their self-contained grace makes us blush at our awkward and clumsy movements. Their gentle harmony of physical calm arouses in us a doubt with regard to our superiority. Try as we may, we cannot feel that we are nobler products of a higher culture. They compel us to question the beauty and dignity of Western aims and ideals. They look like aristocrats who have strayed into a coarse and heavy society of vulgarians. It is a very preposterous thing, but beyond doubt these men and women make us feel vulgar. We are their rulers, their masters, their lords and gods, but they make us feel like serfs and slaves. It is only an illusion, but it is a very powerful one.

"There is one man whose features are a wonder of delicate refinement. There is race in every curve. His silky beard, unlike most European beards, is as natural as the leaves on a tree. It is not a thicket for the concealment of weak or debased or hideous lineament. Its black splendour enhances the clear beauty of his unblemished skin. He is not vain. He does not appear to be conscious of his amazing fineness. It is a part of his nobility that he is as naive as a little child. It is heart-breaking to contrast this superb creature with ourselves. He is fastidiously, but unostentatiously, clean, and ages of health seem to glow in his solemn eyes. There are no scars of vice on his skin. He looks like a thoroughbred—a human being as pure as a horse.

"And yet he is only a cheap, common, ordinary, working man—even cheaper, commoner, more ordinary than our cheapest, commonest, and most ordinary. Why does our civilisation fail to breed masses of men like him? Is the fault in our food, or our beer, or our schools, or our bricks? Or is it a secret of the soul? Certainly this man's attitude to life is in some undecipherable fashion different from ours. As you study him, you divine a queer composure, a strange balance, a surprising symmetry in his personality. He looks a harmonious being with a settled, imperturbable fixity of mood. But you cannot penetrate his unwrinkled impassivity. He is locked up in his fastness, and you cannot guess at his frame of mind. He is a mystery as inviolable as Bostock's snarling tigers hard by, and as violently beautiful. Whatever we may be, we are not as a race violently beautiful. I have no doubt that my ebon-bearded god thinks that we are masterpieces of ugliness." —*The Morning Leader*, on the Indian Craftsmen at Work in the Crystal Palace, London.