

Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राप्य धराभिबोधत ।

Katha Uya I m 4

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached

—Swami Vivekananda

Vol. XXIV]

MARCH 1919

[No. 272

CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE.)

XXII

[Place—*The rented Math at Belur. Year—1898.*

Subjects. *Swamiji's desire of converting the Ramakrishna Math at Belur as a unique centre of spirituality.—How he desired to train the Brahmacharins.—His plan of starting Brahmacharya Ashramas, Annasatras and Sevashramas with a view to qualify the Brahmacharins for Sannyasa and knowledge of Brahman—What public good it would do—Philanthropic work does not lead to bondage.—As soon as the veil of Nescience is removed every being manifests us Brahmanhood—One's word will always come true when that realisation of Brahman takes place.—To convert the Math as a centre of the harmony of all religions.—Swamiji came simply to show that pure Advaitism can be practised under any circumstances.—The doctrine of one class of Vedantins that individual liberation is impossible so long as the whole universe is not liberated.—On the attainment of Brahman one realises the whole sentient and insentient universe as one's own Self—Nescience is the basis of all phenomenal relations in the world.—The origin and cessation of Nescience.—The Scriptures state that Nescience is almost endless as a series, but has really a termination.—The entire universe has been superimposed on the Brahman.—Can there be a superimposition of an idea not already experienced?—The realisation of Brahman is like a dumb man tasting something*

The disciple has come to the Math on foot at about two o'clock to-day. The Math has now been removed to Nilambar Babu's garden-house, and the site of the present Math has recently been purchased. Swamiji is out visiting the new Math-grounds at about four o'clock, taking the disciple with him. The site was then full of jungles and on the north side of it

there was an one-storied brick-built house. The gentleman who had helped in the purchase of the land, also accompanied Swamiji a short distance and then took his leave. Swamiji began to walk over the site and to discuss, in the course of conversation, the plan of work of the future Math and its rules and regulations.

Reaching by degrees the verandah on

the east side of the one-storied house, Swamiji said, "Here will be the place for the Sadhus to live in. It is my wish to convert this Math into a chief centre of spiritual practices and the culture of knowledge. The power that will have its rise from here will flood the whole world, and turn the course of men's lives in to different channels; from this place will spring forth ideals which will be the harmony of Knowledge, Devotion, Yoga and Work; at a nod from the men of this Math a life-giving impetus will in time be given to the remotest corners of the globe; while all true seekers after spirituality will in course of time assemble here;—a thousand thoughts like these are arising in my mind.

"Yonder plot of land on the south side of the Math will be the centre of learning, where Grammar, Philosophy, Science, Literature, Rhetoric, the Srutis, Dhakti Scriptures and English will be taught; this Temple of Learning will be fashioned after the *Tols* of old days. Boys who are Brahmacharins from their childhood will live there and study the Scriptures. Their food and clothing and all will be supplied from the Math. After a course of five years' training these Brahmacharins may, if they like, go back to their homes and lead householders' lives; or they may embrace the monastic life under the sanction of the venerable Superiors of the Math. The authorities of the Math will have the power to turn out at once any of these Brahmacharins who will be found refractory or evil in character. Teaching will be imparted here irrespective of caste or creed, and those who will have objection to this will not be admitted. But those who would like to observe their particular caste-rites, will make separate arrangements for their food etc. They will

attend the classes only, along with the rest. The Math authorities shall keep a vigilant watch over the character of these also. None but those that are trained here shall be eligible for Sannyasa. Won't it be nice when by degrees this Math will begin to work like this?"

Disciple.— Then you want to reintroduce into the country the institution of living a Brahmacharin's life in the house of the Guru, in vogue in ancient times?

Swamiji.— Exactly. The modern system of education gives no facility for the development of the knowledge of Brahman. We must found Brahmacharya Homes as in times of old. But now we must lay their foundations on a broad basis, that is to say, we must introduce a good deal of change into it to suit the requirements of the times. Of this I shall speak to you later on.

"That piece of land to the south of the Math," Swamiji resumed, "we must also purchase in time. There we shall start an *Annasatra*—a Feeding Home. There arrangements will be made for serving really indigent people in the spirit of God. The Feeding Home will be named after Sri Ramakrishna. Its scope will at first be determined by the amount of funds. For the matter of that, we may start it with two or three inmates. We must train energetic Brahmacharins to conduct this Home. They will have to collect the funds for its maintenance,—aye, even by begging. The Math will not be allowed to give any pecuniary help in this matter. The Brahmacharins themselves will have to raise funds for it. Only after completing their five years' training in this Home of Service, will they be allowed to join the Temple of Learning branch. After a training of ten years—five in the Feeding Home and five in the Home of Learning—they

will be allowed to enter the life of Sannyasa, having initiation from the Math authorities,—provided of course they have a mind to become Sannyasins and the Math authorities consider them fit for Sannyasa and are willing to admit them into it. But the Head of the Math will be free to confer Sannyasa on any exceptionally meritorious Brahmacharin, at any time, to the violation of this rule. The ordinary Brahmacharins, however, will have to qualify themselves for Sannyasa by degrees, as I have just said. I have all these ideas in my brain.”

Disciple.— Sir, what will be the object of starting three such sections in the Math?

Swamiji.— Didn't you understand me? First of all comes the gift of food; next is the gift of learning, and the highest of all is the gift of knowledge. We must harmonise these three ideals in this Math. By continuously practising the gift of food, the Brahmacharins will have the idea of practical work for the sake of others and of serving all beings in the spirit of the Lord firmly impressed on their minds. This will gradually purify their minds and lead to the manifestation of *Sāttvika* (pure and unselfish) ideas. And having this the Brahmacharins will in time acquire the fitness for attaining the knowledge of Brahman, and become eligible for Sannyasa.

Disciple.— Sir, if, as you say, the gift of knowledge is the highest, why then start sections for the gift of food and the gift of learning?

Swamiji.— Can't you understand this point even now? Listen,—if in these days of food scarcity you can, for the disinterested service of others, get together a few morsels of food by begging or any other means, and give them to the poor and suffering, that will not only be doing

good to yourself and the world, but you will at the same time get everybody's sympathy for this noble work. The worldly-minded people, tied down to lust and wealth, will have faith in you for this labour of love and come forward to help you. You will attract a thousand times as many men by this unasked-for gift of food as you will by the gift of learning or of knowledge. In no other work will you get so much public sympathy as you will in this. In a truly noble work, not to speak of men, even God Himself befriends the doer. When people have thus been attracted, you will be able to stimulate the desire for learning and knowledge in them. Therefore the gift of food comes first.

Disciple.— Sir, to start Feeding Homes we want a site first, then buildings, and then the funds to work them. Where will so much money come from?

Swamiji.— The southern portion of the Math premises I am leaving at your disposal immediately, and I am getting a thatched house erected under that Bael tree. You just find out one or two blind or infirm people and set yourself to their service. Go and beg food for them yourself; cook with your own hands and feed them. If you continue this for some days, you will find that lots of people will be coming forward to assist you, with plenty of money. नहि कस्यापि कृत्स्नदुर्गतिं ताव गच्छति—“Never, my son, does a doer of good come to grief.”

Disciple.— Yes, it is true. But may not that kind of continuous work become a source of bondage in the long run?

Swamiji.— If you have no eye to the fruits of work, and if you have a passionate longing to go beyond all selfish desires, then those good works will help to break your bonds, I tell you. How thoughtless of you to say such work will lead to bondage! Such disinterested work

is the only means of rooting out the bondage due to selfish work. नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय—“There is no other way out.”

Disciple.— Your words encourage me to hear in detail about your ideas of Feeding Homes and Homes of Service.

Swamiji.— We must build small well-ventilated rooms for the poor. Only two or three of them will live in each room. They must be given good bedding, clean clothes and so on. There will be a doctor for them, who will inspect them once or twice a week according to his convenience. The Sevashrama will be as a ward attached to the Annasatra, where the sick will be nursed. Then gradually, as funds will accumulate, we shall build a big kitchen. The Annasatra must be astir with constant shouts of food demanded and immediately supplied. The rice-gruel must run into the Ganges and whiten its water! When I see such a Feeding Home started, it will bring solace to my heart.

Disciple.— When you have this kind of desire, most likely it will materialise into action in course of time.

Hearing the disciple's words Swamiji remained motionless for a while, gazing on the Ganges. Then with a beaming countenance he addressed the disciple saying, “Who knows which of you will have the lion roused up in him, and when? If in a single one amongst you Mother rouses the fire, there will be hundreds of Feeding Homes like that. The thing is, that Knowledge, and Power, and Devotion,— everything exists in the fullest measure in all beings. We only notice the varying degrees of their manifestation, and call one great and another little. In the minds of all creatures a screen intervenes as it were and hides the perfect manifestation from view. The moment that is removed, everything is settled; whatever you will want,

whatever you will desire, will come to pass.”

Hearing Swamiji's words, the disciple mused within himself when that veil within his mind would be removed, ushering in the realisation of God.

Swamiji continued, “If the Lord wills, we shall make this Math a great centre of harmony. Our Lord is the visible embodiment of the harmony of all ideals. He will be established on earth if we keep alive that spirit of harmony here. We must see to it that people of all creeds and sects, from the Brahmana down to the Chandala, may come here and find their respective ideals manifested. The other day when I installed Sri Ramakrishna on the Math grounds, I felt as if his ideas shot forth from this place and flooded the whole universe, sentient and insentient. I, for one, am doing my best, and shall continue to do so, all of you too explain to people the liberal ideas of Sri Ramakrishna; what is the use of merely reading the Vedanta? We must prove the truth of pure Advaitism in practical life. Sankara left this Advaita philosophy in the hills and forests; while I have come to bring it out of those places and scatter it broadcast before the work-a-day world and society. The lion-roar of Advaita must resound in every hearth and home, in meadows and groves, over hills and plains. Come all of you to my assistance, and set yourselves to work.

Disciple.— Sir, it appeals to me rather to realise that state through meditation than make a display of it through action.

Swamiji.— That is but a state of stupefaction, as under liquors. What will be the use of merely remaining like that? Through the urge of Advaitic realisation, you should sometimes dance wildly and sometimes remain lost to outward sense.

Does one feel happy to taste of a good thing all by himself? One should share it with others. Granted that you attain personal liberation by means of the realisation of the Advaita, but what matters it to the world? You must liberate the whole universe before you leave this body. Then only you will be established in the eternal Truth. Has that bliss any match, my boy? You will be established in the bliss of the Infinite, which is limitless like the skies. You will be struck dumb to find your presence everywhere in the world of soul and matter! You will feel the whole sentient and insentient world as your own self. Then you can't help treating all with the same kindness as you show towards yourself. This is indeed practical Vedanta. Do you understand me? Brahman is one, but is at the same time appearing to us as many, on the relative plane. Name and form are at the root of this relativity. For instance, what do you find when you abstract name and form from a jar? Only earth, which is its essence. Similarly, through delusion you are thinking of and seeing a jar, a cloth, a monastery and so on. The phenomenal world depends on this Nescience which obstructs knowledge and which has no real existence. One sees variety such as wife, children, body, mind—only in the world created by Nescience by means of name and form. As soon as this Nescience is removed, the realisation of Brahman which eternally exists, is the result.

Disciple.— Where has this Nescience come from?

Swamiji.— Where it has come from, I shall tell you later on. When you began to run, mistaking the rope for the snake, did the rope actually turn into a snake? Or, it was your ignorance which put you to flight in that way?

Disciple.— I did it from sheer ignorance.

Swamiji.— Well then, consider whether, when you will again come to know the rope as rope, you will not laugh at your previous ignorance. Will not name and form appear to be a delusion then?

Disciple.— They will.

Swamiji.— If that be so, then name and form turn out to be unreal. Thus Brahman, the Eternal Existence, proves to be the only reality. Only through this twilight of Nescience you think this is your wife, that is your child, this is your own, that is not your own, and so on, and fail to realise the existence of the Atman, the Illuminator of everything. When through the Guru's instructions and your own conviction you will see, not this world of name and form, but the essence which lies as its substratum, then only you will realise your identity with the whole universe from the Creator down to a clump of grass,—then only you will get the state—*भ्रमते हृदयग्रन्थिरिह्यन्ते सर्वसंशया*—“in which the knots of the heart are cut asunder and all doubts are dispelled.”

Disciple.— Sir, one wishes to know of the origin and cessation of this Nescience.

Swamiji.— You have understood, I presume, that a thing that ceases to exist afterwards, is a phenomenon merely? He who has truly realised the Brahman will say,—where is Nescience, in faith? He sees the rope as rope only, and never as the snake. And he laughs at the alarm of those who see it as the snake. For this reason, Nescience has no absolute reality. You can call Nescience neither real nor unreal. *सत्राप्यसत्राप्युभयान्मिका नो*—“Neither real, nor unreal, nor a mixture of both.” About a thing that is thus proved to be false, neither question nor answer is of any significance. Moreover, any question

on such a thing is unreasonable. I shall explain how. Are not this question and answer made from the standpoint of name and form, of time and space? And can you explain Brahman which transcends time and space by means of questions and answers? Hence the Shastras and Mantras and such other things are only relatively, and not absolutely, true. Nescience has verily no essence to call its own. How then can you understand it? When Brahman will manifest Itself, there will be no more room for such questions. Have you not heard that story of Sri Ramakrishna about "the shoemaker coolie"?* The moment one recognises Nescience, it vanishes.

Disciple.— But, Sir, whence has this Nescience come?

Swamiji.— How can that come which has no existence at all? It must exist first, to admit of coming.

Disciple.— How then did this world of souls and matter originate?

Swamiji.— There is only one Existence, viz. Brahman. You are but seeing That

* Once a Brahmin, desirous of going to a disciple's house, was in need of a coolie to carry his load. Not finding anyone belonging to a good caste, he at last asked a shoemaker to perform the function. The man at first refused on the ground that he was a man belonging to an untouchable caste. But the Brahmin insisted on engaging him, telling him he would escape detection by keeping perfectly silent. The man was at last persuaded to go, and when the party reached their destination, someone asked the shoemaker-servant to remove a pair of shoes. The servant who thought it best to keep silent, as instructed, paid no attention to the order, which was repeated, whereupon the man getting annoyed shouted out, "Why dost thou not hear me, sirrah? Art thou a shoemaker?" "O Master," cried the bewildered shoemaker, "I am discovered. I cannot stay any longer." Saying this he immediately took to his heels.

under different forms and names, through the veil of name and form, which are unreal.

Disciple.— But why this unreal name and form? Whence have they come?

Swamiji.— The Shastras have described this ingrained notion or ignorance as almost endless as a series. But it has a termination. While Brahman ever remains as It is, without suffering the least change, like the rope which causes the delusion of the snake. Therefore the conclusion of the Vedanta is that the whole universe has been superimposed on the Brahman,—appearing like a juggler's magic. It has not caused the least aberration of Brahman from Its real nature. Do you understand me?

Disciple.— One thing I cannot yet understand.

Swamiji.— What is that?

Disciple.— You have just said that creation, maintenance, and dissolution etc. are superimposed on the Brahman, and have no absolute existence. But how can that be? One can never have the delusion of something that he has not already experienced. Just as one who has never seen a snake cannot mistake a rope for a snake, so how can one who has not experienced this creation, come to mistake Brahman for the creation? Therefore creation must have been or is, to have given rise to the delusion of creation. But this brings in a dualistic proposition.

Swamiji.— The man of realisation will in the first place refute your objection by stating that to his vision creation and things of that sort do not at all appear. He sees Brahman and Brahman alone. He sees the rope and not the snake. If you argue that you at any rate are seeing this creation, or snake,—then he will try to bring home to you the real nature of the

rope, with a view to curing your defective vision. When through his instructions and your reasoning you will be able to realise the truth of the rope, or Brahman, then this delusive idea of the snake, or creation, will vanish. At that time, what else can you call this delusive idea of creation, maintenance and dissolution, but a superimposition on the Brahman? If this appearance of creation etc. has continued as a beginningless series, let it do so; no advantage will be gained by settling this question. Until Brahman is realised as vividly as a fruit on the palm of one's hand, this question cannot be adequately settled, and then neither such a question crops up, nor is there need for a solution. The tasting of the reality of Brahman is then like a dumb man tasting something

nice, but without the power to express his feelings.

Disciple.— What then will be the use of reasoning about it so much?

Swamiji.— Reasoning is necessary to understand the point intellectually. But the Reality transcends reasoning—*नैषा तर्केण मतिराप्तेया*—“This conviction cannot be reached through reasoning.”

In the course of such conversation Swamiji reached the Math, accompanied by the disciple. Swamiji then explained to the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins of the Math the gist of to-day's discussion on Brahman. While going upstairs he remarked to the disciple, *नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः*—“This Atman cannot be attained by the weak.”

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

AMONG the various facts of the personality of the Swami Vivekananda, there is one which constitutes the very foundation of his being, the bed-rock, as it were, on which the aggregate of his multiform personality is reared. It is, that he was a monk, first, last and always. Strong, virile, manly, he moved fearlessly among all circumstances of life, standing as the champion of humanity, his mind rising to new heights in defence of the weak, the oppressed, his God, “the poor, the wicked, the poor of all races, of all species”; he appeared as the ideal householder with strong yearning to protect, to save and defend. But often this garment of the “warrior-monk” would slip and he would appear as the Ideal Monk with nothing in the world to interest him, full of the passionate longing for purity

chastity, and infinite idealisation of monkish poverty. In the West he passed through the complexities of social living, and amidst the surroundings and opportunities of Princes, but it left him only the simple Monk, disdainful of the material appanages of life, heedless of money, wealth or fame. Ignoring his world-wide reputation, he was ready to depart to be forgotten in retirement and silence and be again the nude, silent wanderer on the banks of the Ganges, of his early Parivrajaka days. The silent life of the wandering monk, bereft of all external trappings, the life of spiritual thought in unknownness and obscurity, and of unbounded freedom of the Soul, the uncertain shelter and subsistence uncared and unprovided for beforehand—he returned again and again upon this Vision, which

was verily the queen of the adoration of his heart. Caught in the entanglements of external life, how often he exclaims in his letters from the West, "How I long again for my old life of the Sannyasin, with the simple garment of the monk, my shelter under the trees and my food from *bhikshá*! Never before did I feel the vanity of all material circumstances of life so forcibly. India is the only country where with all its defects the soul finds its freedom."

Vivekananda the preacher, the patriot, the lover of humanity, the metaphysician and philosopher was adventurous superimposition; beneath these cloaks beat the heart of Vivekananda the Sannyasin, the Apostle of the Spirit of Man, distant of all dependence on material conditions. Such examples we need in this age of materialism, when men have bartered away their soul to matter and by apotheosising the world of matter and material adjuncts and comforts of life, are reduced to mere money-worshipping automata; these bright children of the Spirit will demonstrate to the material sceptics of the world that there yet breathed a man who was ready to accept all the conditions of modernity and to work a whole life joyful, free "for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many," working without any idea of requital, and not goaded to work by any selfish end or ambition; yet he did not care for all the wealth and fame that there might be in the world but renouncing all material emoluments wished to possess and bear witness only to the infinite, immortal Atman of man, mightier, more beloved and precious by far, than all the possessions and glamour of the world

He was an embodiment of the other ideal of the Sannyasin,—the ideal of Chastity. In the course of his chequered life, passing through different grades of society and diverse types of men, the purity of his heart was a great asset with him. In his dealings with men and women all over the world, some sort of spiritual relationship sprang up; somewhere he found a group of spiritual mothers, at others a group of spiritual daughters, and sisters, friends, brothers, or sons and disciples. Everywhere the blessed privilege of his relationship was a purifying, chastening and ennobling influence and was sought after eagerly by many who came in touch with his personality. How he was passionately followed by some of his disciples over whom was cast the magic charm of his personality, is narrated in his Life. As the Upanishads declare: Such a one (who has realised the Atman, who sees the unity of his Self with the Self of all) is verily sought after by all beings in the world. The serenity, the holiness that was writ on his face, the heavenly glow that lit up his countenance, the intense fascination that he spread round the souls of men were all the power of Eury by which he appealed to the Divine in man and stimulated the noblest elements in human character.

He had risen above the sex-idea, nay, he was born without it. In the Atman, there is no sex and it is only men who have been degraded to the animal, who see the difference of men and women. He rooted out this distinction and it was absolutely obliterated from his mind. How can one believe in the Atman, the glorious and pure Self of man, and again sink to the depths of degradation by accepting the bodily pleasures? The

setting sin of humanity is the sex-idea ; men in their weakness may make light of it and whittle down the enormity of its consequences, but to the Truth-seeker who aspires to live up, and bear witness to the Highest, it is the most formidable obstacle and bars the gate to all his progress. The thirst for the body is the bane of the world, and is bearing poisonous fruits. It has entered into the bone and marrow of existence and under a veneer of civilised reticence horrible enormities are committed, destroying the purity of human life and relations. The apotheosis of the body, the idealisation of mere sensuous and animal beauty has invaded whole pages of literature and vitiated human taste; even the so-called idealism that passes current in the world's market, expressed in poetry and art, is reared on the base of sense-pleasures and is animal beauty. It is a rotten corpse covered over with gold-leaf. Carnality is the surest way to death and extinction.

As an off-set and warning to worldly men the world needs bright examples of absolutely chaste powers who have killed the body-idea, risen above the thought of it,

pure in every atom of their being, to bear witness to the pure and effulgent Soul of Man. "Brahmacharya should be like a burning fire in the veins," the Swami told his disciples, and he was an embodiment of that. In his holy presence, one felt the burning glow of purity, sin and unholliness hid their heads and shrank away, and the fire of his purity infused into others made new men and women of them. It was this power of purity which gave such force and authority to his words, it was purity which was the sheet-anchor in his life, by the strength of which he defied all the powers of the universe and smiled at the form of Death.

Let us then on the occasion of his anniversary acclaim him as the Prince of monks, the Paragon Sannyasin who by his unblemished life has shed added lustre on the long line of Indian saints and Sannyasins, and enhanced the glory of the time-honoured and glorious institution of Sannyasa ; let those who have gathered under his banner, and the innumerable host of those who will come after strive to be loyal to his memory and to the ideals of Sannyasa, so nobly set by him.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S MESSAGE OF DIVINITY.

(SWAMI VISHUDDHANANDA)

I feel it a pleasant duty to present before the readers of this Vivekananda Number some of the salient points in the teachings of the great Swamiji. He came to us at a time when we needed him most. His sublime teachings have proved a panacea for many evils in this materialistic age. The glamour of the Western civilisation has blinded our vision of the glorious past of India and we

have long forgotten that we are the children of the Vedic sages and that we still possess the noble heritage of their spiritual treasure. It was Swamiji who had brought home to us the fact that we have the *strength and courage* to dig out the treasure-trove within ourselves and share the Divine Bliss with one another. Fearless as he always was, he boldly proclaimed the message to the world and

illuminated many a soul with those lofty and inspired teachings of the Vedanta.

Now Swamiji has been and is being accepted as a Teacher of modern India and his teachings have been gaining ground upon the minds of people who are earnest and sincere about knowing God and religion. And why should they not? The religion of the Vedanta, if properly understood and interpreted, is sure to help men of all creeds to know their purpose of life and ultimately lead them to the mine of Infinite happiness and bliss which is the divine heritage of every man. The Swamiji made a comparative study of all religions and found out that to understand the true import of the teachings of other religions, the study of the Vedanta was absolutely necessary. The Vedanta preaches Advaitism (non-duality), the identity of the individual soul with the universal Soul, as the Final Beatitude of life. No religion has attained such a climax as the Vedanta and the Truth it declares is represented in its various aspects in the different scriptures of other religions. "All religions are true," says the Swami, "if one is proved to be false, the others are sure to fall to pieces. The proof of one rests upon the proof of others." The Vedanta has no quarrel with any sects, it does not proselytize but gives a clear insight, if studied with an unbiassed mind, into the teachings of the various religions and thus helps us to find out the underlying principle in them. Hence the necessity for a comparative study of all religions in the light of Vedanta.

The Swamiji defines religion as "the manifestation of the Divinity already in man." He says, "Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest the Divinity within by controlling nature external and internal." To see this Divinity within and to become one with it is the supreme happiness of human life. Religion begins only when we catch a glimpse of the Divine soul. We may talk glibly of religion all our life and study the various scriptures of the world, but that

will be of no avail until we realise the Atman, the Divinity within us. To manifest it, the Swamiji lays down the four different methods of spiritual practice and urges us to adopt any one or more of them according as it suits us. He says, "Do this either by work or worship or psychic control or philosophy, by one or more or all of these and be free." Here he chalks out the four paths leading to the emancipation of the soul, viz, Karma, Bhakti, Yoga and Jnana. There are men of different tendencies and temperaments and each one is at liberty to choose and practise one or other of these Sadhanas to see the Divinity within. Here the question may arise: can this be practical? "Yes," says the Swamiji most emphatically, "our Rishis have seen God. We have now to realise Him within and cover everything with the Lord Himself, not by a false sort of optimism but by really seeing God inside everything." To believe that God is omnipotent, pervading everything and that we live and move and have our being in Him is the first step to get at this state. Then comes renunciation (Vairagya). It does not mean that a man should fly into the forest or shut himself up in the cave of the Himalayas. The Vedanta does not in reality denounce the world. By renunciation, the Swamiji means the deification of the world. Says the Swamiji, "Give up the world as we think of it, as we seem to know it, as it is appearing, and know *what it really is.*" When the Divinity within is made manifest, we see Oneness everywhere. Service love and compassion to all beings are transformed into the worship of God, seeing them as the veritable manifestations of the Divinity. The mere intellectual grasp of it will not do. The intellect helps us only to understand things in their true light. The inspiration must come from the heart. Hence to realise this Divinity the intellect should join the heart.

The Swamiji demands of us spiritual boldness. He says, "He is an atheist who does

not believe in himself." Here he exhorts us to believe in the effulgent glory of the Atman. He calls him an atheist who does not believe in the pristine purity of his Soul. There are some impediments in our way. It is we who have thrown them in our path. We have bound ourselves hand and foot to the world of senses. To what a miserable state we are driven by forgetting *what we really are!* We shall have to summon up spiritual boldness, shake off this delusion and recognise the *real man* in us. Ah, we clutch at shadows only and do not see the Reality behind! Swamiji says, "He is the Eternal witness of all knowledge. Whatever we know, we have to know in and through Him. He is the essence of our self." Nothing exists but Him. He stands unshaken behind this world of relativity, the vanities are all unreal. How boldly the Swamiji has preached the message of the Vedanta!

We have to unloose the tie of Avidyá (Nescience) with which we have fastened ourselves. The power to undo it is within us. We are alone responsible for what we have made ourselves. Believing in the infinite glory of the Atman, we have to throw the yoke of Avidyâ off our shoulders. It is foolishness to say that we are worked upon by other forces. This shows our lack of faith in the Omnipotence within. "The infinite power of the spirit," says the Swamiji, "brought to bear upon matter evolves material development, made to act upon thought evolves intelligence and made to act upon itself makes of man a God." This is indeed a tremendous faith which India needs to-day. The effulgent Atman is at the back of all these planes of existence—physical, mental and spiritual and manifests Its powers in them. It alone supports the universe. This we must recognise. All differences between man and man, between man and animal, nay between things animate and inanimate will cease to exist when we realise the All-blissful Atman. This is the ideal of our life. We

must know It. The Swamiji has made it easy and accessible for us. Each one of us can follow these sublime teachings of the Swamiji and put them into practice in his every-day life and attain the Life Divine.

In the Sankhya we are told that a king's son who was born under an unlucky star was stolen out of his father's kingdom and was left in charge of a pariah. He was brought up there and when he grew up he naturally thought that he was a pariah. The minister somehow came to know that the prince was alive and he called on him secretly and told him that he was the prince and not the pariah. His delusion vanished at once. He believed that he was a prince and assumed a truly royal bearing. In the same manner, the great Swamiji came to us with the Divine message to rouse us from our deep slumber and make us recover our real nature and thus realise the Divinity within.

EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(*Translated from Bengali.*)

CXLIX.

U S. A.
1895.

My dear —,

Yesterday I received a letter from you in which there was a smattering of news, but nothing in detail. I am much better now. Through the grace of the Lord I am proof against the severe cold of this year. Oh the terrible cold! But these people keep all down through scientific knowledge. Every house has its cellar underground, in which there is a big boiler whence steam is made to course day and night through every room. This keeps all the rooms warm, but it has one defect, that while it is summer indoors, it is 30 or 40 degrees below the freezing point outside! Most of the rich people of this

country make for Europe during the winter, which is comparatively warm.

Now, let me now give you some instructions. This letter is meant for you. Please go through these instructions once a day and act up to them. I have got S—'s letter—he is doing good work but now we want organisation. To him, T—and others please give my special love and blessings. The reason why I give you these few instructions is that there is an organising power in you—the Lord has made this known to me,—but not yet fully developed. Through His blessings it will soon be. That you never lose your centre of gravity is an evidence of this, but it must be both intensive and extensive.

1. All the Shastras hold that the three-fold misery that there is in this world, is not natural, hence it is removable.

2. In the Buddha Incarnation the Lord says that the root of the *ādhibhautika* misery, or misery arising from other terrestrial beings, is the formation of *classes (Jāti)*; in other words, every form of class-distinction, whether based on birth, or acquirements, or wealth is at the bottom of this misery. In the Atman there is no distinction of sex, or *Varna** or *Ashrama*, † or anything of the kind, and as mud cannot be washed away by mud, it is likewise impossible to bring about oneness by means of separative ideas.

3. In the Krishna Incarnation He says that the root of all sorts of misery is *Avidya* (Nescience) and that selfless work purifies the mind. But "कि कर्म किमकर्मेति" &c —"Even sages are bewildered to decide what is work and what is no-work." (Gita)

4. Only that kind of work which develops our spirituality is work. Whatever fosters materiality is no-work.

5. Therefore work and no-work must be

* The four principal castes, viz. Brāhmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra.

† The four orders of life, viz. Brahmacharya, Gāhasthya, Vānaprastha and Sannyasa.

regulated by a person's aptitude, his country, and his age.

6. Works such as sacrifices were suited to the olden times, but are not for the modern times.

7. From the date that the Ramakrishna Incarnation was born, has sprung the Satya Yuga (Golden Age). * *

8. In this Incarnation atheistic ideas, * * will be destroyed by the sword of Jnanam (knowledge), and the whole world will be unified by means of Bhakti (Devotion) and Prema (Divine Love). Moreover, in this Incarnation, *Rajas*, or the desire for name and fame etc, is altogether absent. In other words, blessed is he who acts up to His teachings; whether he accepts Him or not, does not matter.

9. The founders of different sects, in the ancient or modern times, have not been in the wrong. They have done well, but they must do better. Well—better—best.

10. Therefore we must take all up where they are, that is, we must lead them on to higher and higher ideals, without upsetting their own chosen attitude. As to social conditions, those that prevail now are good, but they shall be better—best.

11. There is no chance for the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved. It is not possible for a bird to fly on only one wing.

12. Hence, in the Ramakrishna Incarnation, the acceptance of a woman as the Guru, hence His practising in the woman's garb and attitude,* hence too His preaching the Motherhood of women, as representations of the Divine Mother.

13. Hence it is that my first endeavour is to start a Math for women. This Math shall be the origin of Gargis and Maitreyis, and women of even higher attainments than these. * *

* For some time Sri Ramakrishna dressed himself as a woman and practised Sadhana conceiving himself as a woman, to get rid of the sex-idea.

14. No great work can be achieved by humbug. It is through Love, a passion for Truth, and tremendous energy, that all undertakings are accomplished. तन् कुरु पौरुषम्—“Therefore, manifest your manhood.”

15. There is no need for quarrel or dispute with anybody. Give your message and leave others to their own thoughts. “सत्यमेव जयते नानृतम्”—“Truth alone triumphs, not falsehood.” तदा किं विवादेन—“Why then fight?”

* * Combine seriousness with childlike naïveté. Live in harmony with all. Give up all idea of egoism, and entertain no sectarian views. Useless wrangling is a great sin.

* * From S—'s letter I came to know that N— Ghosh has compared me with Jesus Christ, and the like. That kind of thing may pass muster in our country, but if you send them here in print, there is a chance of my being insulted! I mean, I do not like to hamper anybody's freedom of thought,—am I a Missionary? If K— has not sent those papers to this country, tell him not to do it. Only the Address will do, I do not want the proceedings. Now many respectable ladies and gentlemen of this country hold me in reverence. The missionaries and others of that ilk have tried their utmost to put me down but finding it useless, have now become quiet. Every undertaking must pass through a lot of obstacles. Truth triumphs

if only one pursues a peaceful course. I have no need to reply to what a Mr. H— has spoken against me. In the first place, it is unnecessary, and secondly, I shall be bringing myself down to the level of people of Mr. H—'s type. Are you mad? Shall I fight from here with one Mr. H—? Through the Lord's grace, people who are far above Mr. H— in rank listen to me with veneration. Please do not send any more papers. Let all that go on in India, it will do no harm. For the Lord's work at one time there was need for that kind of newspaper blazoning. When that is done, there no more need for it. * * It is one of the attendant evils of name and fame that you can't have anything private. * * Before you begin any undertaking, pray to Sri Ramakrishna and He will show you the right way. We want a big plot of land to begin with, then building and all will come. Slowly our Math is going to raise itself, don't worry about it. * *

K— and all others have done good work. Give my love and best wishes to all. Work in unison with the people of Madras, and let someone or other amongst you go there at intervals. Give up for ever the desire for name and fame and power. While I am on earth, Sri Ramakrishna is working through me. So long as you believe in this, there is no danger of any evil for you.

(To be continued)

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(SWAMI MADHAVANANDA)

NATURE abhors vacuum. Whenever there is a lack of something in one part of nature the deficiency is supplied from other parts, for nature is homogeneous and continuous. Science proves that this is so in the material plane. In the mental and spiritual planes too, the same law holds good.

Reviewing the state of affairs in the world as they were a generation or two ago one finds as if

there were no principle anywhere, a state of chaos seemed to reign in the East as well as in the West. People seem to have forgot the ideals of their lives and by a sort of gravitation as it were tended more and more to materialistic tendencies, in place of spiritual. The West was avowedly so; the East, dazzled by the apparent splendour of the West, followed also in her wake, leaving her traditional spirituality aside. The dictum of 'Might is right,'

and 'Everyone for himself' seems to have been the motto of races which prided themselves on their civilisation. It seemed as if matter would rule spirit, selfishness override unselfishness, and heterogeneity stamp out unity. While the uncivilised races were asleep, leading at best a beastlike existence.

But such a negative state could not long continue. Nature's God had seen the inverted order of things and created a counter-current to stem the tide of advancing materialism, of which the world to-day hears only the first faint murmurs. We allude to the advent of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and his worthy disciple, the Swami Vivekananda.

Sri Ramakrishna, by dint of wonderful realisations unheard of in the world's history, came to know what has been taught again and again by the world's most ancient Scriptures—viz., the basic unity of all creation. He also clearly understood that the many was the outcome of the One, and that there was a bond of unity among all the different presentments. At no time was the world so full of divergent elements and never did man combine in himself so many varying realisations as did Sri Ramakrishna. His burning love for the universe set himself to share his unique experiences with the whole world, and Nature furnished him with the best instrument he could ever have for this purpose in the person of the future Swami Vivekananda. When the Guru and the disciple are both of an extraordinary type, then is the real manifestation of the highest knowledge. And this marvellous union of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda has ushered into the world a flood of spirituality which was never before witnessed on earth. We shall not discuss how much the disciple got from his Master, and what was his own contribution to it, for an ideal disciple is the exact mirror of his Guru, he has to *assimilate* the Master's teachings and make himself the selfless instrument whereby the Guru's message is carried from corner to corner of the globe. For practical purposes, it will be best to treat Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda as a composite personality, as two facets of the same thing, the two together making the circuit of galvanic spirituality complete.

As in the case of Sri Ramakrishna, so in Swami's case also, the realisation of Advaita—the

One without a second—was the central pivot on which all the other aspects of his personality were balanced. Through the Guru's blessings the Swami Vivekananda got this highest realisation in the very prime of youth, and succeeded in perfectly assimilating it before he attained the age of thirty. As he himself playfully expressed it to one of his brother disciples, "I have finished all that there was to be achieved within twenty-nine years." As soon as he was ripe to deliver his message of uplift to the world, there was a field ready for him in the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. To move the world a good fulcrum is needed, and the Chicago Parliament served as that point to the Swami.

The Chicago Parliament is one of the turning points of history. It was convened for the glorification of Christianity, but by an irony of Fate the scales were turned, and instead of bringing Christianity to the forefront, it proved a triumph for a pagan religion—Vedanta, and the representative of this religion was no other than the Swami Vivekananda. He had made his mark. The doors of the civilised world were thrown open to him. America and Europe listened with admiration to the words of this young scion of the ancient Rishis of India. Having sown the seeds of world-federation in the West, the Swami came back to the land of his birth and set himself to give out his experiences to his countrymen.

He boldly voiced forth the teachings of the Vedanta, clothing the wonderful truths of unity-in-variety with a forceful and intelligible language, so that the modern man and woman might grasp them with ease. What did say? He said: Every being is as it were a sun hidden under a veil of clouds. The difference between one being and another is in the density of these clouds. Behind these clouds the Sun of Atman is ever shining in his majesty. Only, through ignorance we have forgotten our real nature, and we shall again have that freedom when we know our real self. "Awake, arise, and stop not till the goal is reached," he thundered. He bade all be of good cheer, for there was chance for everyone, aye, even the lowest. Only remove the veil, and the Truth will appear. And since knowledge is power, therefore by knowing our real nature we shall cease to be weak. It is spirit that rules matter, he proclaimed, and

nature will be our servant if we become conscious of our glory, for we are nothing less than the birthless, deathless, immutable Atman. The Swami was a believer in Karma. If we have become miserable by our evil actions, he argued, then we can again become pure and perfect by our good actions. So we must have Shraddhâ or unflinching faith in ourselves. This word Shraddhâ was a great word with the Swami, and he insisted on our rousing up this Shraddhâ through Brahmacharya or chastity, study of the Upanishads and Vedânta, and acting upon this knowledge of Oneness.

He repudiated the constant brooding on sin, in fact all negative thoughts. Instead of harping on our weaknesses, he has advised us to meditate on the good side of our character. Purity, patience, and perseverance he held as the key to success. According to Swami, life means a lost balance, a struggle to regain the lost equilibrium. Perfect sameness would mean the cessation of the universe as it is, and our life's problem will be solved if we attain this attitude of sameness to all beings, and to all states of experience. For are we not the eternal Witness? We must look at the manifested universe as an on-looker appreciates a beautiful picture. This is the way to bliss—to be unattached. This is the keynote of the Swami's philosophy of Work,—to be in the world but not of it. His Advaita was not an intellectual abstraction, it was a living, dynamic religion, which must be applied to every phase of life and bring about a complete "regeneration of man the brute into man the God," throughout the world. Nothing short of this was his aim—to help the world to get back its lost individuality—its perfection as Atman.

Grounded on the rock of Advaita he could easily see the meaning of unselfish work, of the Utilitarian principle—'Greatest good of the greatest number,'—for in reality there was but one existence, not two. An out and out Advaitin, he insisted on the service of all creatures, looking upon them as God manifest on earth. This service, he said, should take different forms, according to the particular needs of the case. Some may need a little material development, others intellectual, while yet others spiritual. This service should be done in the proper spirit, not in the haughty attitude of a rich man making a charity of a penny to a beggar,

but fully believing it is the Lord almighty who has Himself come to me, in the garb of the poor, the hungry, the down-trodden and the ignorant, to give me an opportunity to better *myself* by performing an act of *service*. It shall be worship, not charity as it is commonly understood. This is one of the Swami's marvellous inaugurations. And that it was a crying need in India, is proved from the readiness with which the country has taken it up. This removing of physical wants the Swami urged, from his intimate knowledge of every nook and corner of Indian society as an itinerant, as the first step towards improvement in impoverished countries like India. It is blasphemy, he said, to preach religion to a famished people. He strenuously exhorted our countrymen to devise improved means of growing food-stuffs, and take steps to improve the physique of the people by introducing sanitary modes of living. As days pass by, this makes itself more and more a necessity, for India is now being constantly ravaged by famines, and floods, penury and all kinds of pestilential disease, so much so that one may rightly ask how long the nation will live if these are not promptly checked by the organised unselfish labour of the countrymen themselves. It is a hopeful sign that the country is slowly awakening to her needs, but it should be inclusive and the leaders of the different societies must be wholly unselfish and actuated by an intense love for their fellow-beings. India is a vast country and has been long subjected to oppression from within and without. Hence it will take her some time to recover the use of her limbs and be herself again.

She needs education too, the training of her intellectual faculties. Compared with other civilised countries she lags sadly behind in education, only a handful of her middle classes now enjoying this privilege, and that also of a questionable kind, for it is, as the Swami was not slow to point out, mostly negative and destructive, instead of, as it should be, positive and constructive. The Swami bitterly resented the present Godless system of education in vogue in the schools and colleges of modern India, and advocated a revival of the ancient system of living with the Guru as a Brahmachari, and imbibing secular and spiritual knowledge through both precept and example. The masses and the women of India are most in need

of education, and Swamiji sincerely believed that most of the problems that at present await solution concerning them would be satisfactorily solved by themselves through education. According to him, instead of settling such momentous questions as the labour problem and the widow-remarriage problem from the standpoint of laymen and outsiders, it should be our duty to spread the light of education among them, which will enable them to see their own position clearly and introduce the necessary changes for their betterment. For every growth, the Swami held, must be spontaneous and from within. While deprecating the illiterate state of our masses, he however emphatically pointed out that our masses are a head and shoulders above those of all other countries in point of morality, despite the malicious assertions of interested parties to the contrary. In this connection, with a prophet's vision he predicted that the coming age would see the ascendancy of the Sudra power, and instead of being the hewers of wood and drawers of water, as they had so long been, they would have the ruling power. The student of the present day politics knows very well how these prophetic utterances bid fair to be shortly fulfilled.

Last, but not least, comes the question of Religion. Swamiji was never weary of pressing its importance in regulating our lives, and he believed it to be the special field for India. He showed that while the ancestors of the Western nations sought explanations of their questionings from without, India, with truer instinct, went inside. The result was that while Western civilisation, typified by ancient Greece, became outgoing in its energies, and tried to solve the human problems from the standpoint of matter, India became introspective and brought out the lofty ideal of spiritual oneness, the Advaita. The ideal of the West became Bhôga—enjoyment, that of the East Tyaga—Renunciation. The former clung to the "I," the latter to the "not I, but thou." For to see any break in the unity of existence means to the true Indian the greatest of sins. And so long as spirit will control matter, India will remain the Teacher of all other countries. Having reached this Advaitic solution, it was easy for her to preach the idea of harmony and co-operation, and her influence, the Swami took pride in showing, was like that of the gentle dew, falling unseen, yet

causing the fairest of flowers to bloom. Truth is one, the Swami declared, but its presentations might be many, each representing a stage in the progress of the soul towards unity. And each of these presentations constitutes a religion, while the soul of all religions is the Advaita Vedanta,—“whose authority is the Sruti, Gita its divine commentary, the Sântaka Sûtras its recognised system, and all the different sects of India, from the Paramahansa Parvîâjakas to the poor despised Mehtar disciples of Lalgaru, are different manifestations.” Nowhere, the Swami held, was religious toleration more noticeable than in India. And according to him, we progress not from error to truth, but from lower truth to higher truth.—Just the sort of lesson to learn in these days of strife, when the right of a race to exist seems to depend on its being strong enough to survive this struggle for existence.

This marvellous development of religion Swamiji attributed to the freedom it obtained. Society also was not originally bound by so rigid laws as at present. There was not an unbridgeable chasm between one caste and another, the whole question being at first decided by Gunas, tendencies or fitness of particular individuals for special kinds of work. It was purely a division of labour at the outset. As if by a tacit mutual agreement the four different castes chose their respective occupations, just as in the same family different members perform different functions and yet are considered as entitled to the same sort of privileges in it. Those who excelled in learning were the Brâhmanas, those who developed the fighting power became the Kshatriyas, those who had the power of wealth by trade and other means became the Vaisyas, and those who had none of these three sources of strength lived by serving the other classes, and were called Sudras. This worked smoothly so long as the ideal remained in view and there was love among the parties, as among children of the same father. But gradually, through the lapse of time, people came to forget the lofty ideals; what was based on qualifications came to be confined to birth, and the bane of privilege or exclusive rights spoiled the happy state of harmony. Each section thought it had the monopoly of the good things of the earth, in as much as it contributed—so it thought most to the society's well-being. But a

house divided against itself cannot stand, and quarrel and dissension made this beautiful world extremely ugly. Now the one, now the other power became predominant, and tried to keep the others out of their exclusive area, the Sudras facing the worst in the fight, for the Brâhmanas being the makers of Shastras went so far as to declare that if any Sudra heard the Vedas he must have his ears stopped with molten lead! The wheel of time rolled on and on, the kingly power, which, by the bye, had much more toleration in spiritual matters than the Brâhmanas, had its day, and made the latter thralls to their wishes. The Vaisya or the moneyed classes also have had their turn, as may be seen in the West to this day, swaying over the kingly and other powers. Now the turn of the Sudra is coming too, for Democracy is the watchword of the day.

A perfect society ought to be an efficient help-mate of religion. It should find scope for the free play of the spiritual forces in the land. This must specially be so in India, for religion is the very life of India. Swamiji's idea was to combine our religion with a society as free as that of Europe. This, he pointed out, might be effected, not by demolishing the caste-distinctions, but by doing away with the exclusive privileges. He showed that because one man excelled in ruling a state, while another in sweeping the dust of the street, there was no reason why the former should monopolise to himself all the fat of the land whereas the latter would live a mere drudge all his life with scarcely a full meal a day. Swamiji's Advaitic instinct rebelled against this kind of invidious distinction as regards enjoyment, and he strongly spoke in favour of an equalisation of privilege among all. A champion of the weak and down-trodden, he would pass sleepless nights in thinking out means for the amelioration of the Indian poor, and like a true Sannyasin boldly asserted the claims of these mute, suffering millions, for were they not also images of the Most High?

Caste must be a step to that high realisation where there is no caste. Through caste we must rise to beyond caste. And the caste-rules ought to be modified accordingly. The ideal was to raise the Sudra and all other castes to the level of the Brâhmana. And this should be done by the Brâhmanas themselves coming forward, as a sort of

expiation for their once exclusiveness, to open the gates of Sanskrit culture to all. With characteristic insight the Swami pointed out that the Sutris, being the revelation of universal truths, could alone remain unchanged, but other scriptures classed under the general name of Smritis, dealing with relative truths, must change with the exigencies of the time. You cannot squeeze a grown up man into a child's coat. Ever since the advent of the English in India the East and the West have been thrown together in a hundred relations. The commercial facilities which the English power has created have linked the people of the East and the West and new problems demand solution. The social rules have now to be revised to suit the times, and Swami Vivekananda has recommended an interchange of the ideals of the East and West as conducive to the welfare of both. The recent world-war has remarkably paved the way for such a union, for the East has fought side by side with the West, and Eastern money and materials have equipped Western fighters. Thus an unheard of situation has been presented by this war which has, it seems, sounded the death-knell of materiality, and once again in the world's history, Indian thoughts have got an excellent opportunity for bringing about an uplift of the human race. When Swamiji went for the second time to the West in 1900, he quickly observed the change of spirit among the English people, who were making ready to keep pace with the increasing material power on the Continent, and not deeming it a fit season for the dissemination of Vedanta, he went over to America. Now the Time spirit has shifted the scene. In the crucible of this fierce war races have melted and who knows what new nation will arise out of this fusion of the Orient and the Occident? Whatever may be the form, one who has the eyes to see, cannot fail to grasp the meaning of Swamiji's pregnant words: "Europe and America are now looking towards India with expectant eyes,—this is the time for philanthropy. this is the time to occupy the hostile strongholds.Conquest of England, Europe, and America—this should be our one supreme Mantiam at present, in it lies the well-being of the country. Expansion is the sign of life, and we must spread over the world with our spiritual ideals." In exchange for this we shall have to learn secular wisdom at their hands. Thus

will be established a bond of friendship between the East and the West. For India, inspite of her deluded notion that she is highly Sâttvika, is at present dreadfully Tâmasika, and Rajas is first needed to drive out this Tamas. There is an ocean of difference between profession and action, we must no more talk high philosophy, but live it in our every-day actions.

Swamiji fervently believed that India's welfare depended on a band of Tyagis or men of renunciation who would carry the torch of Vedanta to every door, and serve in every possible way to help people to appreciate its teachings. He wanted this band of selfless workers to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, nurse the sick, educate the illiterate, irrespective of creed or colour, live ideal lives of chastity and poverty, and become in fact the leaven of society for its regeneration. Not only was it his cherished ideal to start monasteries for men but nunneries for women also. The Ramakrishna Mission has been the outcome of this desire of his in the first direction, but he did not live to see the nucleus of a nunnery started in the Sister Nivedita Girls' School, Calcutta. Posterity will surely fulfil the Swami's aspirations in this direction.

Swami Vivekananda was an epitome of all that was great and good in the India of the past, and all that is also potentially great and good in her. With Sankara's intellect he combined Buddha's heart. Christ's renunciation, and the Prophet of Arabia's spirit of equality, and the result of this holy confluence will in time flood the whole world. Though he was the most accomplished of men, none possessed greater humility or genuine devotion to the Guru than Swamiji, and his lion-heart throbbed with surging emotions whenever Sri Ramakrishna's sacred name was mentioned in his presence. Had Sri Ramakrishna not been born into the world, the world would have worshipped the Swami Vivekananda himself with divine honours, —so great was Swamiji and of so multi-sided a personality. But he believed from the bottom of his heart, that he owed everything to the divine touch of that wonderful man. To quote his own words: "And if there has ever been a word of truth, a word of spirituality, that I have spoken anywhere in the world, I owe it to my Master, only the mistakes are mine." His love for his brother-disciples also was unique, and was the admiration of the Sadhus of Hishi-

kesh and other places, who could not understand how a Paramahansa of his type could be so full of the spirit of loving service to his Gurubhais. But Swamiji was born to beat all record. Well might Sri Ramakrishna say, "There has never been a personality like Noren's, nor will there ever be." Only a jeweller knows the merit of jewels, the laymen will only display their ignorance by trying to value them.

Swamiji himself declared, he wanted to be "a voice without a form," the unattached spokesman of the message of his beloved Gurudeva. And if we look into the present literary activities of India and abroad, into what is being given out from the Press and the Platform, do we not find everywhere an echo of the harmony and freedom, of brotherliness and love for which the Swamiji stood pledged and which he so eloquently proclaimed before all the world? Some acknowledge the indebtedness, others may not, but the careful reader never fails to understand where the wind is blowing from. And the spirit of Swamiji must be glad at the phenomenon, for what did he care for personal name and fame so long as his Master's teachings were appreciated all over?

As to his power of eloquence who shall describe it? As one of his brother-disciples put it, "His words seemed to bring the dead back to life!"—So fiery and enthusiastic they were! For he threw his whole soul into the conversation or lecture. He used to carry his audience to the ethereal heights of Advaitic Oneness, where there is neither aught nor naught, where the least breath of duality is an intrusion. Truly has it been remarked by another fellow-disciple of his, "His words are not mere letters, but spirit itself!" Every sincere reader will testify to the truth of this statement from his own experience.

Let us conclude this imperfect sketch with a few quotations from Swamiji's delineation of India's part in the world-economy. He exclaims:

"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.

"First, let us be Gods, and then help others to be Gods. 'Be and make.' Let this be our motto."

"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."

"You must give up. Be great..... Bring all the

forces of good together. Do not care under what banner you march. Do not care what be your colour, green, blue or red, but mix all the colours up and produce that intense glow of white, the colour of love. Ours is to work. The results will take care of themselves.....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 sitting on her throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than ever. Proclaim her to all the world with the voice of peace and benediction."



WITH THE SWAMIS IN AMERICA

VI.

DURING one of his classes in San Francisco, the Swami Turiyananda had told his students how his Master had told him that first of all he should try to realise God and then he could live and work in the world. "Be like the lotus leaf," the Master had said. "The lotus leaf floats on the surface of the water but no water adheres to the leaf. Or, be like butter. Before the milk is churned the butter is mixed with the milk, but after churning the milk, the butter floats on top, and can no longer be mixed with the milk. So first churn your mind and get the butter of realisation. Then you can live in the world without fear of getting entangled again."

And now on their way to the Ashrama, the Swami turned to the youngest student in the party and said: "Well, Ida, why did you come with us? You are only a young girl, what shall you do there?" "Oh, Swami," she replied, "I go there because I want to become butter." The answer pleased the Swami immensely. "Yes, certainly," he said, "you will become butter, if you try hard."

After a pleasant journey then, the party reached what was to be their new abode. Far, far away from human habitation the place stretched out before them in a rolling hilly country. Oak, pine, chaparral, chamisal and manzanita covered part of the land, the other part was flat and covered with grass. Here in the solitary forest retreat the

students were to live with their teacher. They had left friends and home and luxury to give themselves up to God, to realize His presence within their own hearts, to hear, to meditate on, to realise the Truth taught by Vedanta. Here they were to forget what the world holds so dear, here they were to search for Him, "who is nearer to us than anything, the Atman, dearer than a son, dearer than wealth, dearer than all," here they wanted to rise to that realm which lies "beyond hunger and thirst, sorrow, passion, old age and death, beyond the desire for sons, wealth and heaven," here they would strive to stand in the strength of their real Self,—to reach that state of which the Rishis have spoken: "Then a father is no longer father, a mother no longer mother, the world no longer world, a thief no longer thief. He who has realised this state is not affected by good and evil, for he has then overcome all the sorrows of the heart." It was a noble step that these few students had taken. And the reward would be theirs in varying degrees. None ever left the Ashrama just the same as he had entered there. The fire was burning and none did escape its beneficial warmth, a spark was caught by everyone.

But on arriving difficulties presented themselves. Where to sleep? There was only one old log cabin. Where to get water? It had to be brought from a long distance. The Swami was a little disheartened. He walked up and down "Where

have you brought us?" he said to one of the students. But the students were Americans from the old stock of early pioneers, who had braved danger and difficulties without a murmur as in their big wagons they had travelled from Eastern States, for months together, through deserts and over mountain passes, fording rivers and crossing prairies, and always safe from the attack of red Indians, to reach the far, wild West, as California was called in the old days. These descendants of that hardy race were not so easily to be daunted. Some of them knew camp-life and they soon made things bearable. But the Swami feared that the hardships might be too severe for them and he complained to the Divine Mother as he paced up and down: "Mother, what have you done? What do you mean by this? These people will die; no shelter, no water, what shall they do?"

One of the students not understanding this mood thought that the Swami had lost faith. She went to him and said: "Swami, why are you dejected? Where is your Mother? Have you lost faith in Her? Do not fear, She will make everything all right." The Swami was struck with wonder. This woman, he thought, accustomed to a pleasant home and easy city-life is so brave! He straightened up and said, "Yes, you are right, Mother will protect us. How great is your faith! Your name henceforth will be *Shraddhâ*' (One who has firm faith in God). And *Shraddhâ* she was called ever since.

Gradually things came into shape. Tents were pitched, a well was dug and a meditation cabin was erected. One gentleman was especially helpful in arranging everything. He was energetic, handy with tools and always obliging, helping where help was needed. The Swami loved him and called him *Sadhu Charan* (Follower of the sages). And so in a short time the place was made more comfortable and a life of daily routine was established.

We used to rise at five o'clock in the morning and the Swami and the men would take their bath at the well at some distance from the main camp. This habit was kept up summer and winter. In the winter we had to take a lantern to light our way and it would sometimes be so cold that on returning from our bath we found that our wet

towels were frozen stiff. Then a fire was lit in the meditation room (in the summer we meditated under the trees) and we would all gather there. The Swami chanted and then we meditated for one hour. After meditation the women prepared breakfast, the men engaged in different duties, carrying water from the well, chopping wood, planting a vegetable garden, building wooden cabins etc. The Swami took a lively interest in everything and he shared heartily in the work. At eight o'clock breakfast was served in the canvas dining room. The mountain air and the exercise had given us a good appetite and we were in the pink of health. Breakfast was a most enjoyable hour. The Swami would talk on all kinds of subjects and everyone joined in the conversation. But the Swami was always careful to keep the drift of the conversation in a certain direction. With all our fun and joking, the object of our life was never lost sight of.

After breakfast each one attended to his duties and at ten o'clock we would meet again for one hour's Gita class followed by one hour of meditation. At one o'clock dinner, supper at seven, and again meditation in the evening. At ten o'clock in the evening each one retired to his tent. This was the general routine, but the Swami was up and doing all the time,—now speaking to one, now to another. He spoke always about "Mother." Sometimes the Swami would call out "Think of Mother, forget your worldly things. Here it must be only Mother, no city here, forget all that and think of Her." When he found the students talking together he would come up smiling and say: "What are you talking about? Talk together of Mother, try to be close to Her."

Once one of us asked: "Swami, what do you mean by Mother?" "Mother is everything," the Swami replied, "She is everything and everywhere. Do you hear the bird? Listen! *Tui, tui!* The bird is calling Mother. *Tui* means Thou in my language. The bird is calling Thou, Thou! Always say 'Thou, Thou, not I, not I. The Master taught us that. Then in time you will know what Mother is

(To be continued).

A BRAHMACHARIN.



VIVEKACHUDAMANI

(continued from page 46.)

सत्यं यदि स्याज्जगदेतदात्मना

न तत्त्वहानिर्निगमाप्रभाणता ।

असत्यवादित्वमपीशितुः स्या-

न्नैतत्त्रयं साधु हितं महात्मनाम् ॥२३२॥

232. If the universe were real as it is, there would be no cessation of the dualistic element, the Scriptures would be falsified, and the Lord Himself would become guilty of an untruth : None of these three is considered either desirable or wholesome by the noble-minded.

[*No cessation... element*—The world as it is would become real, and as such could never be destroyed. Hence the duality with all its ugly features would persist.

Scriptures .. falsified—According to staunch Advaitins the numerous Advaitic texts of the Srutis, inculcating the highest philosophic thought, are alone considered as bearing out the true import of the Srutis, to which the rest of the Vedas must be subordinated.

The Lord etc —being the Revealer of the truths of the Srutis. Or the allusion may be to Sri Krishna's words in the Gita quoted in the next verse.]

ईश्वरो वस्तुतत्त्वज्ञो न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ।

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानीत्येवमेव व्यचीकल्पत् ॥२३३॥

233. The Lord, who knows the secret of all things, has supported this view in the words—"But I am not in them," "And the beings are not in Me."

[*Who knows &c.*—Because He is Omniscient.

"*But I am not etc*"—The reference is to the 4th and 5th Slokas of the 9th chapter of the Gita which declare that all existence owes its being to Brahman which is its substratum, yet Absolute.]

यदि सत्यं भवेद् विश्वं सुषुप्तावुपलभ्यताम् ।

यन्नोपलभ्यते किञ्चिदतोऽसत्स्वप्नवन्मृषा ॥२३४॥

234. If the universe be true, be it then perceived in the state of deep sleep also. As it is not at all perceived in that state, it must be unreal and false, like dreams.

अतः पृथङ्नास्ति जगत्परात्मनः

पृथक्प्रतीतिस्तु सृष्टा गुणादिवत् ।

आरोपितस्यास्ति किमर्थवत्ता-

धिष्ठानमाभाति तथा भ्रमेण ॥२३५॥

235. Therefore the universe does not exist apart from the Supreme Self ; and the perception of its separateness is false like the qualities (of blueness etc. in the sky). Has a superimposed attribute any meaning apart from its substratum? It is the substratum that appears like that through delusion.

[*Qualities of blueness etc.*—See Sloka 185.

It is the substratum &c—The rope appears as the snake. This idea is made clear in the next few Slokas.]

भ्रान्तस्य यद्यद्भ्रमतः प्रतीतं

ब्रह्मैव तत्तद्रजतं हि शुक्तिः ।

इदन्तया ब्रह्म सदैव रूप्यते

त्वारोपितं ब्रह्मणि नाममात्रम् ॥२३६॥

236. Whatever a deluded man perceives through mistake, is Brahman and Brahman alone: The silver is nothing but the mother-of-pearl. It is Brahman which is always considered as this universe, whereas that which is superimposed on the Brahman, viz. the universe, is merely a name.

अतः परं ब्रह्म सद्वितीयं

विशुद्धविज्ञानघनं निरञ्जनम् ।

प्रशान्तमाद्यन्तविहीनमक्रियं

निरन्तरानन्दरसस्वरूपम् ॥२३७॥

237. Hence whatever there manifests, viz. this universe, is the Supreme Brahman Itself, the Real, the One without a second, Pure, the Essence of Knowledge, the Taintless, Pacified, devoid of beginning and end, beyond activity, the Essence of Bliss Absolute. (To be continued.)

FAMINE IN MANBHUM & BANKURA.

Ramkrishna Mission's Work & Appeal.

The generous public is fully conscious from our last appeal about the dire distress that has menaced at present the people of the district of Manbhum. The condition of the people is getting worse every day. The area affected is so vast that in comparison with it our one centre of relief at Bagda in Thana Pancha to help the 11 villages included in it, is a mere drop in the desert. For want of proper funds we are failing to give adequate relief even to this small area. While in the most affected tracts the people are living on wild plums, leaves etc. Our agent says, in a modest estimate 8 to 10 thousand rupees per month will be necessary to keep the body and soul together of the men of the whole affected area, and if urgent relief measures are not taken immediately the consequence will be serious.

Besides the above, we are receiving appeals for help from the flood-washed area of North Bengal. Before the inhabitants could fully recover, with the help of the generous public, from the effects of the flood, they are finding themselves facing starvation at present, owing to the failure of the Rabi and Aman crops of their fields. So in dire necessity they are again appealing to their generous countrymen to save them.

Under the circumstances we appeal to our generous countrymen and philanthropic bodies to strengthen our hands with money or in kind and invite them to come to these affected parts, if possible, to help their distressed brothers.

Any contribution in money or cloth, however small, will be thankfully received and acknowledged at the following addresses:—(1) The President, Ramkrishna Mission, Belur, Howrah, (2) The Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission, Udbodhan Office, 1 Mukherji Lane, Baghbazari, Calcutta.

The following letter has been written by the Magistrate of Bankura, dated the 1st February 1919 to the President Ramkrishna Mission, Belur Math:

“Dear Sir,—The people of this district have barely had time to recover from the effects of the Famine of 1915-16 when your Society so nobly co-operated with the Government in relieving the distress, when owing to the early cessation of the rains this season's Aman rice crop, which is the chief harvest of the district, failed. The failure is however more extensive in the south and west portion of the district which contains a large thriftless aboriginal population. This combined with the prevailing high prices and the recent visitations of influenza is already causing some distress among the poor in these parts and the District

Board has found it necessary to open works and to make arrangements for the distribution of gratuitous relief doles. The resources of the District Board here are, however, limited and though Government will do everything that is necessary to supplement them, there is, in circumstances like the present, always room for charitable bodies like yours to exercise their beneficent functions. If your Society desires to take up local relief work, as on the last occasion, I shall be glad to assign an area to it. If, however, it be not in a position to undertake measures, any other help from it in the shape of donations in cash or kind, especially in the way of free distributions of cloth, will be welcomed. The favour of an early reply is requested.”

6th February, 1919.

Saradananda.

Calcutta.

Secy, R. K. Mission.

THE FIFTY-SEVENTH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF THE SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

THE 57th birthday anniversary of the Swami Vivekananda was celebrated on Sunday, the 26th January, 1919 at the Ramakrishna Math, Belur. Swamiji's room and Samadhi temple were tastefully decorated, and the whole Math wore a gala appearance. Vast crowds of devotees and admirers assembled to do honour to the loving memory of Swamiji. The feeding of the poor, whom Swamiji used to hold as the Lord Himself in different forms, was an important and edifying feature of the day's festivities. The feelings which this solemn occasion evoked in the minds of all present can better be imagined than described,—the place was so full of tender reminiscences of the great Swami.

The Tithi-puja had been duly observed on the preceding Thursday, and a few young members initiated into Brahmacharya.

Swamiji's 57th anniversary was successfully celebrated at Ranchi-Duranda, on the 26th Jan. A big meeting was held at 4 p. m. in the Durgapuja Hall, when Sri Jatindra Kumari Ghosh read a thoughtful paper on the life and teachings of Swamiji. Among other interesting items, the extempore lecture of a lay disciple of Swamiji on the same topic was most captivating. The Tithi-puja had been observed on the 23rd. Prasada was distributed on both occasions.

The 57th anniversary of Swamiji was celebrated under the auspices of the Calcutta Vivekananda Society (78-1 Cornwallis Street) on the 2nd February, at 3.30 p. m. in the University Institute Hall. There was a large and distinguished gathering. The proceedings commenced with the melodious 'kirtan' of Pundit Dinesh Chandra Bhaktavatsala Babu Sachindia Nath Mukerjee in an eloquent speech in

Bengali then explained the objects of the meeting and proposed the Hon'ble Maharaja Sri Manindra Chandra Nandy Bahadur of Cosmabazar to the chair. The Maharaja Bahadur, on taking the chair, read an impressive paper in which he brought out the secrets of the Swami's greatness. He paid a high tribute to the humanitarian work in which the Ramkrishna Mission had been engaged with such gratifying results to the cause of suffering humanity. The Swami, he said, inculcated that the service of man was the service of God and his mission was the realisation of this noble teaching. The Secretary then read the annual report of the Society, which indicated a good year's work. Two well-written papers, one in English and the other in Bengali, were then read by Prof. Batuk Nath Bhattacharjee and Pundit Amulya Charan Ghose Vidyabhushan. Speeches were delivered by Babu Panchkari Banerjee, Mahamahopadhyaya Pramatha Nath Taikabhushan, Babu Jaladhar Sen, Pundit Kokileswar Sastri and others. In the course of the proceedings the Maharaja had to leave the meeting and Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Satish Chandra Vidyabhushan occupied the chair in his place. The proceedings terminated at about 8 p. m.

The birthday anniversary was celebrated with becoming grandeur at the Ramkrishna Mission, Barrisal, on 2nd February, 1919. Distribution of rice and pice among the poor was the chief attractive feature of the day. Portions of the Life of Swami were read out and explained with effect by Babu Jagadis Mukerjee B. A., Headmaster, B. M. Institution. This was followed by sweet Kirtan, and the gathering dispersed after the distribution of Prasada at 10 p. m.

On 26th January, the 57th birthday anniversary of Swami was celebrated in a befitting manner in the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Luxa, Benares City. About 800 Daridra Narayanas were heartily fed. In the afternoon there was a meeting of seven or eight hundred gentlemen of the city. Two distinguished Professors of the local Hindu University, Mr. P. Seshadri and Mr. H. L. Chablanu addressed the assembly dwelling on the life and teachings of the Swami and mentioned gratefully in the course of their discourses how great was the influence of the unique personality of Swami Vivekananda on their own lives and character. This was followed by Kirtan, devotional music and distribution of Prasada. The Tithi-puja had been observed on the 23rd Jan.

Swami's 57th birthday anniversary was celebrated at the Ramkrishna Sevashrama, Kankhal (Hardwar). The Ashrama was beautifully decorated. In the afternoon, Swami Mangalananda Giri, the Mahant of Ramnivas, addressed a meeting of the Sadhus and gentry of the locality in Sanskrit. He dwelt chiefly on the ultimate unity of all religions and remarked that all Hindus were under

a deep debt of gratitude to the great Swami for preaching this most essential principle of our religion to the people of the West. Pandit Jogendra Nath Sarma Nyaya-Sankhya-Vedantatirtha, Professor of Gurukul, then delivered a pretty long speech in which, among other things, he referred to the service of the poor and the down-trodden which was so much advocated by Swami. Pandit Kanailal Sastri Sankhya-Vedantatirtha of Gurukula and the Pandit of Jwapur Mahavidyalaya then made short speeches in Hindi, after which the meeting came to a close. "Poor Narayanas," about a thousand in number, were fed towards evening, which completed the programme of the day.

The Anniversary was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Kishampur (Rajpur P. O., Dt. Dehradun) on the 26th Jan last, when about a hundred children and poor Narayanas were fed.

The 57th birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated on the 26th Jan 1919 in the Ramakrishna Home, Madras with great eclat. Bhajana was performed in the morning hours of the day and over 2000 poor Narayanas were fed in the forenoon. A Harikatha Kalakshepam was performed by Brahmasri Vasanta Bhavati and a public meeting was held at 5 p. m. when Mr. N. Gopalaswami Iyengar read an interesting paper on "Swami Vivekananda's Gospel of Man-making." The meeting came to a close with the distribution of Prasada. Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer B. A., B. L. presided.

The 57th birthday anniversary of the Swami was celebrated at the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore, on 26th Jan. The celebration commenced as usual with the arrival of Bhajana processions from Cantonment and various parts of the city at 11 a. m. The parties were received by Swami Numalanandaji and taken to the Pandal erected for the occasion, where they were served with Prasada. Food grains were distributed to about 900 poor people. There was Bhajana from 12 a. m. to 3 p. m., which was followed by an inspiring Harikatha on Dhruva Vijaya by Shivan Venkanna Das. In the evening, before a large audience, Mr. C. Venkataramanaja, Principal of the Chamatajendra Sanskrit College, read a paper in Kannada on the "Influence of Swami Vivekananda." This was followed by an erudite paper in English on "The Ramakrishna Mission and Indian Renaissance" by Mr. S. Venkatapathali, B. A., LL. B. After distribution of Prasada at 7 p. m. the meeting dispersed. Separate accommodation had been provided for ladies, a large number of whom were present.

Swami's 57th birthday was celebrated with great enthusiasm and fervour on the 2nd February, by Sri Ramakrishna Samaj and the Vivekananda Vidya Ashrama of Salem. Srimat Swami Numalanandaji, President, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama,

Bangalore City graced the occasion with his presence for three or four days, holding several interesting conversaziones. He gave a few instances of his first personal experiences of the Great Master, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa Deva and explained "the three steps of Hindu philosophic thought" and how one led to the other. On the 1st Feb. Mr. Subramania Panday of Coimbatore gave a very interesting lecture in Tamil on "Vedanta in Daily Life," when Swami Nilalanandaji presided. The feeding of about 5000 poor Narayanas lasted from 11 a. m. to 5 p. m. At 6 p. m. a meeting was held, presided over by Swami Nilalanandaji. Sumat Swami Vivekananda's famous address, "Be proud you are an Indian," was printed with Tamil translation and freely distributed to the audience which numbered nearly a thousand. At 8 p. m. there was a gorgeous procession of Swamiji's photo with music. The whole celebration was an immense success.

The 57th birthday of the Swamiji was celebrated by the Vedanta Society, Trivandrum on the 2nd February, 1919. There was Puja, Bhajana and reading from the Swamiji's works in the morning. At noon over 500 poor Narayanas were fed. A public meeting was held at 5 p. m. in the Maharaja's High School Hall, when Mr. K. Padmanabhan Iyengar, B.A., B.L., Personal assistant to the Commissioner of Police, Travancore, delivered a speech in English on "Some Lessons from the Life of the Swami Vivekananda." This was followed by a speech in Malayalam by Mr. P. Krishnan Nambiar on "The Message of the Swami Vivekananda." Swami Virajanandaji of the Ramakrishna Mission, who had been on his pilgrimage to the Cape Comorin, blessed the celebrations of the day with his kind presence.

Under the auspices of Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Teppakulam, Trichinopoly Swamiji's 57th anniversary was celebrated on 23rd Jan. 1919 at the Hindu Secondary School premises, Trichinopoly. Mr. M. S. Nateson read a Tamil translation of Swamiji's Paper on Hinduism at the Chicago Parliament. Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P. presided. Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, Avl., B.A., B.L., also spoke on the example and inspiration of the life of the great Acharya. The Hall was literally packed.

The 57th birthday of Swamiji was celebrated with devotion and enthusiasm at Tattamangalam (Palghat) by the Vivekananda Society on 26th January, in the local Sealy Memorial School Hall. The Tithi-puja had been observed on the 23rd. On the following Sunday after special Puja about 500 poor Narayanas were sumptuously fed by the young members of the Samaj. At 3-30 p. m. a public meeting was held with Mr. R. Raghava Menon, M.A., B.L. of the Palghat Bar in the chair. Mr. T. V. Venkitanarayana Iyer, Avl. B.A., L.T.

delivered a stirring lecture on "Swami Vivekananda and Religious Toleration" in English, which was followed by a Malayalam lecture on "Our Indian Sages" by Mr. T. P. R. Menon. The president then delivered an instructive speech which he concluded with the remark that religion was the birthright of every human being, and that everyone had a right to study and understand the holy scriptures. Prasada being distributed the meeting terminated and a procession with the photo of the Swamiji began at about 7 p. m. which ended at 9-30 p. m., with display of fire-works and illumination. It was indeed a "Vivekananda Day."

The 57th birthday was observed by the Rk. V. Vedanta Sangham, Sivaganga, Madurai. The Tithi-puja was done with the chanting of the Tattvya Upanishad and Aratika on the 23rd. About 500 poor Narayanas were fed on the 25th. On the 26th the public celebration commenced with Aradhana in the morning. It consisted of chantings of various sacred texts and the reading from the different scriptures of the world. In the afternoon there was Bhajana followed by distribution of Prasada. The public meeting began at 4 p. m. when Mr. M. K. Srinivasa Iyer, B.A., B.L. delivered a lecture in English on the work of the Swami and Brahmasi Sundara Sivan a Tamil lecture on Bhakti. There was a Hanukha at night by a member of the Sangham.

The public of Yellamanchili (Dt. Vizagapatam) enthusiastically celebrated Swamiji's 57th birthday on the 26th Jan. last. In the morning a grand procession was conducted through all the streets of the town with photos of Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji. In the evening, after about 200 poor Narayanas had been fed, a successful mass meeting was held, presided over by Mr. M. Subba Rao Pantulu, Pleader, who delivered an interesting lecture on Swamiji and his sayings. From 8 to 11 p. m. there was Bhajana in the local Sri Rama temple and Prasada was distributed.

The 57th birthday anniversary of the Swamiji was celebrated at the Vivekananda Ashrama, Kuala Lumpur, (F.M.S.) with the following programme:
23rd January, 1919 — Tithi-puja in Shrine-room at 12 noon and at 7-30 p. m. 26th January — Guru Puja 10 a. m. to 5-30 p. m. Meeting 7 p. m.

Swamiji's 57th birthday was also becomingly observed by his numerous followers and admirers with special Puja, Bhajan, feeding of poor Narayanas, or discourses etc. at the Rk. Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban, at the Rk. Math, Muthi-gunj, Allahabad, at the Rk. Mission Branch Centre, Dacca, at the Rk. Sevashrama, Sutarmandi, Lahore, at the Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, at the Rk. Mutt and Swami Vivekananda Sangham, Vaniyambadi and at various other places in India and abroad.