

# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जायत



प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत ।

*Katha Upa. I. iii. 4.*

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

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

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VOL. XXIX

MAY, 1924.

No. 5.

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## CONVERSATIONS WITH SWAMI TURIYANANDA.

*14th July, 1920.*

The Swami opened the conversation saying :

Swamiji said, “Wherever you go, a centre will be started.” You see this quite plainly. I was then reminded of Mrs. Wheeler’s letter. While I was in London, she had invited me to come over to her place and live there. When I told Swamiji about it he said it was a good idea. Then I held classes for some time at Mrs. Wheeler’s. I used to tell them, “You are reading the Vedanta, but this is a subject which it won’t do merely to read. You must practise it, and for this a suitable place is needed—which must be quiet and solitary. A place, too,

was found. Well, Sri Ramakrishna had been building everything up from the very beginning. Just then a lady offered two hundred and fifty acres of land. I said I could not accept the offer then and there. I referred the matter to Swami A. who used to be on tour then. He said, "Wait, I am coming." When he came he said it was not worth accepting. But I said it was not fair to let go this opportunity. Swamiji, who was then in California, was wired to, and he immediately wired a reply to accept the offer. You know, Swamiji never let slip an opportunity. The land was secured. Swamiji wrote to me to come over there. But Swami A. had already announced me for a series of lectures. So I could not go. Swamiji came and afterwards we all started with him. In the middle of the journey, near Chicago, Swamiji got down. That was the last I saw of him. As a parting salutation he said, "Namo namah!" The words are still ringing in my ears.

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Everything is hypnotism—the play of Maya. Have you seen hypnotic performances? A man under the hypnotic spell swims on land if he is given the suggestion. The Divine Enchantress (Mahamaya) has hypnotised us all. Vidya Maya and Avidya Maya (leading respectively to Knowledge and ignorance) are both hypnotism. We have to destroy the one with the help of the other, for Knowledge is the opposite of ignorance. You know Swamiji's story. A jackal ate a part of a Mahomedan's food. Now the jackal is considered very unholy among the Mahomedans. The man went to

a Mullah and sought his advice on the point. The Mullah said, "Dogs are the enemies of jackals. So if you can have the food eaten by a dog, then it will become pure again." (Laughter.) One has to destroy Avidya by Vidya—ignorance by Knowledge.

Question : Is something else needed to destroy Vidya again?

The Swami : No. Vidya leads a man to the Reality and itself ceases to be. Don't you remember Sri Ramakrishna's parable of the three robbers?\*

*15th July.*

The Swami : There is a mention of the Uttarayana† in the Mahabharata. Bhishma was waiting for the Uttarayana. By this no particular time is meant. It only shows that Bhishma had the power to die whenever he chose. The scriptures do not mean by the word Uttarayana any time at all—it only means the Deva or angel identifying himself with that time. We can well understand this. It is like people coming forward to receive a distin-

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\* A man was attacked in a forest by three robbers who seized all he had. One of them wanted to kill him, but another interposed. So they tied his hands and feet and left him. Shortly after, the third robber came, and setting him free, conducted him to the high road, within sight of his house. The man, out of gratitude, wanted to invite him to his house, but the kind robber declined, saying that he would then be caught by the police. The Master compared the three Gunas—Tamas, Rajas and Sattva—to the above three robbers respectively, Tamas kills, Rajas binds and Sattva sets free. But it too is a robber—it cannot stand before Realisation. Here Vidya represents the Sattva.

† *Lit.*, the six months of the sun's northward passage.

guished visitor. I am reminded of an incident in this connection.

B—— Babu got news that his father was ill. Before he reached the place, the gentleman had expired. As soon as he stepped into the room, he saw a shining figure. He wrote to me that perhaps it was his father waiting to meet him. But suddenly the idea flashed in my mind that it might be some angel come there to escort the departing soul. B—— Babu of course won't tell an untruth. He is not the man to do so. Besides, I can very well understand such things as the following statement of the Gita :—

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।

विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥

“Fools do not perceive the soul when it departs from the body, or lives in it, or enjoys things through the help of the Gunas. But wise men see it doing all this.”

Swamiji used to say, “He who has seen even a ghost is much greater than a mere book-learned Pundit”—because he has got an opportunity to form a conviction about the future life.



## OCCASIONAL NOTES.

The Lord Buddha, the Light of Asia and of the world, came at that psychological period of Indian history, when India badly needed a saviour like him. Lamentable and disgraceful was the condition of the Indo-Aryans before his advent. Dislodged from the high pedestal of spiritual ideals, Hindu society was struggling in vain to hold up its head in the midst of the chaos and confusion reigning everywhere. The noble tenets of the Shastras that solved the riddles of life and showed the way to peace and blessedness, fell into oblivion, and elaborate rites and ceremonials were invented and performed with extravagant pomp for the realisation of petty ends. With utter disregard for animal life, the sacred altars began to be desecrated with the blood of the innocent dumb creatures. Next, the tyranny of the higher classes over the conquered non-Aryans who formed the main bulk of the Sudra caste, exceeded all bounds. Not only were the latter denied the light of higher culture, but they were also deprived of their legitimate rights and privileges and assigned the lowest place in society. The priests, the supposed custodians of religion, became self-centred and narrow, and violated their sacred trust by turning themselves into social autocrats. Naturally, the soul of the people was crying in silent agony and was longing for an immediate redress and readjustment. And at last the long-cherished expectation was fulfilled. The saving power came in the

person of Buddha who, commanding all the forces of good, restored the lost peace and order in the country.



The wonderful tale of the life of Gautama, for that was the name of the saviour before he attained illumination, has now become a matter of history and the source of inspiration to millions of human beings throughout the world. Unlike ordinary boys he showed remarkably, even while quite young, all the promise of his future greatness. And later, preoccupied as he was with the deeper problems of life, such as, birth and death, disease and old age, suffering and misery, to which all creatures were subject, he was generally of a moody and contemplative turn of mind. The splendours of the royal throne to which he was the heir-apparent, the comforts and luxuries of the palace with which he was surrounded, and above all, the deep and sincere affections of his loving parents, his newborn son and his devoted wife, had no attraction for him.

“My chariot shall not roll with bloody wheels  
 From victory to victory, till earth  
 Wears the red record of my name, I choose  
 To tread its paths with patient, stainless feet,  
 Making its dust my bed, its lowliest wastes  
 My dwelling, and its meanest things my mates ;  
 This will I do because the woeful cry  
 Of life and flesh living cometh up  
 Into my ears, and all my soul is full  
 Of pity for the sickness of the world,  
 Which I will heal, if healing may be found,  
 By uttermost renouncing and strong strife.”

*(The Light of Asia)*

Thus did Prince Gautama think within himself. And at last snapping the ties of attachment that fettered him and stood in the way of the realisation of his singular mission, did he renounce the world. After years of strenuous penance and austerity, contemplation and meditation, the Truth he was seeking after revealed itself to him. Established in Nirvana, the ineffable state of supreme Beatitude and Felicity, he became Buddha, the Enlightened, the seer and teacher of humanity.

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Now he discovered that desire, intensifying the egoism and feeding the cravings of the flesh, which were no part of man's self, was the root of his repeated sufferings of birth, disease and death. And as a remedy he prescribed the Middle Path which, discouraging the two extremes of sense-indulgence and self-mortification, enjoined on all a strict life of self-culture. Negatively, it urged men to give up the thirst for enjoyment, and positively, it advocated the cultivation of a selfless love for all creatures that breathed. When the two forces of dispassion and compassion would unite harmoniously in one's character, one would have liberation—the summum bonum of life. This was the sum and substance of the new ethical religion that Gautama Buddha preached. For the propagation of his message he infused new life into the ancient institution of Sannyasa and organised the Sacred Order of his monastic disciples who were to go to the ends of the earth, helping and giving light to all. Ananda, the most

devoted of his disciples, was given the charge of the monks, and Gopa, his wife who had renounced the world and followed him, became the head of the nuns. And thus the holy Trinity of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, in which the later Buddhists used to make the profession of their faith, came into being.



We should remember here that the movement inaugurated by Buddha was not a revolt completely subverting the old Hindu religion. Buddha came to fulfil and not to destroy. His message, full of life and fire, vitalised and invigorated the Ancient Faith by the introduction of much-needed reforms. Rightly interpreted and understood, it was simply a restatement of Hinduism in a new form suitable to the changed conditions of life. Some of the fundamental principles of the Hindu scriptures, such as, the conceptions of the impermanence of phenomena, the law of Karma and the transmigration of the soul, formed the groundwork of his system. His doctrine of Nirvana, the indescribable state beyond speech and thought, realisable by the annihilation of desires, was nothing but the Upanishadic conception of Mukti. His humanism, by which was introduced the selfless service to men and animals, was only a practical application of the Vedantic truth of the worship of the Divinity in everything from Brahma, the creator, down to the blade of grass. Nothing can be further from the truth than to say that he seceded from the Mother-church and preached a new reli-



gion to supplant the old. Rightly does Dr. Rhys Davids, the Western authority on Buddhism, observe — “None will deny that there is much that is beautiful and noble in Buddhism, and Buddhism was the child, the product of Hinduism. Gautama’s whole training was Brahminism; he probably deemed himself to be the most correct exponent of the spirit, as distinct from the letter of the ancient faith, and it can only be claimed for him that he was the greatest and wisest and best of the Hindus.”

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Love and sympathy for all, irrespective of the considerations of caste and worldly position, was one of the grandest features of the life and teachings of Buddha. He was the perfect embodiment of Ahimsa or non-violence in thought, word and deed, and preached it as one of the cardinal points of his religion. His compassionate heart moved with each throb of all the hearts that ached, known and unknown, and he was ever ready to lay down his life even for the insignificant worm that crawled under one’s feet. Wherever he went he spread his benign influence and helped and illumined ignorant souls by advice and precept. In his religious system there was no place for those invidious distinctions that divided man from man, and all, male and female, the high and the low, the virtuous and the vicious, the scholar and the ignorant, were equally welcome. He discarded Sanskrit and made the language of the people the medium of his instruc-

tion, so that he might easily reach even the illiterate masses.



True to his teachings his followers emphasised the importance of compassion in spiritual life, and translated the precepts into action by promoting the general welfare of men as well as animals. Charitable hospitals, provided with medicines and nurses, were opened in different places. Along roads and other public thoroughfares, wells and tanks were dug, rest-houses were built and trees were planted for the convenience of the travellers. Edicts, containing the gospel of the great Master, were proclaimed all over the country for the moral training of the people. And it was to the credit of the emperor Asoka, who accepted Buddhism and made it the religion of his empire, that he did much in these lines, and thus won the admiration and gratitude of the world by his labours of love.



The story of the progress of Buddhism and its cultural contribution is both interesting and instructive. The immense success and popularity it gained was due to the spiritual democracy it advocated and to the vigorous missionary work of its followers. By the third century before Christ the whole of the Indian continent, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and from Kabul and Kandahar to the farthest limits of Assam, accepted Buddhism. And as the consequence of its humanising influence, there was a renaissance in all the walks of Indian life,—

in art and literature, philosophy and religion,— followed by national prosperity and solidarity. Its cultural conquest did not stop within the boundaries of India but extended far beyond. And between the fifth and the tenth centuries of the Christian era it conquered the distant countries of Ceylon, Burma and Siam, Thibet, China and Japan, till at last one-third of the human race owed its allegiance to the Prophet of Love and Compassion. The world civilisation was thus enriched substantially by what was noble and great in India, the common heritage of Hinduism and Buddhism alike.

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## WIRELESS FELLOWSHIP

BY ERIC HAMMOND.

“While Mr. Briggs of the Royal Radio Club, Calcutta, was ‘listening-in’ he heard a violin solo and two songs which he believed to be part of the London station’s programme. In order to verify this, he cabled to the Marconi Company, giving particulars of the items he had heard and asking for confirmation. At the time mentioned, a programme given at the London studio was being simultaneously broadcasted from all British stations, and reference to the items indicated by Mr. Briggs confirms the fact that this was the concert which he had heard at the Bengal Radio Club.”

—*Westminster Gazette*, Jan. 19, 1924.

“Wireless” is with us. To cover our ears with cosy little caps and “listen-in,” is an ordinary occupation. That which a brief while ago was a marvel,—receiving messages or hearing music from a distance,—is marvellous still ; yet it is commonplace. We are indeed so accus-

tomed to it that we are not greatly moved by notices and advertisements concerning "broadcasting." We read, almost casually, that explorers, imprisoned on board an ice-bound vessel, wellnigh within hail of the North Pole, were heartened by a specially arranged assortment of carols and the like at Christmastide, arranged in and sent from London. South African listeners-in have caught words of songs sung in England. Five thousand miles of shore and sea have not hindered the "waves of wireless" from wafting harmony from one continent to another. India and Britain are, as we see noted above, brought, similarly, into close and intimate contact. The wizardry of mystery and magic are excelled by the research and revelation of scientific sages. A preacher of to-day, a wise, deeply-taught man, has said that "human science, though its reapers may neither know nor think, is a fruit of the Holy Ghost." (The two last words of that sentence are beautifully interpreted by Swami Atulananda as "The Divine Breath"; vide his memorable notes on *The Birth of Jesus, Prabuddha Bharata*, December, 1923).

"Laborious pioneers of science," continues our preacher, "owe more light than they dream of; and it is high time that the estranged priesthoods of nature and spirit should meet and learn of one another; for between them they have gathered great store of knowledge concerning two worlds. Science, till it learns of faith, can never explore any world but this of matter-stuff; yet it can write some precious pages in the volume of revelation; richly illuminate margins left wide and blank by seers; and even bring to light—who knows?—the invisible script of the Spirit."

The advance made is perceptibly great, but, after all, we are, one may presume, merely touching the outer fringe of the garment of knowledge. That garment is the raiment of the philosopher of modernity who will lead the peoples Godward by discovering and revealing more and more of the sacred purpose and plan. The truly spiritual among us will cherish no fear of the footsteps which men must follow now and in future. That Divine Breath which

is life, exists in all existence—animates and informs all sentient beings and impels the universal movement. Man seeks the motive of that movement, because the impulse of the Eternal urges toward the searching and the finding, the adventure and the discovery. Now and again some wonder-flash rewards the student, after, maybe, years of strenuous endeavour.

The telescope and microscope tell something of the miracle of the worlds. The great gas-filled globe of the balloon is superseded by the winged aeroplane. Horses, so long time the carriers and drawers of mankind, are out of the running when compared with the celerity and convenience of the motor-cars. Gas, once regarded as the illuminator *par excellence*, has seen its glory diminished by the glow of electric bulbs. Experiments made during present lives have resulted in surprises that have become mere incidents or everyday occurrence ; but none of these is so startling in intent, so unifying in possibilities, as “wireless.”

“The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
And God fulfils Himself in many ways.”

—*Tennyson.*

It is therefore the fulfilment of the Divine Idea, and every step leading toward that fulfilment, that wise men will welcome.

In this present position of earthly affairs, science must inevitably be reckoned with and, when tested and approved, acquiesced in. Men are inquiring more and more minutely into causes and effects. Disease is being more rationally approached and the medicine-man of to-day cannot remain satisfied with the external fact. He cannot be content until the basis of that fact shall be disclosed and the right method of attacking and repelling it be brought into action. Knowledge is power ; but knowledge must be ascertained, verified, practised. “Wireless,” by virtue of its revelation, fills a foremost place among the attainments of our age. Its attraction to immense and increasing numbers may not be gainsaid. We are asking ourselves, “Whither will it lead? To what

stupendous discoveries, material and spiritual, does it open possibilities?" For man to be, aurally, in touch with man, notwithstanding seemingly insurmountable obstacles; for musician and poet and preacher to be within the range of the world; this, assuredly, is at once the height of wonderment and the earnest of illimitable achievement. Experts, insatiable, indefatigable, assure us that the near future has wider wonders to open up; that, in all likelihood, we shall literally see one another from continent to continent and from capital to capital. We would accentuate, at this juncture, the scientific proof of spiritual force—the indwelling and outpouring of the Divine Breath.

"My latest achievement," writes a wireless enthusiast, "is to get Toronto. My new friend is in that city. This was the first time that I had talked with Canada." Observe, in this simple but arresting statement, the three significant words, "my new friend." Friendship, brotherhood, the realisation of unity; all these underlie the wonder and the worth of wireless. When man really knows man, intimately, consciously, he will set aside suspicion and fear. The impact of spirit with spirit, resulting from the sound of the voice, the sight of the face, will transform possible enmity into positive fealty. Is this too much to hope for, labour for, pray for? We will hope and labour and pray, certain of progress, assured of final fellowship. That unity in which we fix our faith signifies the salvation of the race from all the stultifying influences of the older, narrower thought. It means that industry and commerce, as well as religion, will stand firmly and squarely upon a platform of all-embracing sympathy. In this very respect we joyfully notice the report of a Conference of manufacturers, employers and industrial leaders held in January at Balliol College, Oxford. At the same moment, also in Oxford, a Conference of professors and lecturers on economics was taking place, and the Master of Balliol delivered a striking address to members of both conferences. He affirmed that though material means were important as indispensable to full life, yet they were

means to the cultivation of our truer selves. He showed how industrialism, considered as a whole, had done wonderful things, but that fundamental defects obtained which could only be changed by a change of spirit. We must, he explained, accept a broader and more humane economics and inspire it by an enlightened conscience. This implied that the first charge on industry was a living wage ; that improved methods of insurance could cope with unemployment. One paragraph of his address should be quoted word for word since it sums up the matter with brief beauty. "The purpose of industry is the conquest of the material world for men's betterment, and it should find room for all sorts of corporate human qualities and for the artistic qualities of the craftsman. Work, difficulties to be overcome, and the disinterested service of the community, are the true lot of man, and necessities should be provided for all before luxuries are provided for a few."

All welcome, then, to wireless and its winning way.

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## IS ABSTINENCE NECESSARY FOR SELF-REALISATION?\*

BY SWAMI PRABHAVANANDA.

You know that Arjuna asked Sri Krishna about the essential characteristics of a man of steady wisdom, so that by trying to follow those virtues in one's life one could ultimately come to the same state of realisation. The end is also the means. As you think so you become.

As for instance it is said in the Gita (II. 58) that the man of steady wisdom can withdraw his senses from the objects like the tortoise its limbs. The Yogi can at will withdraw the senses and remain absorbed in the bliss of the Self. Those of you who are well acquainted with

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\* Notes of a lecture in the Gita class at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, U. S. A.

the life of our Master, Sri Ramakrishna, know how he would often fall into Samadhi, the blissful state of realisation. Now, a person who is aspiring after that end has to be established in such self-control that he would not be attracted by any object of the world. He must have perfect mastery over his senses. How is that possible?

We know, our senses are so turbulent, our passions are so strong that they are always dragging us towards the objects. Must we yield at all to those impulses? Is it by giving a free play to the senses that we can ultimately bring them under our control? No. The more we enjoy the objects, the more we hanker for enjoyment, and the stronger our passions become. Truly has it been said by our great law-giver, Manu: "Desires are never pacified by their enjoyments. On the other hand, they flare up stronger and stronger just as when one pours butter into the fire, it blazes up more and more." It requires no argument to show this. We have our own experiences behind us; if we only look back to them and analyse our own minds we shall be convinced of this.

In the beginning the struggle is very hard. There goes on, as it were, a tug of war between the higher instincts and the lower passions. Well, it is we ourselves who have made it so hard. For ages and ages we have allowed our mind to follow slavishly the desires of the senses. The mind has become a slave to our passions. We have to reverse the process. The senses must obey the mind and not the mind the senses. By repeatedly following the dictates of the senses, it has become a habit with us, and in spite of ourselves we are dragged down by them. Now by close practice and struggle alone can we become the masters of the situation. The father of Indian Yoga Philosophy, Patanjali, has truly said that by bringing in opposite currents of thought we can drive away the undesirable thoughts from us. This means that we shall have to abstain from enjoyments. And not only that, we shall have to fill our brain with such ideas only and let our muscles do such actions only as will help us to break the bondages of Karma. These thoughts and



actions will create new impressions in our mind-stuff, and then the old evil impressions will not have any more chance to raise their heads.

But then the longing due to the old impressions remains in the mind-stuff. This ceases when the knowledge of the Self dawns upon us. As the Gita (II. 59) says:—“Objects fall away from the abstinent man, leaving the longing behind. But his longing also ceases, when he sees the Supreme.”

The idea is this. There is the seed of evil Karmas latent in the subconscious mind ready to burst forth any time. The moment you give up the struggle, it becomes easy for the seed to sprout and grow. So, do not give up the struggle but continue it with perseverance till you attain the highest. The fire of knowledge alone can completely burn the seed and with it longing also.

Let me repeat it once more. We must always have right discrimination and strive hard not to allow the mind to run after the senses and sense-objects. It is by constant practice only that the habit can be acquired. And if one sincerely struggles, one is sure to receive help from our ever-watchful Father and so attain self-mastery.

You know, Religion does not consist in believing in certain dogmas or creeds. But it is realisation, living the life. And unless one is pure, no realisation is possible. If we allow ourselves to fritter away our energies in sense-enjoyments, the mind loses the power to grasp higher truths. It is all right in the case of other sciences of knowledge. One needs to pay no particular attention to the purity of character in order to know the principles of chemistry or of physics. Only one has to load one's mind with certain informations. But Religion is not a science of that nature. It is realisation—direct perception. When it comes, a higher sense opens up as it were, and we perceive the truth face to face. We get the intuitive vision of our Immortal Blissful Nature. It is a rigorous, hard and fast law that until and unless the doors of the lower senses are locked up, the door of the higher sense does not open.

In this connection I am reminded of a parable of the Master which he often used to repeat. It runs as follows : A certain farmer was labouring hard one dry summer day to irrigate his field. He drew water from his well steadily for a long time, but when he went to inspect the plants he found that not a drop of water had wet the roots. And all the water had been carried away through the big rat holes.

The same thing happens to us. We pray, meditate, study, and go through all the practices which, we think, should give us spiritual impetus, yet we often stand still. Why is this? We have not fortified ourselves. There is not that love, that earnestness at the back of our practices, and that is why we make no progress. If we can grow a true love for the Ideal, if we can become mad for it, then naturally our desires for enjoyment fall off. Truly has it been said in the Gita : "Even if the very wicked worship Me with an all-absorbing love, he should be regarded as good, for he has rightly resolved. Soon does he become righteous, and attain to Eternal Peace. O Son of Kunti, boldly canst thou proclaim that My devotee is never destroyed." Thus if we can cultivate an all-absorbing love for the Lord, then soon we are sure to become established in our Ideal.

Religion has but one definition. It is realisation. It is living the life. Howsoever the various religions of the world may differ from one another in creeds and dogmas, they have that one common basis. If you have merely a faith in the existence of God, and do not have any love for Him and do not try to realise Him, that mere faith will take you nowhere. On this point all religions agree. We must ourselves realise God even as Jesus or Ramakrishna realised. Then there is another factor common to all religions. It is this : Before that realisation is made possible, we must acquire purity of character. We must be pure as purity itself. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." We get established in purity when our mind is no longer a slave to the senses.

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# SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE PRESENT AGE.\*

BY MATHURA NATH SINGHA.

There are various points from which the achievements of a great man can be viewed. One view-point is to take a survey of the state of the country which preceded the birth, or at least the activity of the man. Now let us see what was passing on in India at the time of the advent of Swami Vivekananda. Steam, Telegraph, Post and Railway had done their work. India was no more in geographical isolation but had come to be mixed up in international politics of a complicated nature. But more than that there was the intellectual and religious ferment on the establishment of the British Government. The schoolmaster and the Christian Missionary were abroad, and the whole fabric of Hindu society was shaking to its foundations. The first result of this was to create a vacuum in thought. Men drunk in English education lost their mental balance. They lost their faith in the ancient religion and traditions and became either rank atheists or sceptics. Some rushed to Christianity. At this juncture the great reformer, Raja Rammohan Roy, came to the rescue. The Raja tried to purify the orthodox faith encrusted with dead formalities which to the educated came to signify meaningless jargon. In order to retain the straying young men in the fold, the Brahmo Samaj founded by the Raja introduced a strong tincture of rationalism as the sure basis on which to construct the rejuvenated faith. Hindu society must owe an immense debt of gratitude to the Raja and to the movement he inaugurated to stem the tide of religious anarchy.

Flocks of young men joined the Samaj. Idol worship was at a discount, and rationalistic worship to the Deity was substituted in place of the old. The young men adopted all the trappings of modern civilisation to shake off the obloquy that might be hurled against them. A

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\* Notes of a lecture delivered as president of a meeting held at the Bihar Young Men's Institute, Patna.

large number of educated men commenced to visit England and other Western countries to receive new light. They had one laudable desire in their mind, viz., to rehabilitate themselves in the eyes of Europe and to prove that they were no longer barbarians or heathens. The Westerners, who were accustomed to think that the Hindus were a race of barbarians, were surprised to notice a change in them. They found them reading and understanding Mill and Herbert Spencer, Bacon and Bentham, and were struck to see their acquisitive faculty manifesting itself in a remarkable way. They commiserated them in a patronising spirit and dubbed them as passable imitators of themselves. It was also to the interest of the educated young men of India of the time, specially of Bengal, to pose themselves as "black Anglo-Indians in thought, culture and civilisation" as has been somewhat ungenerously remarked by some of their critics. Some serious Indians preached a sort of religion in Christian countries, which was sometimes characterised as Christianity minus Christ.

At this juncture a great soul was fulfilling his *sadhana* in a quiet corner of India. The great Saint of Dakshineswar, with a keenness of discernment, saw the unwelcome transformation which English education was producing in the young men of the country. He felt that, with the development of the mentality that had been bred by it, the craze for applying the Western veneer of civilisation was increasing. He keenly felt, however, that that was not the way of earning self-respect from the Westerners. For the latter could only look with sufferance on a people on their having unyoked themselves from the incubus of a deadly priestcraft and superstition. The way to command the respect of a race of proud conquerors was to present the other side of the shield, the positive side of the Hindu creed. Such a weapon existed in the teachings of the Vedanta. Swami Vivekananda had already joined the band of the new Sannyasins who came under the magnetic touch of the Paramahansa who felt that the necessity of sending out a messenger to spread

abroad the teachings of Vedanta had come. He found in Vivekananda a bold, intrepid spirit, full of patriotic fire and religious fervour. He felt that Vivekananda was a fit apostle to propagate the message. His expectation was fulfilled to the letter. The Parliament of Religions held at Chicago was devised to impress on the religious representatives of the heathen world, the superiority and the excellence of the Christian creed. It was taken for granted by the conveners that no other religion could give the world a better spiritual ideal.

The dramatic presence of Vivekananda with his all-imposing figure in the yellow robe of a Sannyasin filled the audience with admiration and reverence. But the climax came when he delivered his message in a clarion voice amidst an alien people. The precious words of Vedantic wisdom practically stormed the assembly. The audience was struck with the earnestness and gravity of the superb sermons which the Swami preached. They felt that they heard for the first time new refreshing truths that were bound to furnish a new key in interpreting the life and character of humanity. The Adwaita principle of the oneness of life throughout the creation, making human entities essentially identical with one another and with God, reminded them of a deeper meaning of the scriptural phrase—"I and my Father are one." His sermons induced the Western world seriously to think that India had something to impart to the West. That significance has deepened as years have rolled by. Every thinker now believes that poor down-trodden India has a mission to deliver to Europe. And already the serious thinkers of Europe are stretching their ears to receive the blessed message.

The moral canker in Indian society did not go undetected by Vivekananda. He saw India in the throes of a death-pang. A large mass of the depressed classes were denied the ordinary rights of humanity, even at the cost of the solidarity of the Indian nation. This, he thought, must be remedied at once. He had keenly felt that the holy order of monks which from its highest standard of

spirituality was calculated to render invaluable service, was rotting in the obscurity of lonely forests and working only for its own spiritual welfare, regardless of the struggles of humanity. He gave a new meaning to the ideal of the Sannyasins and diverted their labours and activities to the more fruitful course of uplifting humanity. To-day we have the wonderful sight of a band of Sannyasins sanctified by the baptism of Tyaga (renunciation), Vairagya (non-attachment) and Seva (service), unceremoniously throwing themselves into the struggles, privations, pangs and miseries of the world. Whether it is an epidemic of a terrible disease or the devastation of a disastrous flood, they are always in the forefront of the toiling workers in the act of ministering to the needs and alleviating the distress of an afflicted people. The world will not fail to estimate properly the worth of Vivekananda's work and his message both in India and abroad.

## THE KUMBHA MELA AND OUR DUTIES TO THE INDIAN SADHUS.\*

BY A SADHU.

I came up to Allahabad in time, so that I might witness the Mela from beginning to end. Accompanied by a few friends of mine I went to the sacred confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna, the place where the Mela took place, and lived there in a tent for about a week. This being my first experience of a Kumbha Mela, it is needless to say that I was greatly impressed by what I

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\*We have received this account of the last Ardha-Kumbha Mela held at Prayag (Allahabad) from one of our senior Swamis, who was present there on the occasion and saw everything with a critical eye. In addition to a short description of the vast congregation of Sadhus and their processions, he also gives here some valuable suggestions which, if worked out, will go a great way towards reforming the time-honoured institution of India's Monastic Order. We reproduce here the narrative and hope it will be interesting to our readers.—Ed., P. B.

saw. About seven or eight thousand Sadhus of various denominations, with the distinctive paraphernalia of dress and marks of their respective orders, assembled on the occasion and lent a special grandeur and solemnity to the place. I was much pleased to see the processions of the Sadhus of the different sects, as they marched to bathe in the holy waters with their Jhandas or flags borne on elephants and the Mandaleswaras and Mohants following in palanquins. The Paramahamsas, attired in ochre robes, and the Nagas, stark-naked, walked on foot followed by bands and bagpipes. I visited the different Akhras (camps) and was delighted when I heard about the hospitality and liberality of the Sadhus in general. I bore by personal experience a happy impression of the good behaviour and discipline of the Nagas with whom I had had an opportunity to mix on a previous occasion.

I still remember the long stories I heard in my younger days about the fights the Nagas had amongst themselves over precedence in their procession and about the numerous casualties resulting from these quarrels. The Arms Act was not so rigid in those days, and it was quite possible for such things to happen. But since the Arms Act became more stringent, and it was decided that at Ujjain and Nasik the Vaishnavas should have precedence over the Shaivas, and at Hardwar and Prayag, the Shaivas over the Vaishnavas, we have seldom heard of such fights.

It grieved my heart, however, to find that our Math was not represented in this great assembly of the Sannyasins. It is true that the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashram at Allahabad opened a small outdoor dispensary for the relief of the people there, but it could not obviously provide shelter to those Sadhus of our Order who had come to have a bath on this auspicious occasion.

The Mela would have been a success but for a sad incident that took place on the day preceding the Sri Panchami. And it showed that the sectarian enmity which I mentioned beforehand had not entirely died out. A certain charitable gentleman had brought a few cart-

loads of firewood for distribution amongst the Sadhus. A few Vaishnavas came to the place, eager to take wood from the carts. At this an altercation ensued between them and some Udasi Nagas, resulting in a regular fight in which the former took an aggressive part by invading the Dashnami Akhras where the latter had taken shelter. The inmates were beaten right and left without any consideration whatsoever, and finally the huts and tents were set on fire that burnt down the whole of the Atal and a part of the Niranjani Akhras and also the adjoining police camp. We have heard that there were a few casualties in this fracas, but the loss by fire in property and cash was immense. What a sad incident over a trifling thing! It has helped to open my eyes still more to the necessity of working amongst these Sadhus.

I am reminded in this connection of an interesting episode in my life. It was about the year 1905. I was at Udaipur, living for some days with a party of Nagas who were spending their Chaturmasya there. Their Mohant might be said to have a little of education, but they themselves were quite illiterate and full of superstition and bigotry. A very funny thing happened one day as I was conversing with a Naga. He turned to me and asked, "Maharaj, can you tell me who rules over Lanka (Ceylon) now-a-days?" I replied, "Yes, the English." He rejoined, "The English? Impossible! Vibhishana rules over it." "Why," I said, "if it be possible for the English to be the ruler of the country where Sri Ramachandraji reigned, how do you say it is impossible for them to rule over Lanka where Vibhishana was the king?" It became too much for him, and he said in an agitated tone, "No, it can never be so. It is strange that you who wear the dress of a Paramahansa would speak like a heretic!" As he uttered these words his face looked so sullen and fierce that I thought it wise to drop the matter altogether. After a while as I went to the Mohant, he remarked, "Have you seen, Maharaj, how illiterate and bigoted these people are?" In reply I asked, "Why don't you give them a little education?" To this he observed, with a



sorrowful countenance, that the learned Paramahansa Sannyasins who were their Gurus looked down upon them for their ignorance and avoided their company, not to speak of taking any trouble for their education. But, he added, that in times of Kumbha Melas it was they—the Nagas—who would act as the bodyguards of the Paramahansas, ready to fight and lay down their lives for the precedence and honour of the latter. About this I wrote a long letter to Swami Vivekananda who was then in America. He, in reply, wrote an encouraging letter sympathising with my plan of work for the elevation of the Nagas. But our Lord willing otherwise, I went to work amongst the poor at—and was so engrossed with the work there that for about twenty-five years I was tied to that place.

In India the Sadhus count many lacs and have Maths all over the country. Their income, put together, would come to about twenty crores of rupees or so. What a potent force we have in these Sadhus and in their religious endowments for the regeneration of the country!

The Mohants of all the Maths, some of whom possess princely incomes, should be so influenced that their wealth might be utilised for the good of the country. They should be told roundly that many of them, by the mode of life they lead, are simply digging their own graves. Already a few well-known public-spirited gentlemen have tried through the Government to have a hand over the religious endowments of the Maths, but to no purpose. It is however a happy sign of the times that the eyes of the people are set upon the Mohants, who cannot therefore go on squandering the public money with impunity. If they do not care to set matters right of their own free will, they must suffer for it ere long. The religious endowments were not meant for the satisfaction of personal vagaries of any individual or body of men. They exist rather for the advancement of the good of the people in general. The Mohants should form a committee of their own and devise plans how best to make use of their income. Each Math should be an institution to help the

spread of knowledge, religious or secular, theoretical or practical, to support and educate Sadhus and to train up and send out men provided with money to work among the distressed in times of famine and pestilence in the country. This will serve a great end.

As for ourselves, the Sannyasins and Brahmacharins of the Ramakrishna Mission, what are we doing for the uplift of the Indian Sadhus? For these long thirty-four years—I say thirty-four years, counting from the date when the Mission and the Math at Belur were brought into being—we have taken very little notice of them. Hitherto we have confined our activities to the physical and spiritual amelioration of householders only. The banner of our Lord has not been taken into the fold of the Sadhus—those who have renounced their all for God. Is it not true that our relationship with them is more real and deep? The dross they have in them should be removed by infusing into them the ideal of true religion and spirituality. The old thoughts that found an encouraging echo from our beloved Swamiji, then overseas, are returning to me with great vigour and are stinging me to the quick. Great visions are floating before my eyes and impelling me to work them out. We should remain no longer apathetic to the noble cause of the regeneration of the mass of Sadhus who are ignorant and bigoted.

In the next Kumbha that comes off after three years at Hardwar, we should assemble in full strength and take steps to impress upon the Sadhus the great doctrine of the truth of all faiths and creeds as embodied in the life and teachings of our Master. In the Mela we may have an Akhra of our own, where should be worshipped with due solemnity all the great teachers of the world—Buddha, Christ, Sankara, Ramanuja, Dadu, Nanak, Sri Gauranga and others including Sri Ramakrishna. Besides, there should be a big hospital where medical relief, indoor and outdoor, should be given freely, irrespective of caste and creed. And above all, there should be preaching work through daily discourses illustrated from the Shastras as well as from the lives of saints and sages of all coun-

tries, and this with a view to drive home to all the spirit of religious toleration and freedom of thought. This work done as a labour of love and service is sure to form the nucleus of a movement working for the purification and rehabilitation of the Sanatana Dharma and its ancient institution of monasticism.

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## THE NEED OF VEDANTA IN THE WEST.\*

A tremendous storm of controversy is being raised over the Virgin-birth of Jesus in almost all the Protestant denominations in America. The Episcopalians are facing a grievous schism over the matter. They are split in two camps which are at present observing a short truce. The Fundamentalists stand for Virgin-birth of Jesus and the Liberals stand for no such miraculous origin of the prophet of Nazareth. I quote the following from a New York weekly to show that religion is faced with either decay or life in some countries of the West :—

### IN BEHALF OF RELIGION.

“There is nothing new about the internal disturbance which is going on in certain of the Protestant churches, and which threatens two of them at least—the Presbyterian and Protestant Episcopal churches—with serious disruption. Ever since organized Christianity first ranged itself under a standard of intellectual belief and insisted upon identity of opinion as a condition of fellowship, it

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\* This interesting letter has been addressed to us from New York by the writer who is a lecturer on Hindu religion and culture in America.

has suffered from frequent outbreaks of this kind ; and as long as it keeps to this general policy, so long they may be expected to recur.

“They are salutary and should be welcomed. They are not good for the contending factions or for the ecclesiastical organization as a whole. Before the outbreak takes place, both factions have become quite ruffled ; if either wins a substantial advantage over the other, it tends to become tyrannous ; and thus their progress in religion is retarded. The organization emerges from the battle with its official notion of the importance of opinion thoroughly inflated ; and thus its progress in religion is retarded too. But for those within the organization who do not concern themselves with the place and function of opinion in matters of religion—and these are doubtless a large majority—and for the far greater number of religious persons who remain outside organized Christianity altogether, these controversies are very valuable. They never yet have failed, when their dust and smoke have subsided, to make the essential nature of religion more clearly and easily visible, and to throw out in higher relief the figure of Jesus of Nazareth.

“We shall have more to say on this subject as the situation in the churches develops. At present we make only an observation or two, leading up to a practical suggestion. As between the modernists and the fundamentalists, the preponderance of one’s goodwill should be towards the former. Whether explicitly or implicitly, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, they are doing somewhat more than their adversaries for the clearance and disengagement of religion. Religion is a *temper*, a frame of mind ; the fruit of the Spirit is, as St. Paul says, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control. It is probably not to be said that the modernists exhibit this temper in the present controversy more distinctly than their opponents ; yet the terms of their contention are more favourable to the general apprehension of religion as a *temper* than the

terms chosen by the fundamentalists. As in strictness between the two, therefore, the mind that is interested purely in the furtherance of religion would incline to the side of the modernists.

“But it is not necessary to take sides in this controversy, nor is it appropriate to do so ; because, as has invariably been the case, neither side has, from the point of view of religion itself, a sound cause. The proper attitude is that of Erasmus towards the early rivalries between Romanism and Protestantism. Erasmus saw that as far as religion is concerned, Protestantism rested on no more solid intellectual foundation than Romanism, and that the questions controverted between the two were therefore really negligible. Hence he refrained from partisanship and contented himself with continually pointing out that religion, properly speaking, was not involved in the discussion ; that it was implicit neither in the dogmatic tenets of Romanism nor in those of Protestantism, but was a *tertium quid* not directly contemplated by either. His attitude was that which was taken on another occasion by St. Paul in reference to the great ecclesiastical controversy of his day, when he said that “in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.” In the present controversy in the Protestant Episcopal church, the thing is, therefore, not to take one’s stand with the reactionary bishops who say that the doctrine of the Virgin Birth must be believed ; nor yet with the modernists who content themselves with saying that disbelief in that dogma is permissible within the doctrinal system of this branch of the church. The thing is to insist that this dogma, whatever it may represent as matter of fact, and whatever its status in any doctrinal system may be, has nevertheless no conceivable connexion with religion. It belongs in an entirely different order of truth. The truth of parthenogenesis, whatever that truth may be, is truth of science ; it is not truth of religion ; and from the standpoint of religion, it is utterly irrelevant and nugatory to dispute against it or to dispute for it or to concern

oneself with it in any way except as matter of strict science.

“Our practical suggestion to the modernists is that they should make their service to religion distinct, direct and positive instead, as now, of making it confused, indirect and negative. We would remind them that in all previous controversies men have appeared who laboured to put the controverted dogmas on their proper ground by discriminating sharply and powerfully between truth of science and truth of religion, and by showing, as one of the greatest of these apologists puts it, that “truth of science does not become truth of religion until it is made religious”—until, that is, it is informed and animated by the *temper* which is religion. Such were the Cambridge Platonists, Hales, to some extent Tillotson and Stillingfleet, and above all Jeremy Taylor, in the seventeenth century ; such were Ernest Renan and Matthew Arnold in the nineteenth. What is needed now is a new apologetic which shall do for this generation in behalf of religion and of organized Christianity what Matthew Arnold did for the last ; and shall do in behalf of the life, words and character of Jesus what was done by Renan. If our newer modernism will produce this apologetic, it will have done something positive and fruitful in the cause of religion, beside which its present efforts in the cause of a dubious and unimportant broad-church ecclesiasticism will appear of no great consequence.”

“*The Freeman.*”

Now that you have perused the above quotation don't you think the West needs more of the religion of the Upanishads, as Swami Vivekananda prophesied? Then where are the Vedantist Missionaries? Is India going to turn a deaf ear to the cry of the world?

DHAN GOPAL MUKERJI.

## SRI KRISHNA AND UDDHAVA.

(Continued from page 181.)

मां विद्मद्भव दैत्यानां प्रह्लादमसुरेश्वरम् ।  
सोमं नक्षत्रौषधीनां धनेशं यक्षरक्षसाम् ॥ १६ ॥

16. O Uddhava, among demons know me to be Prahlada, the king of the Asuras. To the stars and herbs I am the moon,<sup>1</sup> and to Yakshas and Rakshasas I am Kuvera (their king).

[1 Moon—their king and presiding deity.]

ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां यादसां वरुणं प्रभुम् ।  
तपतां दुग्मतां सूर्यं मनुष्याणां च भूपतिम् ॥ १७ ॥

17. I am Airavata<sup>1</sup> among the high-class elephants, and of the dwellers in water I am Varuna, their Lord. Of heating and shining objects I am the sun, and I am the king of men.

[1 Airavata—Indra's elephant.]

उच्चैःश्रवास्तुरंगाणां धातूनामस्मि काञ्चनम् ।  
यमः संयमतां चाहं सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः ॥ १८ ॥

18. Among horses I am Uchchaisravas,<sup>1</sup> and among metals, gold. Of those that control I am Death, and of snakes I am Vasuki (their king).

[1 Uchchaisravas—Indra's steed.]

नागेन्द्राणामनन्तोऽहं मृगेन्द्रः शृङ्गिदंष्ट्रिणाम् ।  
आश्रमाणामहं तुर्यो वर्णानां प्रथमोऽनघ ॥ १९ ॥

19. Among the great Nagas<sup>1</sup> I am Ananta, and to all beasts with horns or teeth I am the lion. Of the orders of life I am the fourth or monastic order, and of castes I am the first or Brahmana, O sinless one!

[1 Nagas—another class of snakes. Ananta is their king.]

तीर्थानां स्रोतसां गङ्गा समुद्रः सरसामहम् ।

आयुधानां धनुरहं त्रिपुरघ्नो धनुष्मताम् ॥ २० ॥

20. Of sacred torrents I am the Ganges, and of reservoirs I am the ocean. Of weapons I am the bow, and of wielders of the bow I am Shiva, the Destroyer of the Threë Cities.<sup>1</sup>

[1 *Three Cities*—from which impregnable stronghold their owner, a demon, greatly molested the gods.]

धिष्ण्यानामस्यहं मेरुर्गहनानां हिमालयः ।

वनस्पतीनामश्वत्थ औषधीनामहं यवः ॥ २१ ॥

21. I am Mt. Meru<sup>1</sup> among abodes, and the Himalayas among inaccessible places. Of trees I am the peepul tree, and of annuals I am barley.

[1 *Meru*—where Brahmâ and other great beings live.]

पुरोधसां वसिष्ठोऽहं ब्रह्मिष्ठाणां बृहस्पतिः ।

स्कन्दोऽहं सर्वसेनान्यामग्रण्यां भगवानजः ॥ २२ ॥

22. Of priests I am Vasistha,<sup>1</sup> and of the knowers of Brahman I am Brihaspati.<sup>2</sup> Of all generals I am Skanda,<sup>3</sup> and of pioneers<sup>4</sup> I am the Lord Brahmâ.

[1 *Vasistha*—the priest of Ramachandra's dynasty.

<sup>2</sup> *Brihaspati*—the preceptor of the gods.

<sup>3</sup> *Skanda*—Kartikeya, the commander-in-chief of the gods.

<sup>4</sup> *Pioneers*—of righteous paths.]

यज्ञानां ब्रह्मयज्ञोऽहं व्रतानामविहिंसनम् ।

वायवन्त्रकार्मुवागात्मा शुचीनामप्यहं शुचिः ॥ २३ ॥

23. Of sacrifices<sup>1</sup> I am the study of the Vedas, and of vows, non-injury. Of purifying agencies I am the wind, fire, sun, water, speech<sup>2</sup> and Self, which are specially so.

[1 *Sacrifices*—There are five of them, viz., those to the gods, Brahmanas, Pitris, men and lower animals. Of these the Lord gives the highest place to the second.

<sup>2</sup> *Speech*—which ventilates the highest thoughts.]

योगानामात्मसंरोधो मन्त्रोऽस्मि विजिगीषताम् ।

आन्वीक्षिकी कौशलानां विकल्पः ख्यातिवादिनाम् ॥ २४ ॥



24. Of Yogas I am the perfect control of mind (Samadhi), and I am the policy of those who aspire after victory. Of all kinds of cleverness I am the discrimination between the Self and non-Self, and with regard to the different hypotheses<sup>1</sup> I am the faculty of doubt.<sup>2</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> *Hypotheses*—put forward by different schools of philosophy as to the nature of the world.

<sup>2</sup> *Doubt*—the never-ending puzzle whether the world is thus or thus.]

स्त्रीणां तु शतरूपाहं पुंसां स्वायंभुवो मनुः ।

नारायणो मुनीनां च कुमारो ब्रह्मचारिणाम् ॥ २५ ॥

25. I am Satarupa<sup>1</sup> among women, and Manu, the son of Brahmâ, among men. Of saints I am (the one called) Narayana, and of celibates I am Sanatkumara.<sup>2</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> *Satarupa*—the wife of Manu. These were the first parents of mankind.

<sup>2</sup> *Sanatkumara*—one of the four first-born sons of Brahmâ, who refused to marry and be dragged into the world.]

धर्माणामस्त्रि संन्यासः क्षेमाणामवहिर्मतिः ।

गुह्यानां सूतं मौनं मिथुनानामजस्त्वहम् ॥ २६ ॥

26. Of religions I am monasticism,<sup>1</sup> and of sources of well-being I am introspection. Of secrets I am sweet words<sup>2</sup> and silence, and of couples I am Brahmâ.<sup>3</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> *Monasticism*—characterised by the declaration of fearlessness to all beings.

<sup>2</sup> *Sweet words*—because they often hide the real object of the speaker.

<sup>3</sup> *Brahmâ*—who out of his body created the first couple—half-man and half-woman—whom he next turned into Manu and Satarupa.]

संवत्सरोऽस्म्यनिमिषामृतूनां मधुमाधवौ ।

मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहं नक्षत्राणां तथाभिजित् ॥ २७ ॥

27. Of the watchful I am the year,<sup>1</sup> and of seasons I am the spring. Of months I am the Agrahayana,<sup>2</sup> and of stars I am Abhijit.<sup>3</sup>

[<sup>1</sup> *Year*—rotating with unerring precision and slowly reducing everything.

<sup>2</sup> *Agrahayana*—middle of November to middle of December.

<sup>3</sup> *Abhijit*—the special name for the last quarter of Uttarasharha and the first quarter of Sravana.]

अहं युगानां च कृतं धीराणां देवलोऽसितः ।

द्वैपायनोऽस्मि व्यासानां कवीनां काव्य आत्मवान् ॥ २८ ॥

28. Of Yugas I am the Satya Yuga, and of the steady-minded I am Devala and Asita. Of the dividers of the Vedas I am Dwaipayana, and of the wise I am the self-contained Sukra.<sup>1</sup>

[1 *Sukra*—preceptor of the Asuras, who knew the art of reviving the dead.]

वासुदेवो भगवतां त्वं तु भागवतेष्वहम् ।

किंपुरुषाणां हनुमान्विद्याधराणां सुदर्शनः ॥ २९ ॥

29. Of the Lords I am Vasudeva, and of devotees I am thyself. Of the Kimpurushas I am Hanuman, and of Vidyadharas, Sudarsana.

रत्नानां पद्मरागोऽस्मि पद्मकोशः सुपेशसाम् ।

कुशोऽस्मि दर्भजातीनां गव्यमाज्यं हविःष्वहम् ॥ ३० ॥

30. Of gems I am the sapphire, and of the beautiful I am the lotus-bud. Of species of grass I am the (sacred) Kusa, and of oblations I am the clarified butter of cow's milk.

व्यवसायिनामहं लक्ष्मीः कितवानां छलग्रहः ।

तितिक्षास्मि तितिक्षूणां सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम् ॥ ३१ ॥

31. I am the fortune of the energetic, and the fraud of the deceitful. I am the fortitude of the painstaking, and the balance of mind of the steady.

ओजः सहो बलवतां कर्माहं विद्धि सात्वताम् ।

सात्वतां नवमूर्तीनामादिमूर्तिरहं परा ॥ ३२ ॥

32. Know that I am the energy and tenacity of the strong, and the devotional work of the devout. Of the nine forms worshipped by devotees,<sup>1</sup> I am the supreme first form, Vasudeva.

[1 *Devotees*—Vaishnava devotees.]

(To be continued.)

# BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

## BOMBAY.

The eighty-ninth birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Ramakrishna was celebrated with great eclat at the Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Santa Cruz, Bombay. A big pandal was erected in the compound of the Ashrama and was tastefully decorated. The morning programme included Bhajan, Pravachan by Sri Dada Maharaj of Satara and musical entertainments. There was a large gathering of the Bombay people, including many men of light and leading. The boys of the local Depressed Classes were sumptuously fed.

In the afternoon a public meeting was held at the Cowasji Jehangir Hall with Mr. Jhaveri, Chief Judge of the Small Cause Court, in the chair. Mr. K. Natarajan, Mr. J. K. Mehta and others spoke on the mission and greatness of Sri Ramakrishna. Swami Sharvananda, President, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, also delivered a lecture on the life of the Prophet of Dakshineswar.

## BENARES.

The anniversary was celebrated with due eclat at the Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Luxa, Benares City. The Tithipuja was observed on the 7th March. Special Puja, Homa, Bhajan and feeding of devotees formed the main programme of the day. The public celebration took place on the 9th March. A number of Sadhus of the different monasteries in Benares were invited on the occasion. At 5 P.M., a meeting was held with Principal A. B. Dhruva of the Hindu University in the chair. Prof. P. K. Telang, who addressed in English, spoke of how, owing to the influence of Sri Ramakrishna and his followers, Vedanta has not been allowed to remain a mere theory, but has been made a practical religion expressing itself in various forms of service. Srimat Swami Suddha-

nanda next delivered a short lecture in Bengali, in the course of which he laid stress on the central theme of the life of Sri Ramakrishna,—the practical realisation of religion, and on the wonderful catholicity and purity that marked all his thoughts and actions. Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Pramathanath Tarkabhushan in an admirable speech in Hindi said that Sri Ramakrishna was a prophet who had brought peace to innumerable men and women, and had harmonised the apparently discordant paths of Jnana, Karma and Bhakti. The president brought the proceedings to a close with his concluding remarks in English.

#### PATNA.

The birthday was celebrated with great enthusiasm and devotion under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Muradpur, Patna. The *tithi* was observed on the 7th and 8th March. Special Puja, Homa, Bhajan and Kirtan formed the main programme of these days.

The public celebration took place at the local Gait Public Library Theatre Hall which was tastefully decorated for the occasion. Till 11 A.M. the boys of the Boys' Association attached to the Ramakrishna Ashrama sang melodious Bhajans to the accompaniment of various musical instruments. The devotees assembled as well as some 400 poor Narayanas were next treated to a sumptuous feast. In the afternoon a public meeting was held with Srijut Mathuranath Sinha, Vakil, in the chair. Babus Lachmi Narayan and Santa Prasad delivered interesting speeches on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Prof. Bejoy Gopal Banerjee of the local Training College next gave a brilliant address in English. Swami Jnaneswarananda of the Ramakrishna Ashrama also delivered an admirable lecture in Bengali. The president wound up the proceedings with a thoughtful speech in Bengali. The celebration came to a close with Bhajans sung till about 10 P.M.

### KANKHAL.

The birthday was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal. The Tithipuja was performed on the 7th March, with special worship, Homa and other ceremonies. The public celebration came off on the 9th March. The Ashrama was artistically decorated. Sadhus and Mohants representing the important monasteries of the place were invited to take part in the celebration. A well-attended meeting was held in the Library Hall of the Ashrama under the presidency of Dandi Swami Narayana Tirtha. Brahmachari Brijmohan Swarup and Swami Khargananda addressed the congregation in Hindi on the "Sanatana Dharma." Swami Devananda read a paper in Hindi on the "Life and Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna." After the meeting was over, the Sadhus were sumptuously fed. There were special Aratrik and Bhajan at night.

### MADRAS.

The birthday was celebrated with due eclat at the Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, Madras. The *tithi* was observed on the 7th March with special Puja, Homa and feeding of devotees. The public celebration fell on the 9th March. The programme began with Bhajans in the morning. Nearly 4,000 poor Narayanas were sumptuously fed. There was a Harikatha on "Jayadeva Charitam" in the afternoon. This was followed by a well-attended public meeting with Mr. T. V. Seshagiri Iyer, retired High Court Judge, in the chair. Mr. N. Subrahmanya Iyer, B.A., gave an interesting address in Tamil on "Sri Ramakrishna and His Sayings." Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, B.A., M.D., delivered an eloquent lecture in English on "The Message of Sri Ramakrishna." The meeting ended with the distribution of Prasad.

### BANGALORE.

The anniversary was celebrated with great success at the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore City. The 7th

March was the day of the Tithipuja. The public celebration came off on the 9th March. As usual a number of Bhajan parties came to the Ashrama in processions carrying the portraits of Sri Ramakrishna through the main streets of the city. The members of these parties numbering over 300 were treated to a sumptuous lunch at about 12 noon. Then they all assembled at the spacious pandal of the Ashrama and sang Bhajans till 3 P.M. This was followed by a highly devotional Harikatha Kalakshepam on the "Life of Purandara Das." Mr. T. S. Venkannaiya, M.A., next spoke eloquently in Kannada on "Sri Ramakrishna, the Yuga Dharma Avatara." Prof. K. Devanathachar, M.A., delivered an interesting lecture in English on "Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Vaishnava Thought." The functions came to a close with Aratrik and distribution of Prasad.

#### NAGPUR.

The birthday was celebrated with great eclat on Sunday, the 9th March at the Ramakrishna Ashrama Grounds, Craddock Town, Nagpur. The Bengali Sankirtan Samity sang Kirtans early in the morning. Nearly six to seven hundred poor Narayanas were sumptuously fed with great care and attention.

A large and beautiful water-colour portrait of Sri Ramakrishna was exquisitely adorned with floral wreaths, and placed under a spacious Shamiana tastefully decorated with flags and festoons. A largely attended public meeting was held at 6-30 P.M. under the presidentship of the Hon'ble Sir G. M. Chitnavis, K.C.I.E. The audience consisted of people of all shades of opinion, including many of the men of light and leading of the place. Special arrangements were also made for ladies, a good number of whom attended the celebration with great enthusiasm.

After the president's introductory remarks, Mr. K. N. Dave, Sub-Judge, read a thoughtful paper in English on "Sri Ramakrishna and Universal Brotherhood." Pandit Narayan Dat Sharma, Editor, "Bijoy", next delivered an

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impressive speech in Hindi. The meeting was brought to a close with a vote of thanks to the chair at 8-30 P.M.

### TOTAPALLI HILLS (Godavary Dt.)

The birthday was observed on the 7th March at Sri Shanti Ashrama with prayer, meditation and Bhajan. A free school was opened on this day in memory of Sri Ramakrishna Deva. It is meant for the poor boys and girls of the surrounding villages, who were fed on the occasion.

### KUALA LUMPUR ( F. M. S.)

The birthday was celebrated with great enthusiasm and devotion at the Vivekananda Ashrama, Kuala Lumpur on the 9th March last. The whole Ashrama was tastefully decorated with flowers and evergreens, flags and festoons.

Bhajan parties arrived at the Ashrama at 8-30 A.M. from different parts of the city. A large number of poor Narayanas—Indians, Chinese and Malayas—were given a sumptuous feast. About 400 cloths were distributed among the needy. Mr. T. R. Subramania Iyer gave a Harikatha Kalakshepam from 4-30 to 6-30 P.M. The public meeting commenced at 7 P.M., with Mr. S. Veerasamy, Bar-at-Law, in the chair. Mr. K. Ramasamy spoke in Tamil, and Mr. V. Nallasekharam in English on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. The meeting came to a close with a vote of thanks to the president and lecturers.

### JORHAT (Assam).

The birthday was celebrated on the 9th March under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Seva Samiti which has been recently started at Jorhat, Assam. About 200 indigent people were fed on the occasion. At 6-30 P.M. a meeting was held at the Training School under the presidency of Rai Sahib Durgadhar Barkataki, retired Inspector of Schools. Two prizes were awarded to two school

boys for the best essays on the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. A small Pamphlet containing a short sketch and some sayings of Sri Ramakrishna in Assamese was freely distributed among the audience.

#### OOTACAMUND.

The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were observed on the 9th March at the Ramakrishna Hermitage and Mandiram, Kandal, Ootacamund. Special Puja was offered in the morning. A number of Bhajan parties came from among the different sections of the local Badagas, a hill tribe. Between 1 and 3 P.M. the Bhaktas partook of the Prasad in big batches consisting of men, women and children. A public meeting was held at 4 P.M., Mr. Ramakrishna Iyer of the Government High School occupying the chair. Mr. K. C. Varadarajulu Chettiar, Swami Seetharam and two Badaga boys addressed the audience. There was also a Harikatha Kalakshepam by Brahmasri Seshagiri Rao. The celebration came to a close with Aratrik and distribution of Prasad.

#### OTHER PLACES.

The birthday was also observed at the Ramakrishna Ashrama, Panchkhanda, Dt. Sylhet ; Sree Kannabhiram Bhajana Sabha, Triplicane, Madras ; Vivekananda Society, Jamshedpur ; Sri Ramakrishna Sevashrama, Bharukati-Narayanpur, Dt. Barisal ; Sree Ramakrishna Bhakta-Jana Sabha, Kottayam, Travancore ; Sri Ramakrishna Ashramas, Mymensingh, Dinajpur, Dacca, Travancore, Lucknow and various other places too numerous to mention.

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## NEWS AND NOTES.

### THE RAMKRISHNA MISSION RELIEF WORKS.

We have received the following appeal from the Secretary of the Ramkrishna Mission for publication. We hope, it will meet with ready and proper response from our large-hearted countryment :—

We have already informed the public that centres have been opened at Lahore in the plague affected area and at Birbhum and Gauhaty for the fire relief. The following are the reports from different centres.

#### *The Punjab Plague Relief.*

The Lahore Municipality has opened a temporary hospital. Segregation camp has been established at the Minto Park where temporary accommodations are given free of rent to persons who are afraid of living in the town and specially to those who have lost their relatives. Vaccination depots have been opened and cases of infections are reported here. The Municipality is trying to combat the disease by disinfecting the houses and burning out the old clothes in the infected ones. The mortality among the poor is very great, they can neither arrange for treatment nor send the victims to the hospitals. In a majority of the cases the victims are left to their fate and dead bodies are left uncremated. Among the Mussulmans the attack is more virulent as they do not believe in leaving the victims to their fate but take the dead bodies to the burial place in a procession which only helps the spread of the infection in a more dangerous proportion. The poor people cannot come forward to co-operate with the Municipality as in case of a break out the old clothes of the people of the affected house are burnt down and they are too poor to afford it.

We have sent ten workers up till now to organise the relief work. Our work will be based on the following lines :

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- (a) Distribution of new sets of clothings in the affected houses.
  - (b) Nursing the diseased persons.
  - (c) Rendering pecuniary help to the sufferers and thus attempting to relieve unemployment.
  - (d) Distributing proper diet to the sick.

### *Birbhum Fire Relief.*

About 200 families in the village of Fatepur and 500 in Valian have been rendered homeless by a disastrous fire. The fire broke out on eight consecutive evenings though the real cause is unknown. To add to their misery, a great storm has passed over these villages after the fire has subsided rendering a great number of huts, saved from fire, roofless.

### *Gauhati Fire Relief.*

Our workers have reached there and a detailed report has not been received yet.

We appeal to our generous countrymen to come forward with their liberal help for our distressed brethren in the afflicted areas mentioned above. Contributions, however small, will be received with thanks at any of the following addresses and may be designated for any of the funds for which they are intended.

1. President, Ramkrishna Mission,  
Belur P.O., Dt. Howrah.
2. Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission,  
1, Mukherji Lane, Baghbazar, Calcutta.

(Sd). SARADANANDA.

*Secretary, Ramkrishna Mission.*

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## HOW TO END WAR?

The horrors and devastations of the Great War have created in the minds of mankind in general an earnest hankering for permanent peace. To attain this object it is absolutely necessary to outlaw war. But in spite of loud protestations of high motives and international justice, there still exist great rivalry and suspicion among the powers, particularly among those that dominate the world to-day. Still there are signs of feverish arming and fresh attempts at developing the horrible engines of destruction. The destinies of nations are held in the hands of diplomats and politicians of the type that brought about the great catastrophe of 1914. In the first of his famous "fourteen points," President Wilson wanted that "diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view." But it is moving as before in the old crooked and secret ways. The so-called League of Nations is still a distrusted alliance of dominant powers, although propagandists are anxious to prove the contrary. But in spite of this deplorable state of affairs the talk of putting an end to war and attaining lasting peace is in the air, probably more than ever.

Dr. J. T. Sunderland suggests "a plan to abolish war and secure world-peace" in the *Modern Review* for February. He wants to outlaw war ; establish a World Court ; codify a Law of Nations on the basis of the criminality of war ; and secure an agreement of all nations to disarm down to police status. He wants the United States of America to take the initiative in calling a World Conference, and also definitely to promise to disarm herself as a pledge of her sincerity and earnestness.

The outlawing of war is the first and foremost object of the plan. Says Dr. Sunderland:—"If nations violate no law in fighting, why should they not fight if they feel like it? If they are within their legal rights when they attack one another, who may presume to object? When war shall have been declared illegal by the joint action of the nations ; when it shall have been made a crime ;

then, but not before, we shall be on the right road ; then, the necessarily first step and the longest single one will have been taken toward its abolition ; because then we shall have summoned to confront and oppose it, the two most powerful of all existing moral forces, namely, Law—the law of the whole world—and general public opinion—the public opinion of the whole world.”

It is the moral compulsion of the world's public opinion that can abolish war, and “on this, and this alone, must all efforts, all movements, and all plans to secure world-peace be based, if they are permanently to succeed.” Universal education on healthy lines must bring about a change in the hearts of men. It must awaken in them a sincere feeling of human solidarity and brotherhood, and an unmixed hatred for all forms of militarism and aggression.

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#### THE HINDU SYSTEM OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY.

“It is to the Hindus,” says Dr. Wise, “we owe the first system of medicine.” From very ancient times India has been famous as the home of medicine and aromatic herbs. The ancient Greeks were highly impressed by the Indian system of medical science. In the works of Hippocrates, called the “father of medicine”, there are distinct traces of the influence of the Indian pharmacopœia. The ancient Hindus excelled not only in the use of medicinal herbs but also in that of metallic drugs. As Dr. Royle says in his ‘Antiquity of Hindu Medicine’, “Though the ancient Greeks and Romans used many metallic substances as external applications, it is generally supposed that the Arabs were the first to prescribe them internally. But in the works of Charak and Susruta, to which, as has been proved, the earliest of the Arabs had access, we find numerous metallic substances directed to be given internally.” Our ignorance of the glorious days of Hindu medicine is stupendous. There is therefore no wonder that most of us know little of the Hindu physicians who lived in the camps of Alexander the

Great, and cured diseases which even the Greek medical men could not heal, or again, of the two Hindu physicians known in the Arabic records as Manka and Saleh who adorned the court of the famous king Haroun-al-Rashid reigning in Arabia in the eighth century A.D.

The Hindus were highly advanced, considering the knowledge of the contemporary nations, in surgery also, as Dr. Royle pointed out long ago. For we find "among the operations of those ancient surgeons those of lithotomy and the extraction of the foetus ex utero; and that no less than 127 surgical instruments are described in their works." The valuable researches of Mahamahopadhyaya Kaviraj Gananath Sen, M.A., L.M.S. also clearly prove that the ancient Hindus were highly conversant with the use of surgical instruments, and that they could make these instruments beautiful, polished and sharp enough "to divide a hair longitudinally." Said the Mahamahopadhyaya in a recent lecture in Madras—"If you turn over the chapters of Sushruta and Bagbhatta and such other works on Surgical Instrumentology, you will be astonished that the descriptions of the instruments are so accurate and exact that there is no mistaking the fact that the ancients had invented them. . . . Our ancient surgeons had developed a fine system of instrumentology. They divided the instruments into non-cutting and cutting ones. The former were divided into six groups, each group consisting of numerous kinds of instruments named according to the mechanical principles on which they were applied. The cutting instruments were equally many and varied. Besides these, there were needles, splint instruments for operation, tapping and so on. Various operations also—major and minor—have been described in the ancient works. . . . There have been great developments in surgery of late. But we must not forget that we were not babes in surgery, and that our forefathers knew a great deal when others were still utterly ignorant."

During the days of the glory of Ayurveda our ancestors freely borrowed certain things from the Arabs,

Egyptians and others, and assimilated these into their system of medicine and surgery. Modern doctors of the Hindu system should follow in this respect in the footsteps of their forefathers, and never forget that "contact with the West and application of scientific methods to our present day Ayurveda would certainly enhance its value and raise its status in the eyes of the whole world." We must learn to assimilate what is best in the Western system of medicine and surgery, modifying and adapting it to our requirements, and at the same time keeping intact the individuality of Ayurveda.

#### THE OPENING OF THE RAMAKRISHNA ASHRAMA, TRIVANDRUM.

The dedication ceremony of the newly constructed Ramakrishna Ashrama at Nattayam, Trivandrum, was performed with special Puja, Homa and other rites by Srimat Swami Nirmalananda on Friday, the 7th March,—the *tithi* of Sri Ramakrishna's nativity. A number of devotees came even from distant parts of Travancore and Malabar to take part in the functions. The Ashrama is a magnificent granite structure situated on a retired hill-top commanding an inspiring landscape, and is about four miles from Trivandrum—the capital of the Travancore State. It has been established through the untiring missionary zeal of Swami Nirmalananda, who by his lectures, classes and conversations, and above all by his personal influence has succeeded in sustaining and developing the work first begun by Swami Vivekananda and Swami Ramakrishnananda.

The Ashrama was publicly opened on Sunday, the 16th March in the presence of a large gathering consisting of many men of light and leading of the place. At about 8 A.M. the photo of Sri Ramakrishna was taken in procession along the main road to the hill-top on a big, beautifully caparisoned elephant. After the morning Puja was over, Prasad was distributed among the devotees assembled. This was followed by Bhajans which animated the atmosphere with a spirit of devotion. At noon about

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a thousand people were given a sumptuous feast. High caste Hindus sat side by side with the members of the so-called Depressed Classes, and partook of the Prasad as members of one great family.

A largely attended public meeting was held in the afternoon under the presidency of Swami Nirmalananda. Mr. Kunji Rama Pathiar and Swami Niranjanananda delivered thoughtful lectures suited to the occasion. This was followed by a stirring address from the president. The meeting came to a close at 7 P.M. with Puja and distribution of Prasad.

#### SWAMI NIKHILANANDA'S TOUR.

The reader is aware of Swami Nikhilananda's tour in Rajputana and of his cordial reception by H. H. the Maharaja of Alwar. From Alwar the Swami proceeded to Jaipur, where he stayed for over a fortnight with a friend and also delivered a lecture on Sri Ramakrishna at the Maharaja's college, in which the elite of the town was present. The Swami met with sympathy and co-operation from different sections of the people here. We are glad to announce that the Jaipur State has been pleased to sanction a donation of Rs. 1000 for our Hindi work, for which the President Advaita Ashrama, feels deeply grateful. Visiting Sambhar Lake, the Swami next proceeded to Jodhpur, where he was received as a State guest. He had the pleasure of an interview with His Highness the Maharaja, who also has been pleased to sanction a sum of Rs. 1000 as donation to the Advaita Ashrama for which the President of the Ashrama is much indebted to His Highness. Swami Nikhilananda has passed through Ajmere to Baroda, where, too, he has been kindly received as a State guest. The Maharaj Kumar of Shahpur has also been very kind to the Swami and was much interested in his work. The Swami intends to visit Bombay and some places in Kathiawar, where, too, we are confident, he will meet with friends and be of some service to the interested public.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION IN SAN FRANCISCO.

The sixty-second birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the Hindu Temple, San Francisco, U. S. A., on the 3rd February last. Elaborate were the floral decorations about the pictures of Sri Ramakrishna and the Holy Mother, while a basket filled with the choicest blossoms was placed before Swami Vivekananda's picture. At the morning service Swami Prakashananda spoke on "Swami Vivekananda's contribution to World Civilisation." Among other things, he said that Swamiji's work was not limited to a city or a country, but it was for the whole of humanity. His love was as broad and universal as his teachings. He saw God in all, and the poor and the down-trodden were the special objects of his worship. He even used to say that he would willingly go to the depths of hell if he could help one soul Godward.

At 8 in the evening, Swami Prabhavananda lectured on "Swami Vivekananda's Message of a Universal Religion." He dwelt on the early life of the Swami, and on his great earnestness in the search for God, even from his boyhood. At the feet of his Guru, Sri Ramakrishna, the Swami learnt that religion was realisation, and that all sects and creeds were but different paths leading to the one Goal. And the religion which he preached was so universal that it had room for all.

At both the services appropriate music was played on the Temple organ. Songs especially selected for the occasion were also sung. These were translations of the Bengali songs—the favourite ones which Swamiji used to sing at the feet of his Master: Such as—"Thou art the pole-star of my life," "All that is, Thou art," "Thou hast blest me with Thy vision," "What comfort can there be."

The auditorium was crowded to the utmost capacity, extra seats having been provided for the occasion.

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